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Interview

Iranian clubs in danger of ACL elimination

By Farrokh Hesabi

TEHRAN - Iranian clubs, Persepolis, Esteghlal, Sephahn, and Foolad, could meet the criteria to obtain the club licensing required to enter the AFC Champions League competitions.

In recent days, Persepolis and Esteghlal were rumored to be eliminated from the new season of the AFC Champions League by the Asian Football Confederation because of their failure to get the AFC Club licensing.

There was a concern for both Iranian clubs and their fans if there was enough time to meet the condition required to procure the necessary license.

There have been several occasions where clubs who have qualified for the continental competitions fail to participate in those tournaments. This happens when the clubs fail to meet the obligatory conditions to obtain a license that allows them to participate in games such as the AFC Champions League.

Contrary to some media reports, the deadline for submitting documents to the Asian Football Confederation was the end of Sunday. Esteghlal and Persepolis clubs submitted their papers on time and got the license.

The license is given after a club meets criteria in five sections – Sporting, Infrastructure, Personnel and Administrative, Legal and Financial. ▸ Page **3**

U.S., Israel surely behind cyberattack on petrol stations: Iranian civil defense chief

TEHRAN - The chief of Iran's Civil Defense Organization says the United States and the Israeli regime were surely behind the cyberattack that caused a temporary outage at gas stations in cities across Iran.

"From our point of view, this attack has definitely been carried out by the Americans and the Zionists," Brigadier General Gholam-Reza Jalali told a televised interview on Saturday, Press TV reported.

The attack targeted "the middleware" in the fuel delivery systems, Jalali said, describing the type of attack as very complicated and difficult to fend off.

"If the attack had taken place in the hardware layer, there would have been a need for infiltration," meaning either the company that has manufactured the software would have been responsible or a disrupting piece of e quipment would have to be installed to make the attack possible, the civil defense chief stated.

The cyberattack took place on Tuesday.

Long queues that had been formed in front of gas stations in large cities were cleared up after Oil Ministry authorities dispatched teams to the petrol stations to enable offline fuel delivery.

Three hours following the attack, 30 percent of the gas stationed resumed their offline services, while 12 hours after the attack, 60 percent returned to the normal status, Jalali explained.

"Continued operation of the [country's] infrastructures is the Civil Defense Organization's redline because it affects the people's lives," he said, adding, "Serious infrastructural cyber warfare has started. We should take it seriously and rectify our areas of weakness."

Last year, as many as 1,400 drills were held to reinforce the country's cyber defense prowess, he noted, adding that so far this year 66 such maneuvers have gone underway.

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France, UK step up war of words

Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson has refused to rule out triggering trade dispute action next week in a bitter fishing row with Paris, while French President Emmanuel Macron has told Johnson to "respect the rules." Macron also went further to question Britain's "credibility."

Johnson also expressed his concerns "about the rhetoric from the French government," saying, it does "not appear to be compatible with the UK-EU Trade Co-operation Agreement (TCA) or wider international law." He added "If there is a breach of the treaty or we think there is a breach of the treaty then we will do what is necessary to protect British interests."

Both leaders have held a meeting to discuss the escalating tensions between the two countries that culminated with France detaining a British fishing vessel and the UK summoning the French ambassador.

Following the meeting, the British Prime Minister's spokesman says no measures had been agreed saying, ▸ Page **5**

Exclusive exhibit of Iranian products to be held in Syria in early Dec.

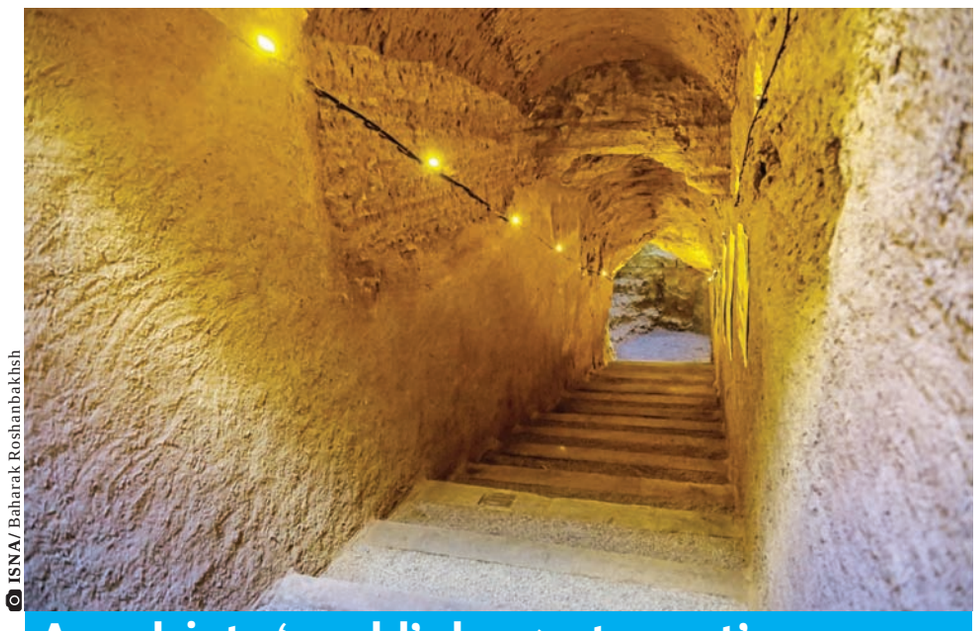
TEHRAN – Syrian Capital Damascus is going to host the second exclusive exhibition of Iranian goods during November 29-December 3, IRIB reported.

The exhibition features companies active in a variety of fields including hospital and medical equipment, medicine and treatment, construction industry, architecture, agriculture, livestock and poultry, oil, gas and petrochemicals, police and security equipment, as well as food, water, and electricity.

The steel industry, informatics, doors and windows, elevators, shop equipment and chain stores, motorcycles, automotive industry, textile industry, home appliances, and banking and insurance are also among the areas represented in the mentioned exhibition.

Over the past few years and since the end of the war in Syria, Tehran and Damascus have been taking major steps for expansion of mutual trade ties, and Syria has become one of the major focal points regarding the Iranian government's plans for boosting non-oil exports to the region.

The two countries have been pursuing the implementation of a free trade agreement signed between the two sides back in 2010 after years of postponement. ▸ Page **4**



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A peek into 'world's longest qanat'

The recently-restored Qanat of Zarch is widely known as the world's longest subterranean aqueduct as it stretches some 80 km across the semi-arid Yazd province in central Iran. The qanat starts from the village of Fahraj located in the northeast of Yazd and it runs at the depth of 30-40 m beneath the surface. It reaches Zarch, where the water is used for irrigation in the lower lands.

350 knowledge-based products to address water challenges

TEHRAN – Domestic knowledge-based companies have produced 350 products to help solve water-related issues, Nader-Gholi Ebrahimi, secretary of the working group for the development of water and environmental technologies of the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology has said.

The products, designed by 300 knowledge-based firms, are related to desalination, purification and recirculation, removal of heavy metals and other pollutants, and various types of pumps, pressurized tanks in order to solve water challenges, he explained.

The Vice Presidency for Science and Technology has tried to find local and knowledge-based solutions to various water challenges by strengthening the country's technology ecosystem, he added. ▸ Page **7**

Iran, S. Arabia have made initial agreement on certain issues: spokesman

TEHRAN — The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said on Sunday that Iran and Saudi Arabia have made initial agreements on certain issues but "we are waiting for their finalization."

So far, Iran and Saudi Arabia have held four rounds of talks to settle their disputes. Iraq has been hosting the talks.

Khatibzadeh said contacts between the two countries have never been cut off.

"The talks have been held in Baghdad, that is, we have sat down and talked for four rounds; but regarding the question that 'are there constant messages and contacts between us and the Saudi government? Yes! This has happened," Khatibzadeh told the Mehr news agency.

On a possible reopening of the embassies of the two countries, the spokesman said: "We are still some distance away from reopening of the embassies in Tehran and Riyadh."

"But if we can start this process, I must say that it can start soon," the diplomat stated.

Talking on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Rome on Saturday, Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal Bin Farhan Al Saud said: "Talks with Iran are friendly but there is no much progress."

Interview

American media trying to conceal the obvious about Philadelphia: ex-Senate candidate

By M. A. Saki

TEHRAN - A former U.S. Senate candidate says that U.S. mainstream media are trying to cover up the facts about massive amounts of crime and violent cases.

"The American mainstream media wants to conceal the obvious about Philadelphia and these other crime-ridden cities and how out-of-control the violence truly is," Mark Dankof tells the Tehran Times.

About two weeks ago, a woman was being raped while on a train near Philadelphia, whereas riders preferred to watch, failing to intervene and did not call the police.

A man whom officials identified as Fiston Ngoy sat down next to a woman at about 10 p.m. on a train that was traveling westbound on the Market-Frankford Line toward the 69th Street Transportation Center.

"Ngoy attempted to touch her a few times," said Andrew Busch, a spokesman for the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, known as SEPTA. ▸ Page **5**

Another archaeological season begins at Hegmataneh

TEHRAN - A former U.S. Senate candidate says that U.S. mainstream media are trying to cover up the facts about large number of criminal and violent cases.

This round of excavation aims at exploring and preserving the remains of the towers and ramparts of the hill, Hassan Soltani said on Sunday.

The project also seeks to enhance long-term maintenance of the already discovered artifacts against potential damage, the official added.

Five Iranian archaeologists are conducting the excavation, which is expected to conclude within a month, he noted.

The Hegmataneh Hill, also called Tepe Hegmataneh (thought to correspond to the ancient citadel of Ecbatana), has a circumference of 1.4 kilometers with an area of about 40 hectares.

The ruined Hegmataneh (Ecbatana) which is partly beneath the modern city of Hamedan (the capital city), is widely believed to be once a mysterious capital of Medes. According to ancient Greek writers, the city was founded in about 678 BC by Deioces, who was the first king of the Medes.

French Assyriologist Charles Fossey (1869 – 1946) directed the first excavation in Tepe Hegmateneh for six months in 1913. Erich Friedrich Schmidt (1897 – 1964), who was a German and American-naturalized archaeologist, took some aerial photos from Hamedan between 1935 and 1937. ▸ Page **6**

Amir Abdollahian says Foreign Ministry ready to attract foreign capital for free zones

TEHRAN – Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian said on Sunday that his ministry is fully ready to facilitate foreign investment in Iran's free trade zones, ISNA reported.

Amir Abdollahian made the remarks in a meeting with Saeed Mohammad, advisor to the president and secretary of Free Trade, Industrial and Special Economic Zones. Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Diplomacy Mehdi Safari was also present at the meeting.

The foreign minister said one of the most important goals of the foreign policy of the Ebrahim Raisi administration is a comprehensive expansion of economic and trade relations with other countries, especially neighboring countries.

"According to the plan presented to the Parliament based on using the capacities of the country's diplomatic apparatus to promote economic cooperation with other countries, we have sought to strengthen the economic sectors of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and (diplomatic) missions of the Islamic Republic of Iran abroad," Amir Abdollahian stated.

The chief diplomat said some countries are willing to invest in Iran's free trade zones. The foreign minister also said the Iranian diaspora have a great potential for investment.

At the meeting, Saeed Mohammad enumerated the many existing capacities and wide areas for cooperation and investment in free trade zones and

called for more assistance from the Foreign Ministry to strengthen cooperation with other countries for investment in these areas.

Researcher says Afghanistan's neighbors concerned about spread of insecurity

TEHRAN — Commenting on the strategic goals of neighboring countries regarding the Taliban reign in Afghanistan, a senior researcher on regional issues has said Iran has a "special position and calls for formation of an inclusive government in Afghanistan" and generally has adopted a middle ground toward the developments in the Central Asian country.

Tehran hosted a meeting of Afghanistan's neighbors on Wednesday. Foreign ministers of Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan attend the conference. The Chinese foreign minister, whose country shares a 46-mile border with Afghanistan, also addressed the conference virtually. The Russian foreign minister also addressed the meeting through a video link.

"This summit is a continuation of the previous summit of Afghanistan's neighboring countries," Farzad Ramezani Bonesh told ISNA in an interview published on Saturday.

Pakistan held the first meeting on Afghanistan in early September.

In the current situation, the analyst argued, there seems to be three attitudes towards the Afghan crisis by neighbors.

On the one hand Pakistan is pursuing its own geopolitical and strategic goals in Afghanistan, Ramezani Bonesh said, claiming

that Pakistan considers itself the main winner of the developments in Afghanistan.

"Besides Pakistan, it seems that in the current situation, given the consultations that have taken place, China has managed the process of relations with the Taliban in order to reduce the scope of anti-China threats," Ramezani Bonesh remarked.

"Turkmenistan, on the other hand, has taken a neutral approach and, in fact, seems to be slowly accepting the reality," the researcher highlighted.

He added, "Uzbekistan, as Afghanistan's northern neighbor, has its own views on security and other issues, and has held talks with the Taliban in line with its geopolitical and strategic goals for economic, railway and other issues."

in such a situation, the expert stated, the most prominent country opposing the Taliban rule is Tajikistan, which supported the national resistance front led by Ahmad Massoud and also accepted hosting Afghan officials to form a strong front against the Taliban in order to undermine the process for possible recognition of the Taliban and views the Taliban as a threat.

Thus, in a general view, Pakistan is the neighbor that ardently supports the Taliban and Tajikistan is the country that is seriously opposed to the Taliban, he pointed out.

The researcher went on to say that in such a situation, Iran has a special position in the face of opportunities and threats as well as security, political, hydro-political issues, Persian language, Afghan Shia community, opposition to ISIL terrorism in Afghanistan, etc.

In fact, Iran has demands from the Taliban, and in practice it is seeking formation of an inclusive government in Afghanistan and generally has taken a middle ground.

Therefore, Ramezani Bonesh said, most actors in the region are seeking to prevent spread of insecurity from Afghanistan in the future. For example, they don't want the security problems in Afghanistan to motivate activities of the Uyghur Islamic Group and the Islamic Party of Uzbekistan.

On the other hand, in a situation where the Taliban are in dire need of recognition, Pakistan and Qatar are seeking to recognize the Taliban, the expert remarked, but the United Nations does not have a pleasant view of the Taliban.

Neighbors can play a major role, and the outcome of these meetings could have a significant impact on Afghanistan's future and the Taliban's views, he opined.

"In this situation, some figures have formed opposition abroad, including some Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazaras and even some Pashtun leaders are trying to stand up to the Taliban and prevent a complete seizure of power. Therefore, neighbors can be influential in the future of Afghanistan," the analyst concluded.

Iran amnesties 100 persons convicted of death sentence

TEHRAN - A senior official at the Iranian Judiciary announced on Saturday that 100 persons who had been sentenced to death and 76 individuals who had been convicted of security offenses have been amnestied.

Hossein Najafi, a magistrate at the State Supreme Court, said the amnesty followed after a proposal by the Judiciary chief and a confirmation by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

In general, 3458 convicts were either amnestied or their sentences were reduced, Najafi explained.

The decision coincided with the birthdates of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Imam Jafar Sadeq (AS).

Armenian president hails ties with Iran

TEHRAN — Emphasizing that his country's relations with Iran as a neighbor have always been good, the Armenian president has said what happened during the war in southern Armenia in 2020 was directly related to Iran.

"Iran is our neighbor. What happened during the war in southern Armenia is directly related to Iran. This section is on the border with Iran, it would be surprising if Iran did not say anything about it in general," Armen Sarkissian told Russia's RBK television, ISNA reported on Saturday.

The Republic of Azerbaijan and Armenia fought over the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding territories. Fighting began on September 27, 2020, and lasted for more than 40 days.

Regarding the reasons behind Armenia's good relations with Iran in comparison to a year ago, Sarkissian noted: "First of all, I do not agree with you. Iran-Armenia relations have always been good. Unlike Turkey, the Iranian government has provided financial support for the preservation of Armenian cultural and religious centers."

On the view that relations have become closer after the war, the Armenian president answered, "Iran is our neighbor. What happened during the war in southern Armenia is directly related to Iran. This section is on the border with Iran, it would be surprising if Iran did not say anything about it in general."

With regard to Iran's concerns in the face of Turkey's measures, Sarkissian highlighted that Iran had the right to be worried about many things, so it was their right to express their views and the neighbors must listen to it.

"God willing, other players in the region will hear the same views. The point is that after the war, many began to say that during the war it was very difficult to get international support from various organizations and governments that actively supported the idea of ending the war."

Of course, there were countries that were very friendly, like France, which was worried about the war, the Armenian president stated.

But, he said, other European countries were not active and "now after the war, everyone has started talking actively."

Though Iran said the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan should be respected by Armenia, the Baku government has adopted an unfriendly approach toward Iran and made accusations against Iran and Yerevan.

Contrary to the Caspian Sea legal regime, Azerbaijan also invited Turkey and Pakistan for a joint maneuver in the sea.

Azeri President Ilham Aliyev went too far in his anti-Iran rhetoric. On October 15, he claimed that Iran and Armenia have been using the Nagarno-Karabakh territory for years to smuggle drugs to Europe."

"After restoring its 130-kilometer border with Iran, which was under Armenian control for 30 years, Azerbaijan stopped the illegal trafficking of narcotics from Iran to Armenia and on to Europe through Azerbaijan's Jebrail district," Aliyev claimed during a virtual summit of the former Soviet republics.

At the same virtual meeting, Armenian Prime Minister Nicole Pashinyan rejected the allegations. "I want to point out that we have been very closely cooperating with Iran's law-enforcement bodies and very productively fighting against drug trafficking," said Pashinian.

Shortly after Aliyev's remarks, the Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said the allegations by the Azeri president are "astonishing".

The Armenian prosecutor's office has issued a statement on the joint Iranian-Armenian fight against drug trafficking, saying the allegations by Aliyev were "baseless".

The prosecutor's office stated that in 2020, thirteen criminal cases were filed against drug trafficking on the Iranian-Armenian border and 14 people were charged. The statement also said that in the first nine months of 2021, 12 cases were investigated and 24 people were charged.

At the end of the statement, the prosecutor's office said: "All this information confirms that the accusations made by the President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, have nothing to do with reality and are fabricated. These allegations, which lack real data and are intended to discredit Iran and Armenia, have been doomed to failure from the outset. These accusations are to hide the fact that Azerbaijan itself is a transit country for drug trafficking."

On October 19, the Iranian director of headquarters for the fight against narcotics, Eskandar Momeni, urged Azerbaijani officials to respect the public opinion and to see the position of Iran in the fight against narcotics trafficking.

"Despite the cruel sanctions, our efforts to combat drug trafficking have intensified and we call on other countries to cooperate in this regard," he emphasized.

Aliyev failed to produce any proof of his allegations that Iran is helping Armenia to smuggle drugs to Europe.

Iran is the leading country in the fight against narcotics worldwide.

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

Since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, about 3,800 Iranian security forces have been martyred and about 12,000 wounded or 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.

Saudi plot to overthrow Lebanese government thickens

TEHRAN — In a chain of events intended to bring Lebanon to its knees, Saudi Arabia and its allies have taken an old interview out of context, published it, and surfed on it to topple the Lebanese government.

Pilot: Set up an interview with a probable nominee

The first episode began when Al Jazeera, Qatar's state TV, aired an old interview from George Kordahi. The interview was conducted on August 5, before Kordahi's nomination for information minister. In the interview, Kordahi said that he believes the 7-year war in Yemen was "futile."

He also said that the Ansarallah movement was merely "defending their country."

It is important to remember when the interview was conducted. On August 5, Kordahi was just a TV presenter. He was appointed as the Lebanese Information Minister on September 10.

So, why did Al Jazeera air an old interview at the most complicated time?

Episode 2: Examining possibility of cutting the cords

The answer lies within the Saudi coalition seeking to topple the Lebanese government. The Saudi officials have never hidden their ulterior motives that they are after toppling the Lebanese government, no matter who is in charge in Beirut.

With a 230 million dollar worth of exports to Saudi Arabia, Lebanon doesn't play an important role in the Saudi economy. Therefore, when they don't see Lebanon as a strategic economic partner, they have no problem cutting cords with the country. All they need to do is to form a coalition.

Episode 3: Let's gather around the usual suspects

Riyadh gathered Kuwait, Qatar, the UAE, and Bahrain to follow the scenario step by step. Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman had to make sure that they are on the same page.

They were all briefed on what steps they must take.

Episode 4: Let the games begin

The interview was aired on Al Jazeera. The bomb exploded. Saudi Arabia invited Walid Bukhari, its envoy to Beirut, for further consultation on the matter. Then, on October 27, the Saudi Foreign Ministry summoned the Lebanese ambassador to Riyadh for issuing a warning. Kuwait, Bahrain, and the UAE also summoned the Lebanese ambassadors to their capitals. They heard the explanations, and seemingly, tensions were de-escalated.

Episode 5: Boom

On October 29, Saudi Arabia gave a 48-hour notice to the Lebanese envoy to leave Riyadh. According to the statement issued by the Saudi Foreign Ministry, the kingdom also banned imports from Lebanon.

The decision was immediately followed by Kuwait, Bahrain and the UAE. They all gave a 48-hour notice to the Lebanese envoys to leave their capitals. For its part, the UAE also imposed a ban on its citizens traveling to Lebanon.

The Lebanese Prime Minister, Najib Mikati, said that he regrets the decision taken by the Saudi Arabian government, and advised his information minister Kordahi to make an "appropriate decision" by considering the national interests, in order to solve the diplomatic crisis between Riyadh and Beirut.

"We have always expressed our rejection of any abuse directed towards the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and we have called for correcting the flaws in the relations between the two brotherly countries during the last period, and we stressed in the ministerial statement that one of the priorities of our government is to work on restoring historical relations and ties between Lebanon and its brothers," Mikati said on Saturday, trying to win the Saudi crown prince's heart.

Finale:

The Saudi kingdom wants to overthrow the Mikati administration, in order to establish a government that serves its interests.

Iran: EU, Taliban asked to attend Tehran meeting on Afghanistan

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh has said that the European Union and the Taliban had asked to participate in the meeting on Afghanistan in Tehran.

Foreign ministers of the countries neighboring Afghanistan met in Tehran on October 27.

The Taliban and other Afghan groups had expressed interest in attending the conference in Tehran, Khatibzadeh said when asked whether the Taliban had been invited to attend the meeting.

He added that Iran had also received requests from others to attend the conference.

"We received requests for attendance in the Tehran summit, the European Union for example, was interested in attending the summit as an observer," he said.

The spokesman also said that all these requests were discussed at the Tehran summit, because the format of Afghanistan's neighboring countries is based on "consensus."

The first meeting on Afghanistan was hosted by Pakistan in September.

According to Khatibzadeh, all countries must reach a single decision on an issue.

He said, "At the Tehran summit, the request of the governing body of Afghanistan [Taliban] was examined and the necessary decision was agreed to be made at the meeting of special representatives."

China, which shares a 46-mile border with Afghanistan, is set host the next meeting on Afghanistan in 2022.

Meanwhile, Iranian Ambassador to China Mohammad Keshavarzzadeh has said that Tehran and Beijing share the same view on Afghanistan, underlining that they can work together to counter terrorism in the war-torn country.

Keshavarzzadeh told the Global Times that both Iran and China have the same view about rooting out terrorism in Afghanistan and its spillover to neighboring countries as well as honoring a non-interference policy and territorial integrity in the country.

He said Iran supported the use of the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative to improve the economy and people's livelihoods in Afghanistan. The ambassador praised China's pledge to host the third round of the meeting of foreign ministers of neighboring countries of Afghanistan and noted that Iran will lend its support to China.

The foreign ministers of Iran, China, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, along with Russia, held a meeting on Afghanistan in Tehran last week on Wednesday.

The Tehran meeting resulted in an agreement to hold the next round of the meeting in 2022 in China, indicating that the neighboring countries of Afghanistan succeeded in establishing a credible platform to address issues related to peace and security in Afghanistan.

The meeting approved a ministerial joint statement that addressed a range of issues of much interest to all the participants of the Tehran gathering, formally known as the "Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Afghanistan's Neighboring Countries + Russia."

It was held in continuation of another meeting held in Pakistan in early September. During the Pakistan meeting, the participants agreed to hold the next meeting in Tehran.

The joint statement of the Tehran meeting noted that "an inclusive and broad-based political structure with the participation of all ethno-political groups is the only solution to the Afghanistan issues."

It also called on "the international community to provide humanitarian assistance on urgent basis."

Furthermore, the statement called on the "international community to remain positively engaged with Afghanistan and develop long term roadmap to advance the agenda of political engagement, economic integration and regional connectivity."

To make sure that the meeting serves the interests of all the participants, the statement took note of "the assurances and commitments of relevant responsible Afghan parties to the international community that the territory of Afghanistan will not pose any threats to the neighboring countries and will not be used by criminal, terrorist and separatist groups, and cut ties with all kinds of terrorist groups, strike and eliminate them in a decisive manner."

The Taliban has welcomed the meeting. Zabihullah Mujahid, the Taliban's spokesman, told Fars News Agency that the Tehran meeting was positive.

"It was a meeting between Tehran and Afghanistan's neighbors that had positive results," he said.

He added: "The Taliban expect from this and other similar meetings to cooperate with the Afghans and to take steps to recognize the Taliban so that we can interact with the world, our neighbors and the region as a responsible party."

Mujahid continued, "The Taliban's position on such meetings is that the international community and different countries should interact with the Taliban in various fields."

Taliban deputy spokesman Ahmadullah Wasiq also praised the Tehran meeting and called it in Afghanistan's favor.

Responding to a request from foreign ministers of Afghanistan's neighbors for a comprehensive government, he said there was a possibility of a change in the Taliban's cabinet.

"We support this meeting, as it was expected, and it was positive and in Afghanistan's favor," Wasiq added.

Keshavarzzadeh said the mechanism set up in the Tehran meeting would further enhance cooperation among neighboring countries of Afghanistan. "Iran, for its part will lend its support to China and believes that this mechanism will further increase cooperation and understanding among neighboring countries of Afghanistan and contribute effectively to their joint efforts toward helping Afghan people better safeguard their interests and step into the path of peace, inclusiveness, friendship and well-being," he said.

The ambassador added, "Iran is also supporting giving full play to the role that regional economic initiatives and organizations like the Belt and Road Initiative, SCO and ECO can have in improving the economy and the livelihood of the people of Afghanistan."

According to the diplomat, the meeting mechanism of Afghanistan's neighboring countries serves as a "very important regional arrangement to support peace, reconciliation and national unity in Afghanistan."

Keshavarzzadeh told the Global Times that all of the neighboring countries are very much concerned about terrorism in Afghanistan. He called on the Taliban to strive to fulfill its commitment to counter-terrorism.

Iran and China share common views on different regional and international issues, said the diplomat who stressed that an inclusive and broad-based political structure with the participation of all ethno-political groups is the only solution to the Afghan issue.

"Tehran's meeting was mainly concentrated on promoting the political solution to the Afghanistan crisis. Iran's position on this has been consistent and principled. We believe that forming an inclusive political structure that represents all ethnic and religious groups of this country is imperative and during this conference Iran has reaffirmed that international recognition would not fly without internal reconciliation and a full-fledged representative government at home. Regional countries and members of the international community at large should help bring about a consensus in Afghanistan to secure lasting peace and prosperity," he said.

Another point of significance, the ambassador noted, is how to face the legacy of foreign interference in the region. "In this regard, any kind of action that could lead to renewal of irresponsible and bullying actions in Afghanistan should be avoided and the US and its NATO allies who created this chaotic situation should not shrink from their responsibilities," said the ambassador.

He mentioned that it's important for Afghanistan to have access to its financial resources in order to avoid further suffering, especially as winter approaches. "Last but not the least is the fundamental importance of observing human rights in Afghanistan, in particular, the rights of women and girls and all ethnic and religious groups," he said.

He pointed out, "Afghanistan's political structure and development path are up to the Afghan people to decide. All the ethno-political groups and parties should participate in an inclusive government that will lead to national reconciliation, peace and integrity."

According to the ambassador, Iran now hopes to help with the urgent needs of the Afghan people. Sending humanitarian assistance, opening borders at the earliest possible time to facilitate and normalize trade activities, providing fuel for the coming cold season, paying due attention to refugees and displaced people and keeping the diplomatic missions functioning are all important actions taken by Iran in accordance with brotherly relations, he said.

He called on the international and regional organizations, in particular the UN and its agencies, to shoulder responsibilities and provide Afghanistan and its neighboring countries with necessary assistance.

He said that Iran has declared its readiness to act as the hub for delivering goods and equipment into Afghanistan. "Since Iran has been hosting more than 3 million Afghan nationals for more than three decades and its economy is strained by illegal and oppressive sanctions by the US, Iran should be provided with support from members of the international community in facing the issue of refugees coming from Afghanistan," he noted.

SPORTS

Iranian clubs in danger of ACL elimination

Frome Page 1 ▸ The sporting criteria mainly consist of requirements (Category A) that pertain to the development of football. The club has to have youth squads that are affiliated with recognized competitions.

The infrastructure criteria deal with Stadium and Training Facilities. The personnel and administrative criteria list all the necessary staff required by a club to satisfy the regulations put forth by AFC for its competitions.

The legal criteria cover all necessary documentation that needs to be submitted to participate in the tournaments. The club's ownership framework and control mechanism should also be declared, with each participant's role and stake at the club explained clearly.

It seems that the financial criteria have been the most challenging one for the Iranian clubs in recent years. Due to economic sanctions against Iran, the country's clubs have many problems with transferring money to fulfill some of their financial commitments toward their foreign players and staff.

The problem of obtaining the AFC Club License for Iranian clubs was solved with the help of the football federation and the Ministry of Sports. However, a source close to the Iranian football federation said to Tehran Times that "the AFC granted the licenses to Esteghlal and Persepolis clubs on a conditional and three-month basis. They must resolve other remaining issues during this period".

It seems that the complete elimination of this problem for Iranian teams requires fundamental steps toward providing professional football infrastructures in the coming years.

Iran advance to 2022 AFC U23 Asian Cup with win over Tajikistan

TEHRAN – Iran defeated Tajikistan 3-2 to book their place at the 2022 AFC U23 Asian Cup on Sunday.

Yasin Salmani made a hat trick in the first half at the Central Republican Stadium in Dushanbe.

Islom Zairov and Ehson Panshanbe were on target for the hosts.

Iran had already defeated Nepal and Lebanon in Group B.

Iran's win sends them back to the continental Finals, but Tajikistan will have to wait to see if they will join them as one of the four best placed runners-up after they missed their chance to win the group.

In each group, teams play each other once at a centralized venue. The eleven group winners and the four best runners-up qualify for the final tournament.

A total of 16 teams will qualify to play in the final tournament, including Uzbekistan as hosts.

Peyman Fakhri named Iran's chef de mission for 2022 Asian Games

TEHRAN – Peyman Fakhri was appointed Iran's chef de mission for the 2022 Asian Games.

The former fencer had been already appointed as chef de mission for the 2020 Asian Beach Games but the Games were rescheduled for 2023 as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

The 2022 Asian Games, also known as XIX Asiad, will be a multi-sport event celebrated in Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China from Sept. 10 to 25, 2022.

In the previous edition held in Jakarta, Indonesia, Iran finished in sixth place, winning 20 gold, 20 silver and 22 bronze medals.

Peyman Hosseini aims to win Intercontinental Beach Soccer Cup

TEHRAN – Iran beach soccer team goalkeeper Peyman Hosseini is looking forward to win the Intercontinental Beach Soccer Cup for the fourth time.

Dubai 2021 will probably be the last competition Hosseini, one of the best goalkeepers in the world, and he wants to bid farewell to his international career — helping Iran claim a fourth crown to make the team the most decorated team in Intercontinental Cup history.

The goalkeeper is convinced that his team has everything it takes to win the Intercontinental Cup, gulfnews.com reported.

"The best in the world. Iran wants to — and can — win the Intercontinental Cup," he said. "We are really motivated and focused to make that happen, and we know we have our people, our country, behind us."

He is right, as the support of the Iranian fans has always been one of the keys for the team's success, and also one of the most iconic images at the Intercontinental Beach Soccer Cup stadium in Dubai year after year.

"Our people love beach soccer, and we feel their support is right behind us. We know that many of them are already in Dubai, looking forward to the event beginning."

After not being given the chance to take part in the FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup Russia due the cancellation of the AFC Beach Soccer Championships, Dubai and the Intercontinental Beach Soccer Cup appear as the perfect stage to show the world that Iran are still one of the strongest teams on the planet.

Between November 2-6, at Kite Beach, the Iranian National Team will be given the chance to prove that as they fight to become the most successful team in the history of the competition and reclaim their place among the best of the beach soccer best.

Defending champions Iran, in turn, will bring curtains down on the first match day at Kite Beach by taking on a combative Paraguay, who will try to show everybody that they are in Dubai with the aim of going all the way

Iran will also play Japan and Russia in Group B in the following days.

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

World champion Hassan Yazdani visits care home

TEHRAN - Olympic and world champion wrestler Hassan Yazdani traveled to shrine city of Mashhad to visit a care home on Sunday.

Yazdani visited Shahid Beheshti Care Home and wrestled with a young disabled boy in his meeting. He was defeated by a technical fall.

His symbolic loss made the residents happy.

The popular wrestler has recently claimed a gold medal in the 2021 World Wrestling Championships in Oslo, Norway, where he could defeat his American rival David Taylor for the first time.

Yazdani had lost to Taylor in 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo in the 86kg.

Exclusive exhibit of Iranian products to be held in Syria in early Dec.

From page 1 ▶ According to Farzad Piltan, the director-general of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO)'s Office of Arabian and African Countries, the implementation of this agreement with Syria, which the Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Reza Fatemi Amin is scheduled to pursue during a recent visit to Syria, means that the two countries' traders will be exempt from current export and import restrictions and bans in their exchanges.

Considering Syria's efforts for reconstructing the country's war-torn infrastructures in recent years, the construction sector has been one of the major areas that Iran has been focusing on for the expansion of ties with the Arab country.

Head of Iran-Syria Joint Chamber of Commerce Keyvan Kashefi has said that currently, commodity items in the fields of housing construction, bridge and dam construction, electricity supply, and technical and engineering services are at the top of the list of exports to this country.

TPO invites investors to establish trade centers in target markets

TEHRAN - The Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) of Iran, in a notice, has invited the country's investors to cooperate in the establishment of new trade centers in the target export countries, the TPO portal reported.

Considering the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry's new strategies for establishing trade centers in the target export countries and the importance of the direct presence of Iranian companies in the destination markets, the TPO has invited applicants to contact the organization secretariat to hand in their documents and to provide their justification plan.

TPO had previously announced that the government was planning to open trade centers in Uganda and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in the near future.

Private sector operates 67% of thermal power plants

TEHRAN - Deputy of Planning and Management Development at Iran's Thermal Power Plant Holding (TPPH) Amir Doudabi-Nezhad has said 67 percent of the country's thermal power plants are currently operated by the private sector.

Speaking on the sidelines of the 21st Iran International Electricity Exhibition (IEE 2021) on Saturday, the official said 381 power plant units with a total capacity of 46,000 megawatts (MW) are currently managed by the private sector.

According to the data provided by TPPH, currently, 538 thermal units are active in 129 power plants across the country.

As IRNA reported, Doudabi-Nezhad noted that the private sector is also set to add over 8,640 MW capacity of power plants to the country's power network during the current government incumbency (ends in July 2025), of which 2,792 MW is expected to come on stream by the next summer peak consumption period (next summer starts on June 22, 2022).

Iran's thermal power plants generated over 173 million megawatt-hours of electricity since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21) up to September 15, registering a nine-percent rise compared to the previous year's same period.

The total capacity of the country's thermal power plants currently stands at 69,000 megawatts (MW), of which 46,476 MW or 67 percent is operated by the private sector and the government is in charge of the other 33 percent.

At present, the installed capacity of all power plants in the country, including thermal, hydropower, nuclear, distributed generation, renewable, and diesel, has reached 85,559 MW, of which about 81 percent is accounted by thermal power plants.

Combined cycle units with a capacity of 31,179 MW account for 36.4 percent of the total capacity of the country's thermal power plants while gas units with a capacity of 21,992 MW have a 25.7 share, and the share of steam units is 18.5 percent with a total capacity of 15,829 MW.

Back in July, Esmail Namazi, the director-general of TPPH Research and Construction had mentioned the inactivity of hydropower plants due to drought, the rising temperature, and the increase in electricity demand, as well as the inactivity of the country's nuclear power plants on some days as reasons for the increase in electricity generation by thermal power plants.

"Thermal power plants have tried to stay active for more hours by shortening the time of their periodic repairs and fixing occasional problems in the power plant units, to compensate the electricity generation deficit in the country," Namazi said.

He further noted that all thermal power plants across the country are currently operating at maximum capacity, and the employees of the country's electricity industry are doing their best to keep the power plants in the grid despite the new wave of coronavirus pandemic and the extreme heat.

In the past decade, constant temperature rising and the significant decrease of rainfalls across Iran have put the country in a hard situation regarding electricity supply during peak consumption periods.

This year, however, new deteriorating factors like severe drought and the decline in the country's water resources as well as a new wave of illegal cryptocurrency mining across the country have also worsened the situation.

Iran's Power Generation, Distribution, and Transmission Company (known as Tavanir) has previously announced that the company is implementing over 40 different programs for managing the situation and to prevent blackouts in the country, however, so far these programs do not seem to be working as expected.

Commodities worth $440m traded at IME in a week

TEHRAN - During the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday), 1.711 million tons of commodities worth $440 million was traded at Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME).

As reported by the IME's Public Relations and International Affairs Department, the exchange experienced trade of 1.369 million tons of commodities valued at more than $216 million on its metals and mineral trading floor.

On this floor, the IME's customers purchased 1 million tons of cement, 302,097 tons of steel, 2,380 tons of copper, 4,475 tons of aluminum, 18 tons of precious metals concentrate, 265 tons of zinc, 16 kg of gold bars and 20,000 tons of sponge iron.

Furthermore, the IME saw trade 331,457 tons of commodities on both domestic and export pits of its oil and petrochemical trading floor valued more than $217 million.

Commodities sold on this floor included 98,000 tons of vacuum bottom, 74,906 tons of bitumen, 81,996 tons of polymeric products, 34,967 tons of chemicals, 34,000 tons of lube cut, 4,009 tons of base oil and 3,800 tons of sulfur.

Last but not least was the IME's side market with 11,291 tons of commodities traded on it.

As previously reported, 7.222 million tons of commodities worth $2.008 billion was traded at Iran Mercantile Exchange during the past Iranian calendar month (September 23-October 22).

Within this month, the exchange traded on its metals and minerals trading floor 5.541 million tons of commodities valued at $1.096 billion.

Commodities sold on this floor included 1.226 million tons of steel, 3.993 million tons of cement, 26,445 tons of copper, 580 tons of molybdenum concentrate, 69 tons of precious metals concentrate, 23,940 tons of aluminum, 215,000 tons

of iron ore, 21,870 tons of zinc, 2,000 tons of coke, 49,000 tons of sponge iron and 67 kg of gold bars.

Furthermore, the IME saw on both domestic and export pits of its oil and petrochemical trading floor trade of more than 1.65 million tons of commodities worth $885 million.

The IME's customers purchased on this floor 419,796 tons of bitumen, 328,872 tons of polymeric products, 140,451 tons of chemicals, 13,955 tons of slops wax and 501,000 tons of vacuum bottom.

It's worth noting that the IME's agricultural trading floor played host to trading 1,300 kg of saffron within this month.

Last but not least was the IME's side market which was a platform to trade 30,860 tons of various types of commodities in this month.

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

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

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

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

Iran eyes becoming agriculture hub in region

TEHRAN – Iranian Agriculture Minister Javad Sadati Nejad has said his ministry in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is pursuing to develop interactions with neighboring countries to boost exports of agricultural products and realize the country's goal for becoming an agriculture hub in the region.

"Given the capacities of neighboring countries and with the cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the field of economic diplomacy, we can increase the export of agricultural products and interaction with neighbors and become a commercial agricultural hub in the region," Sadati Nejad said in meeting with his deputies on Sunday.

As reported by Mehr News Agency, in the said meeting, the official called on his deputies to prepare a list including the export, import and technological needs of the agricultural sector in order to provide to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, so that this ministry can refer the needs and capacities of the agricultural sector to embassies.

In the meeting, Mehdi Safari, deputy of economic diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, emphasized the expansion of Iran's agricultural cooperation with neighboring countries and called for introducing Iran's export potential and import needs in the agricultural sector to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Safari underlined the need for the introduction and transfer of technologies needed by the agricultural sector to the country with the help of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and suggested holding specialized meetings with the presence of deputies of the Agriculture Ministry and heads of specialized organizations.

Despite the economic sanctions, the coronavirus pandemic and the current drought, the exports of Iran's agricultural products have been increasing in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21) compared to the previous year.

The value of agricultural products exported during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 22) rose nine percent as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

According to the Deputy Head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) Mehrdad Jamal Orounaqi, over 2.5 million tons of agricultural products worth more than $1.7 billion were exported in the four-month period.

The main foodstuffs and agricultural products exported during this period were tomatoes, pistachios, watermelons, tomato paste, cheese, apples, melons, potatoes, dates and various sweets, the official stated, and named Iraq, China, Afghanistan, and the United Arab Emirates as the main export destinations of the products.

Nearly 13m tons of crude steel produced in 6 months

TEHRAN- Over 12.888 million tons of crude steel was produced in Iran during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22), the data released by Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry indicate.

After the withdrawal of the United States from Iran's nuclear deal, the Islamic Republic has faced sanctions in various industries, including steel sector.

The United States has sanctioned entities and individuals associated with Iran's steel industry.

In early January, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) added twelve Iranian producers of steel and other metal products to the list of sanctions.

However, at that time, the U.S. experts said that the Islamic Republic of Iran had resisted the so-called U.S. maximum pressure policy for the past three years, and the Trump administration had failed to achieve any of its goals in the face of sanctions against Iran.

Also, those active in Iran's steel sector believed that sanctions against Iran which were in place for 40 years had nothing to do with the Iranian industry.

For example, referring to Iran's success in steel production in the country, the vice president of the Iranian Steel Producers Association (ISPA) stated: "Iran is one of the 10 top steel producing countries in the world and no doubt U.S. sanctions will not take special action against Iran's steel industry at this stage."

"Iran's ranking among the top 10 steel producers in the world shows that the decline of Iran's position among steel producing countries will not be easy", Bahador Ehramian noted.

And now, it's proven based on the repots and statistics released by the international bodies and also the Iranian sources that Iran's strong steel sector cannot be hit by the sanctions.

> Iran's steel industry has been constantly developing over the past years against all the pressures and obstacles.

Based on the Iranian Steel Producers Association's data, Iranian steel companies managed to produce 30.2 million tons of steel in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), registering a three-percent annual growth.

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

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

The Islamic Republic maintained its place as the world's 10th biggest steel producer during the mentioned time span, the report said.

The rising trend is also witnessed in the export of Iran's steel, as according to the latest report released in this due, Iranian major steel producers, including Mobarakeh Steel Company, Khuzestan Steel Company, Esfahan Steel Company, and Hormozgan Steel Company and some others, exported 3.811 million tons of steel in the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22), rising 48 percent as compared to the same period of time in the past year, IRNA reported on Saturday.

As stated by the deputy managing director of Mobarakeh Steel Company, one of Iran's major steel producers, "The sanctions have not only not bent the back of Mobarakeh Steel Company, but has led to various record breakings."

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

According to the Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry, the production capacity of the country's steel chain increased from 123 million tons in the Iranian calendar year 1392 (ended in March 2014) to 230 million tons in the previous year.

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

TEDPIX falls 35,000 points on Sunday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), lost 35,349 points to 1.34 million on Sunday.

As reported, over 6.031 billion securities worth 38.126 trillion rials (about $907.76 million) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index fell 33,878 points, and the second market's index dropped 46,091 points.

TEDPIX lost 43,000 points, or three percent, to 1.393 million in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

During the past week, the indices of Isfahan Refining Company, National Iranian Copper Industries Company, Mobarakeh Steel Company, Iran Khodro, and Sabzevar Pars Steel Complex, and Arian Chimia Tech Industrial Group were the most widely followed ones.

It's over two years that stock market in Iran has been playing an outstanding role in the attraction of the people's investment.

American media trying to conceal the obvious about Philadelphia: ex-Senate candidate

From page 1 ▶ Despite a massive outrage among the American public towards this crime and other crime cases, the mainstream media in the U.S. seem reluctant to address the very roots of criminal acts in the country.

"These cities are run by Democratic Party Administrations committed to Marxist racial theories, a spin on police misconduct disproven by Heather MacDonald's analysis of FBI statistics on crime, police shootings, and racial/demographic analysis of these events for The Wall Street Journal which belies their narrative, especially since the George Floyd case in Minneapolis," Dankof argues.

Following is the text of the interview:

What are the implications of the rape case in Philadelphia for the American society?

The implications are monstrous, both in terms of the real danger of random acts of physical assault, aggravated rape, and premeditated murder, not only in Philadelphia, New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, and here in San Antonio among the larger cities, but in smaller cities and American suburbs as well.

The cowardly, heinous and calloused un-involvement of a massive group of witnesses on the train to such a horrendous act, remaining unmoved and unwilling to defend the victim in this case, is infuriating.

What was the public reaction to the raping of the woman on the Pennsylvania train?

Outrage among any decent person of any demographic or political background definitely occurred, but where are the massive political protests in Philadelphia and around the country in the aftermath with full media coverage? They are non-existent. Why? Because the grim fact of the matter is that the mainstream media in the United States is only interested in covering such events, along with planned demonstrations, when the circumstances play into their false narrative on which racial groupings are committing disproportionate acts of such criminality, even as this same media, in conjunction with the George Soroses of the world, promotes the notion that firearms should not be lawfully possessed by a trained citizenry for self-defense in such situations. I almost had to lawfully shoot a criminal here in San Antonio on Columbus Day in 2015 beating a woman unconscious in my apartment parking lot. The life of an infant child was also at stake. I was in Bluetooth communication with the San Antonio Police Dispatcher as I was leaving my apartment with a Model 1911 Colt .45 ACP. I want to emphasize this point: By their own admission, the police told me on the phone they could not arrive for 20-30 minutes from our local San Antonio Police Substation on Jones Maltsberger. Where were the Philadelphia police on the train in the recent rape case? Nowhere. A gun in the hands of a trained and decent citizen on the train would have made the difference. Your readers may access the story on this on Vkontakte: https://vk.com/wall468804996_1766

> "Violent felons are often multiple repeat offenders."

One other point: The American mainstream media wants to conceal the obvious about Philadelphia and these other crime-ridden cities and how out-of-control the violence truly is. These cities are run by Democratic Party Administrations committed to Marxist racial theories, a spin on police misconduct disproven by Heather MacDonald's analysis of FBI statistics on crime, police shootings, and racial/demographic analysis of these events for The Wall Street Journal which belies their narrative, especially since the George Floyd case in Minneapolis.

The American society is so tolerant of gendered violence. Why? How has it become so inured to people's suffering?

These same leftists in the United States do not want any linkage between American societal attitudes and the devaluation of innocent human life since the infamous Roe v Wade case on the abortion issue in January of 1973. Even worse, as Boyd Cathey has pointed out for LewRockwell, much of the American left including the Democratic Party establishment, has joined the Neo-Conservatives who have hijacked the Republican Party, in supporting American Empire wars for "democracy and human rights," when the fact is that these endeavors have killed millions of innocent people with Zionism, Globalism, natural resources theft, and maintaining the global central banking establishment and the American dollar's reserve currency status are the real reasons for mass murder and endless military interventions and surrogate wars leading up to the real possibility of World War III. The same society promoting mass murder of the unborn via abortion and Empire Wars is the same society demonstrating its Godlessness on the streets of American cities and suburbs.

Is there any legal mechanism to raise societal responsibility, prompting members of society to intervene when they encounter a criminal case?

The lawful ownership and trained use of a weapon ensconced in the American Second Amendment when human life is threatened and the police are not present is one mechanism.

Returning the United States to policies which support the traditional family is another.

Finally, violent felons need to be permanently put out of business once and for all when apprehended and duly convicted of a crime. The Death Penalty or Life in Prison without Parole is the only legitimate options.

How do you assess U.S. laws when it comes to crimes like rape or murder? Is there any will among policymakers and legislators to reduce crime rates?

I am not hopeful on this point. Violent felons are often multiple repeat offenders. This has to end. The liberalism of American laws which attempt to argue for mitigation of the circumstances surrounding crimes like the one in Philadelphia must be rejected by an indifferent American public, and political leaders warped by leftist ideology pandering to racial and Marxist constituencies must be jettisoned. At the same time, the sexual and drug revolutions of the 1960s and 1970s in the United States must be tossed aside in the wake of their cancerous and metastasizing effects on the people of this country. Putin and the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian people are increasingly united against what has happened in America specifically and the Western world generally, and with total justification. I pray they will hold the line.

As for the United States, it may well be too late.

France, UK step up war of words

From page 1 ▶ "It's down to France to decide if they want to step away from the deeply concerning threats. We are not seeking to escalate this. We would welcome it if they de-escalate and withdraw the threats they have made. [But] it will be for the French to decide."

The official statement on behalf of Boris Johnson says he had "reiterated his deep concern over the rhetoric emanating from the French government in recent days, including the suggestion by the French prime minister that the UK should be punished for leaving the EU."

It further said Johnson had "expressed his hope that the French government would de-escalate this rhetoric and withdraw their threats [of taking further action again British fishers near French waters]."

However, the head of the ports of Calais and Boulogne Jean-Marc Puissesseau, says he had already received instructions to stop British fishers from unloading in Boulogne from Tuesday while the border authorities at Calais would enforce tougher controls on goods-laden lorries.

Speaking to British media he warned that "It will be a drama, it will be a disaster, it will be a chaos in your country because the trucks will not cross, it will be chaos at the ports ... It has reached a ridiculous point, I would say." He has urged "the British and [the French] find an agreement, we find a solution to get out of this point."

This week, tensions escalated when a British fishing vessel was detained and escorted to a French port after French officials said it did not have the correct papers. Paris has said it could begin to impose targeted measures from Tuesday, including heightening some checks, if the UK does not provide the right amount of fishing licenses for French boats.

Reports emerging from the UK say French courts have demanded a £125,000 "ransom" for the release of the British fishing vessel detained in the Le Havre port. The Scottish-registered Cornelis Gert Jan is accused of not having a valid license to fish in French waters.

Its unnamed captain has been charged with "acts of unauthorized sea fishing in French maritime salt waters" and ordered to appear in court. He faces £63,000 in fines but sources said an eye-watering bail of £125,000 has been set to ensure he returns to face trial. Owners the company that's own the vessel have reportedly been ordered to pay the amount before a judge releases it.

The company insists the vessel had the correct license and is being used as "another pawn" in the bitter dispute between France and the UK.

In France, Monday is a bank holiday so the eight-member crew cannot leave the country until Tuesday at the earliest. One of them has told British media "We've been told we are not leaving this weekend. We just want to get out of here."

Paris has warned London it must grant more licenses for French boats to fish in British waters by Tuesday or face border and port sanctions. At the same time, the UK has told France that, if it does take further action, then it is prepared to kick-start legal proceedings, arguing that Paris will have violated the terms of the trade agreement with the European Union.

In an interview with the British Financial Times newspaper, Macron said the row was a test of the UK's credibility saying, "when you spend years negotiating a treaty and then a few months later you do the opposite of what was decided on the aspects that suit you the least, it is not a big sign of your credibility."

A series of angry statements from the British Brexit minister David Frost also underlined how seriously London was taking the situation. It followed a letter sent by French Prime Minister Jean Castex to European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen, that the UK should be shown "it causes more damage to leave the EU than to stay in." Frost has described the letter as "very troubling."

He also warned the European Union it would be "in breach of its obligations" under the post-Brexit trade deal with the UK if Paris carries out its threats to block British boats from landing their catch at French ports while tightening checks on vessels.

Frost has repeated his assertion that the UK was prepared to commission legal action as a result of the fishing dispute. In a series of statements, the Conservative peer rallied against comments made by Castex.

Frost says, "to see it expressed in this way is clearly very troubling and very problematic in the current context when we are trying to solve many highly sensitive issues, including on the Northern Ireland Protocol.

"This is all the more so as the threats made by France this week to our fishing industry, to energy supplies, and to future co-operation... unfortunately form part of a pattern that has persisted for much of this year."

He also says, "as I set out yesterday to (European Commission vice-president) Maros Sefcovic, these threats, if implemented on November 2 would put the EU in breach of its obligations under our trade agreement. So, we are actively considering launching dispute settlement proceedings as set out in Article 738 of the TCA (trade and cooperation agreement."

It comes as fears grow the UK and France have less than 48 hours to reach an agreement over fishing rights before the French impose restrictions at their ports.

At the center of the dispute are the licenses for boats, which are issued only if the vessels can demonstrate a history of fishing in British waters.

Fishing rights, which has dogged Brexit talks for years, holds huge political importance to both sides, and the row, if not resolved, could trigger the beginning of the dispute measure in the Brexit trade deal. Any such move would likely involve a demand for compensation or more seriously; a suspension of obligations.

French authorities have been further concerned because 55 boats applying to fish in the waters off Jersey Island have been turned down by the island's government because of a lack of evidence that they have been fishing there for 10 consecutive days in any of the past three years.

With an election in April in which Macron is expected to seek a new term, some British officials believe he is seeking to look tough to appeal to voters back home. This is while some European diplomats see Johnson's government as likewise taking a firm stance to please Brexit supporters.

However, the situation appears more serious with British Foreign Secretary Liz Truss summoning the French ambassador to the UK to challenge the envoy over France's stance.

Saudi, UAE pull diplomats from Lebanon in row over Saudi-led Yemen war

Lebanese politicians are scrambling to resolve a diplomatic spat with Saudi Arabia and other Gulf nations, after the United Arab Emirates (UAE) followed Riyadh with measures against Beirut to protest against comments by a cabinet minister about the war in Yemen.

President Michel Aoun said on Saturday he was keen to establish the "best relations" with Saudi Arabia, the National News Agency reported, while cabinet ministers held a crisis meeting to address the escalating diplomatic row.

Aoun also said he wants to institutionalize relations with the Gulf monarchy through the signing of bilateral agreements, according to the NNA, so that "the positions and opinions issued by some do not affect them, and cause a crisis between the two countries, especially since this issue has been repeated more than once."

The crisis stemmed partly from a televised interview aired last week in which Lebanese Information Minister George Kordahi criticized the Saudi Arabia-led military intervention in Yemen, saying the Iran-aligned Houthis are "defending themselves ... against an external aggression."

Kordahi, who has the support of Iran-backed Hezbollah, said the interview had been recorded more than a month before he was appointed minister. He has so far declined to apologize or resign over the comments.

The comments have dealt the worst blow to Saudi-Lebanese relations since former Prime Minister Saad al-Hariri's detention in Riyadh in 2017.

Saudi Arabia on Friday recalled its envoy to Beirut and ordered Lebanon's envoy to Riyadh out, while also banning all imports coming from Lebanon. Bahrain and Kuwait followed suit, giving the top Lebanese diplomats 48 hours to exit.

'Solidarity with Saudi Arabia'

The UAE also announced on Saturday that it would pull its diplomats from Lebanon "in solidarity with the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia" and said it would prevent its citizens from travelling to Lebanon.

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia's foreign minister said on Saturday that the latest crisis has its origins in a Lebanese political setup that reinforces Hezbollah's dominance.

"I think the issue is far broader than the current situation," Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud told the Reuters news agency in a phone interview. "I think it's important that the government in Lebanon or the Lebanese establishment forges a path forward that frees Lebanon from the current political construct, which reinforces the dominance of Hezbollah."

He said this setup "is weakening state institutions within Lebanon, in a way that makes Lebanon continue to process in a direction against the interests of the people of Lebanon."

In Beirut, several government ministers held a nearly three-hour meeting on Saturday evening to discuss the issue.

Education Minister Abbas Halabi reportedly told the meeting that the government could not afford to resign over the diplomatic dispute.

"The country cannot be left without a government" because of other pressing matters, and will continue to work to resolve the rift, Halabi said.

The diplomatic row has spurred calls by some top politicians for Kordahi's resignation, while others opposed such a move.

Kordahi stepping down would have knock-on effects that could threaten Prime Minister Najib Mikati's coalition government, tasked with addressing a financial crisis the World Bank considers one of the worst in modern history.

His resignation could push ministers backed by Hezbollah and its Amal ally to follow suit at a time when the government is already paralyzed by a dispute over an inquiry into the August 2020 port explosion.

'Irresponsible'

On Saturday evening, Kordahi visited Cardinal Bechara Rai, the head of Lebanon's Maronite Catholic church, to consult him on the matter but gave no comments afterwards.

Lebanon's Foreign Minister Abdallah Bouhabib, who chaired Saturday's "crisis cell" meeting, told the Associated Press news agency that Mikati is in contact with foreign officials who have asked him not to think about resigning.

The minister added that he is in contact with the United States to help solve the crisis.

The US State Department said in a statement: "We urge that all diplomatic channels remain open between the parties to ensure meaningful dialogue on the pressing issues facing Lebanon."

Meanwhile, Qatar on Saturday dismissed Kordahi's comments as "irresponsible," while also calling on the Lebanese government to take urgent measures to rebuild bridges between "brotherly nations."

Oman also expressed regret over worsening relations between some Arab countries and Lebanon and called on all parties to exercise restraint and avoid escalation, according to a statement by its foreign ministry.

The Arab League previously expressed concern about the rapid deterioration of Lebanese-Gulf relations and appealed to Gulf countries "to reflect on the measures proposed to be taken ... in order to avoid further negative effects on the collapsing Lebanese economy."

(Source: Al Jazeera)

Another archaeological season begins at Hegmataneh

From page 1 ▶ According to the Greek historian Xenophon of Athens (c.430-c.355), Ecbatana became the summer residence of the Achaemenid kings. Their palace is described by the Greek historian Polybius of Megalopolis. He writes that the city was richer and more beautiful than all other cities in the world; although it had no wall, the palace, built on an artificial terrace, according to Livius, a website on ancient history written and maintained since 1996 by the Dutch historian Jona Lendering.

An inscription, unearthed in 2000, indicates that Achaemenid king Artaxerxes II Mnemon (404-358) built a terrace with columns in Ecbatana. Some twelve kilometers southwest of Hamedan is Gandj Nameh, where Darius I and his son Xerxes had inscriptions cut into the rock.

Polybius, a Greek historian of the Hellenistic period noted for his work The Histories, tells that the builders used cedar and cypress wood, which was covered with silver and gold. The roof tiles, columns, and ceilings were plated with silver and gold. He adds that the palace was stripped of its precious metals in the invasion of the Macedonian king Alexander the Great and that the rest was seized during the reigns of Antigonus and Seleucus. Later, Ecbatana was one of the capitals of the Seleucid and the Parthian Empires, sometimes called Epiphaneia.

Ecbatana is deemed to be remaining a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, for decades or even centuries to come as the site of the ancient city lies partly within the modern city of Hamedan, which has never been excavated before.

Known in classical times as Ecbatana, Hamedan was one of the ancient world's greatest cities. Pitifully little remains from antiquity, but significant parts of the city center are given over to excavations. Ecbatana was the capital of Media and subsequently a summer residence of the Achaemenian kings who ruled Persia from 553 to 330 BC.

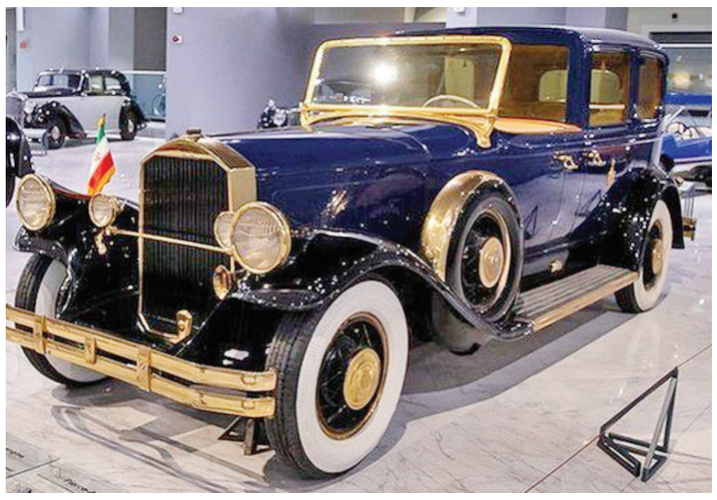
Hamadan has had many names: it was possibly the Bit Daiukki of the Assyrians, Hangmatana, or Agbatana, to the Medes, and Ecbatana to the Greeks. One of the Median capitals, under Cyrus II (the Great; died 529 BC) and later Achaemenian rulers, it was the site of a royal summer palace.

About 1220 Hamedan was destroyed by the Mongols. In 1386 it was sacked by Timur (Tamerlane), a Turkic conqueror, and the inhabitants were massacred. It was partly restored in the 17th century and subsequently changed hands often between Iranian ruling houses and the Ottomans.

Sitting on a high plain, Hamedan is graciously cool in August but snow prone and freezing from December to March. In summer the air is often hazy.

Ali Sadr cave, Ganjnameh inscriptions, Avicenna Mausoleum, Hegmataneh hill, Alaviyan dome, Jameh mosque, and St. Stephanos Gregorian Church are amongst Hamedan's attractions to name a few.

Gold-plated limousine, world's only Panther-Laser shine at Tehran museum



By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN – Following years of restoration and renovation, Iran Historical Car Museum in western Tehran has reopened its doors to the public, featuring a magnificent collection of rare classic, vintage, sports cars, carriages, and motorcycles.

Highlights of the museum include a gold-plated limousine, the world's only Panther-Laser car produced, a Silver Ghost Rolls-Royce once owned by the Qajar King, Ahmad Shah (r. 1909 – 1925), as well as a royal carriage belonging to Nasereddin Shah of Qajar.

In an interview with the Tehran Times on Sunday, the director of the museum Mohammad Fa'al, said: "The 1922 Rolls-Royce, a Morris Oxford Bullnose, and a Fiat Tipo 519 constitute the three oldest cars of the collection."

"The building of the museum underwent restorations as of 2005 as you can see the images of the restoration of the building and cars have been installed on the walls of the museum. Moreover, we refurbished a dozen other cars from our treasury and added them to the newly-opened museum."

"The museum has four main halls, the first of which bears the oldest vehicles of the collection, amongst them the Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost that was belonging to Ahmad Shah Qajar," he said.

Hall 2 is dedicated to American and Mercedes-Benz vehicles, and Hall 3 is devoted to the official and ceremonial cars, which include various models of Rolls-Royces and Mercedes. Hall 4 is also dedicated to sports and super sports cars.

In response to a question about the number of vehicles, the director said: "There are currently 102 cars in the treasury in addition to 55 cars that are currently on display."

"Of course, what you now see in here is not all our cars, and we have a treasury that acts as a support for the museum, and it has cars that are being renovated over time and replaced with these existing cars in order to preserve the charm of the museum."

The museum owns the largest collection of Mercedes-Benz 600 in the world. "We have the largest collection of Mercedes-Benz 600 in the world with 21 units. The Mercedes-Benz Museum itself has three units of the 600 model.... the Mercedes-Benz 600 itself is designed and built with different rooms and its function is only for ceremonies and this model has different rooms some having hardtop or custom-made sunroofs," the director of the museum explained.

He said that the museum owns all models of Mercedes-Benz 600, which is very unique. "Moreover, we have all models of Mercedes-Benz 600 that have been produced by the German company; four of which are on display here in the museum, and 17 are being kept inside the treasury."

Furthermore, Fa'al added 21 classic Rolls-Royces are being kept in the museum and its treasure trove. "Home to 21 [classic] Rolls-Royces, Iran Historical Car Museum is the second-largest treasure trove of those vehicles after the Rolls-Royce Museum."

Talking about the values of cars he explained, "all these cars are valuable and it is impossible to say which one is better. We can say which one is more beautiful and which has a more attractive design, but we cannot say which is more valuable."

"However, the classification of cars in terms of value depends on several factors: one is the age of the car, the other is its manufacturer brand and design technology. And there are decorative items used in cars. For instance, a car in which is gold plated and is decorated with jewelry is obviously more valuable than an ordinary one...."

Responding to a question concerning restoration, Fa'al said all the processes of rebuilding cars are fully documented and all phases are photographed and evidence is available.

The age of the classic cars

According to Brinatica, the decade 1925–35 was notable not only for the appearance of many new small automobiles but also for the building of many ultra-large ones. The years from 1925 to 1948 are cited by collectors of automobiles as the "classic years," a period that saw the rise of the luxurious fast motorcar to a peak it seems unlikely to reach again.

The first name in this field was Rolls-Royce Ltd., founded in 1906. Most Rolls-Royce chassis are designed for limousine and large sedan bodies, but the firm once made a comparatively light car (called the Twenty), and it has throughout its history produced fast models in addition to its regular line—e.g., after World War II, the Continental, built under the Bentley Motors Ltd. label.

Other motorcars of this type included the Hispano-Suiza of Spain and France; the Bugatti, Delage, Delahaye, Hotchkiss, Talbot (Darracq), and Voisin of France; the Duesenberg, Cadillac, Packard, and Pierce-Arrow of the United States; the Horch, Maybach, and Mercedes-Benz of Germany; the Belgian Minerva; and the Italian Isotta-Fraschini.

Native artists, chefs, craftspeople show off skills in Qeshm Island

TEHRAN – Over 50 artists, musicians, chefs, and craftspeople showed off their indigenous skills for a host of visitors and sightseers during a cultural night held in Qeshm Island on Friday.

People who were natives of Riku village put on show indigenous handicrafts and dishes; staged live performances; and held various workshops at a cultural center in Qeshm, IRNA quoted a local official as saying on Saturday.

The Persian Gulf Island recorded over 2.8 million visitors during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (started March 21), which shows a 20 percent increase in tourism flow compared to the same period year on year, IRNA reported.

The island is a heaven for eco-tourists as it embraces wide-ranging attractions such as the Hara marine forests and about 60 villages dotted mostly across its rocky coastlines. It also features geologically eye-catching canyons, hills, caves, and valleys, most of which are protected as part of the UNESCO-tagged Qeshm Island Geopark, itself a haven for nature-lovers.

Many travelers to Qeshm believe that the Stars Valley or Valley of Stars is a "MUST SEE". It is home to bizarre-shaped gorges, tall pillars, canyon-like paths, hollowed-out spaces as well as the smooth and round stones, which have been formed by the wind and rain eroding the soil, rocks, and stones. Locals believe that a star once fell on this area thereby creating the rocky shapes that make it seem as if from another planet.

Museum famed for its salt men gains former glory

TEHRAN –A restoration project has recently been completed on Zolfaqari Archaeological Museum, which is famed for showcasing some ancient salt men and their belongings, Zanjan's tourism chief has announced.

The project, which aimed at strengthening and equipping the Qajar-era (1789-1925) structure, was carried out by the Ruhr-Universität Bochum, and Zanjan's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department, Amir Arjmand said on Sunday.

The project primarily seeks to develop the historical structure and convert it into a museum where ancient salt men and their belongings can be kept, he explained.

A budget of 12 billion rials ($286,000 at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) was allocated to the project, the official added.

The project involved repairing the roof and flooring, installing electrical wiring, installing VRF ventilation, and painting the museum's doors and windows, he explained.

In 2006, the former historical mansion of Zolfaqariha was converted into a museum to house the ancient mummies, along with more than 2,000 registered items and relics.

The four salt men are the most unique items of the museum, which are preserved in special windows.

The Zolfaqariha Mansion was ceded to Zanjan Municipality in the post-revolution era, but it was later entrusted to Zanjan's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department.

Nestled in central Zanjan, the historical house belonged to Zolfaqar Khan Asaad al-Dowleh, the son of Hassan Qoli Khan.

He was one of the wealthiest personalities in the city in the Qajar era and the Zolfaqari household was one of the most well-known families in the city.

The house consisted of the interior and exterior sections and a garden but was later divided into two sections by Zolfaqari Street. The garden was turned into a park, and only the central part of the exterior section has remained.

The remained structure is a two-story building, with halls, bedrooms, and living rooms being influenced by Iranian and European styles of architecture.

In 1993, miners in the Douzlakh Salt Mine, near Hamzehli and Chehrabad villages in Zanjan Province, accidentally came across a mummified head, dated to 300 CE. The head was very well preserved, to the extent that his pierced ear was still holding the gold earring. The hair, beard, and mustaches were reddish, and his impressive leather boot still contained parts of his leg and foot, according to the Ancient History Encyclopedia.

However, in 2004, the miners discovered yet another "saltman," which was followed by further excavation unearthing remains of a human body along with a large number of artifacts made of wood, metal tools, clothing, and pottery.

In 2005, a systematic excavation began, three more mummies were excavated, and a sixth remained in situ due to lack of funds for its storage. The context of the remains suggested that a collapse in the mine had caused the death of the miners in question.

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

This particular "saltman" was originally dated based on the archaeological material found with him. Later, the mummy was carbon dated, which placed him in 500 CE (1750 BP, that is, "before present" or 1750 years ago), the Sasanian Empire's height. The second "Saltman" was carbon-dated to 1554 BP, which placed him in the same era as the first "saltman," the Sasanian era.

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

The individual "saltmen" has a few secrets of their own, for instance, the first "saltman" that was discovered had the blood type B+, and 3D imaging of his skull revealed fractures around his eye and other damage that occurred before death by a hard blow to the head. His clothing (the impressive leather boot) and his gold earring show a person of some rank; the reason for his presence in the mine remains a mystery.

Saltman No. 5 had tapeworm eggs from the Taenia sp. genus in his system. These were identified during the study of his remains. The find indicates the consumption of raw or undercooked meat, and this is the first case of this parasite in ancient Iran and the earliest evidence of ancient intestinal parasites in the area. The best preserved and probably the most harrowing of the bodies is "saltman" No. 4. A sixteen-year-old miner, caught in the moment of death, crushed by a cave-in.

Centuries-old caravanserais demarcated to draw legal boundaries

TEHRAN – Three Qajar-era (1789-1925) caravanserais in Tabas, eastern South Khorasan province, have recently been demarcated help their legal boundaries and properties, a local tourism official has said.

"New boundaries have been defined for Khan, Chehel Payeh, and Deh-e Mohammad caravanserais in a bid to curb illegal constructions within their boundaries," Parisa Jamshidi announced on Sunday.

The caravanserais, which are among the candidates for a collective inclusion in UNESCO'S cultural heritage list, has been recently restored, the official noted.

Over 70 billion rials ($1.7 million at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been invested in the restoration projects of the historical inns so far, she added.

Caravansary (also Caravanserai or Caravansaray) is a building that served as the inn of the Orient, providing accommodation for commercial, pilgrim, postal, and especially official travelers.

According to Encyclopedia Iranica, from the number of surviving caravansaries and their sizes, it is clear that in Safavid and Qajar times there was a state architectural department that was specifically concerned with the construction of caravansaries and stations on the overland routes. Furthermore, in the cities, several caravansaries were erected as lodging houses, depots, and commercial offices in the vicinity of the bazaars.

A typical caravansary consists of a square or rectangular plan centered around a courtyard with only one entrance and arrangements for defense if necessary. Whether fortified or not, it at least provided security against beasts of prey and attacks by brigands.

Iran's earliest caravanserais were built during the Achaemenid era (550 -330 BC). Centuries later, when Shah Abbas I assumed power from 1588 – to 1629, he ordered the construction of network caravanserais across the country.

Such roadside inns were originally built in various epochs along ancient caravan routes in the Muslim world to shelter people, their goods, and animals. The former Silk Roads may be the most famous example dotted by caravanserais.

Property deeds issued for Golestan international wetlands

TEHRAN – Deeds of property have been issued for two international wetlands of northern Golestan province to protect the wetlands and prevent land grabbing, Heydar Asyabi, chief of Golestan's justice department, has announced.

Alagol and Almagol international wetlands stretching to 2,000 hectares are located in Gonbad-e Kavous region of the province, IRIB reported.

To protect these wetlands and prevent land grabbing, property ownership deeds have been issued for the Forests and Rangelands and Watershed Management Organization, and the Department of Environment can transfer property ownership to itself by following the legal steps, he said.

Alagol, Almagol, and Ajigol cover an area of 3,000 hectares. Almagol and Ajigol are seasonally-filled freshwater lakes, fed by autumn and winter rains, which become desiccated in drought periods. Alagol is slightly saline and fringed by extensive reed and grass marshes.

Almagol is sparsely vegetated. There are several human settlements. The site supports Anatidae (ducks, geese, swans, etc.), flamingos, and nesting White-tailed Plover. Placed on the Montreux Record in 1993 due to high levels of disturbance from wildfowl hunters and the extraction of water for irrigation purposes, which has lowered lake levels considerably, especially during summer.

Wetlands' importance

Wetlands are ecosystems saturated with water, either seasonally or permanently. They store water and ensure its quality, providing resilience against drought. They play a central role in sustainable development by supplying all our freshwater. More than 40 percent of freshwater fish are said to live in wetlands.

> Iran is rich in terms of having a variety of wetlands due to its climatic diversity.

Wetlands play a major role in protecting the land against floods and the impacts of storms. They provide food and diverse habitats which support genetic, species, and ecosystem biodiversity. Wetlands play a key role in the life cycles of many species and in annual migration patterns.

Iran is rich in terms of having a variety of wetlands due to its climatic diversity. In Iran, 141 wetlands with ecological value with an area of over 3 million hectares have been identified, of which 25 wetlands are designated as wetlands of international importance (registered in the Ramsar Convention) covering more than 1.4 million hectares and four sites are biosphere reserves.

Of Iran's 25 Ramsar sites about one-third are under pressure or in critical condition.

Unfortunately, wetlands are being degraded and lost due to pollution, overexploitation, climate change, and human population growth.

350 knowledge-based products to address water challenges

From page 1 ▸ With the development of technologies, whether in agriculture or other water-consuming industries, it is possible to reduce waste and hope for optimal management of limited water resources.

In recent years, knowledge-based companies have not only prevented the departure of many of the country's talented figures but have also led to the return of large numbers of them, he concluded.

Knowledge-based and creative companies serve to preserve and protect the environment, Sourena Sattari, vice president for science and technology, has said earlier this week.

Health, environment, and food are three strategic and priority areas of national projects (knowledge-based and technological projects with commercialization abilities, implementation of which requires the extensive cooperation of various players).

> Over 7,000 knowledge-based companies are active in the country, manufacturing diverse products to meet the needs.

Technology development in Iran

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

Currently, over 7,000 knowledge-based companies are active in the country, manufacturing diverse products to meet the needs of the domestic market while saving large amounts of foreign currency.

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

Water resources shrinking

Iran's renewable water resources have decreased from 130 billion cubic meters to about 102 billion cubic meters in less than 30 years, showing a 22 percent decline, deputy minister of energy for water and wastewater, Qasem Taqizadeh said.

The country's water resources must be managed on the basis of a document on adaptation to water scarcity, which has been prepared in cooperation with all water-related sectors, including the Ministry of Agriculture, the Department of Environment, the Ministry of Industry, and the Meteorological Organization.

The document emphasized that 9 billion cubic meters of groundwater consumption and 3 billion cubic meters of surface water consumption should be reduced in five years, so that, it will be possible to prevent subsidence and aquifers depletion.

A recent report by Nature Scientific Journal on Iran's water crisis indicates that from 2002 to 2015, over 74 billion cubic meters have been extracted from aquifers, which is unprecedented and its revival takes thousands of years along with urgent action.

The statistic is unprecedented, as the total reservoirs of all dams in the country have a capacity of about 50 billion cubic meters; In other words, in the last 14 years, 22 billion cubic meters more than the capacity of all dams have been extracted from the country's underground sources.

Charity to rebuild 54 schools, 400 homes damaged by earthquake

TEHRAN – Barekat Charity Foundation will repair and reconstruct 54 schools and 400 housing units in earthquake-stricken areas of Andika city, southwestern Khuzestan province.

Two rather strong earthquakes happened within an interval of five days. According to Tasnim, the first one happened on the border between Khuzestan and Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari provinces on October 4. The second one happened on October 9.

The October 4 earthquake measured 5.7 on the Richter scale. It happened at 6:9 AM local time. The October 9 quake happened at 2:46 AM with a magnitude of 5. It shook the city and villages of Qala-e-Khajeh near the city of Andika, destroying some houses, president.ir reported.

"We will also support 150 job plans for those

whose businesses were damaged during the earthquake, which will provide direct and indirect employment for 450 people," Mohammad Torkamaneh, head of the Foundation stated.

He went on to note that 11,500 villages and 2.25 million households are covered by Barakat insurance activities and services throughout the country.

Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam was founded in 1989. In the Iranian calendar year, 1386 (March 2017-March 2018) Barekat Charity Foundation- the social arm of the organization- with the aim of promoting social justice was established.

Socio-economic empowerment of communities by encouraging entrepreneurship prioritizing breadwinner women, developing infrastructures such as water supply and power grids, building roads, constructing schools and increasing educational spaces, promoting health for all, granting non-repayable loans and insurance especially in less developed areas and regions most affected by the imposed war in 1980-88 and natural disasters are of the priorities of the charity foundation.

Over 764,000 passengers tested for coronavirus

TEHRAN – Some 764,305 passengers have so far been screened for coronavirus by thermal tests at the country's official borders since March 10, Mehdi Valipour, head of Relief and Rescue Organization affiliated to the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS), said.

During the aforesaid period, IRCS forces have conducted 95,432 PCR tests and 119,445 rapid tests, he said, IRNA reported on Sunday.

He went on to lament that some 213 individuals, who tested positive, have so far been temporarily quarantined, under a plan to rapidly identify suspected cases of coronavirus and prevent the spread of new strains.

A total of 471 members of the IRCS cooperate for carrying out the plan in 16 provinces across the country, Valipour concluded.

With the cooperation of ministries of health and transport, a plan is being implemented with the goal of rapidly identifying and testing incoming passengers and keeping them in quarantine facilities, if necessary.

Thirty border checkpoints have been selected, including 18 land borders, nine air borders, and three sea borders, all incoming passengers will be tested and referred to the quarantine facilities in case of necessity.

Around 8,000 individuals enter the country via borders on a daily basis.

On August 22, Iran announced that all travelers must have a negative PCR test certificate or a health card to enter the country during the Covid-19 pandemic, IRINN reported.

Due to the prevalence of delta variant, negative PCR test is also mandatory for vaccinated passengers, Mohammad Reza Seif, head of safety and quality assurance department of Imam Khomeini Airport Town Co, said.

All passengers entering Iran, even if they have been vaccinated and have a vaccination card, must have a negative test result, he stated.

Climate experts warn world leaders 1.5C is 'real science', not just talking point

The 1.5C temperature limit to be discussed by world leaders at critical meetings this weekend is a vital physical threshold for the planet's climate, and not an arbitrary political construct that can be haggled over, leading climate scientists have warned.

World leaders are meeting in Rome and Glasgow over the next four days to thrash out a common approach aimed at holding global temperature rises to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, the lower of two limits set out in the 2015 Paris climate agreement.

But some countries are unwilling to peg their emissions plans to the tougher goal, as it would require more urgent efforts. They prefer to consider long-term goals such as net zero by 2050, the Guardian reported.

Johan Rockström, the director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research and one of the world's foremost climate scientists, warned that the 1.5C target was not like other political negotiations, which can be haggled over or compromised on.

"A rise of 1.5C is not an arbitrary number, it is not a political number. It is a planetary boundary," he told the Guardian in an interview. "Every fraction of a degree more is dangerous."

Allowing temperatures to rise by more than 1.5C would vastly increase the risk of irreversible changes to the climate, he said. For instance, it would raise the risk of the Arctic losing its summer ice, with dire knock-on effects on the rest of the climate as the loss of reflective ice increases the amount of heat the water absorbs, in a feedback loop that could rapidly raise temperatures further.

The Greenland ice sheet, the melting of which would raise sea level rises, could also be tipped into a state of irreversible decline beyond 1.5C.

A rise of more than 1.5C would also threaten changes to the Gulf Stream, which could also become irreversible. It could result in catastrophe for biodiversity hotspots, damage agriculture across swathes of the globe, and could inundate small islands and low-lying coastal areas.

"This is real science – it is a real number. Now we can say that with a high degree of confidence," he said, as 1.5C indicated a physical limit to the warming the planet can safely absorb.

Rockström added: "[Staying within] 1.5C is achievable. It is absolutely what we should be going for."

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Iran breaks U.S. monopoly on aviation navigation charts

Iranian researchers have succeeded to produce aviation navigation charts, known as Inflight AIP (Aeronautical Information Publication), which was monopolized by the United States, IRNA news agency reported on Sunday.

Prepared by Iran's Army, the Inflight AIP was unveiled in Tehran with Air Force Commander Brigadier General Aziz Nasirzadeh and Vice President for Science and Technology Sourena Sattari in attendance.

Digital aeronautical charts, including instrument flight rules (IFR) and visual flight rules (VFR), is a high-quality knowledge-based product which was solely produced by Jeppesen Company and was not available for Iranian airlines due to U.S. sanctions.

ایران انحصار آمریکا در نقشه‌های هوانوردی را شکست

ایران با تولید نقشه‌های هوانوردی (INFLIGHT AIP) که پیش از این در انحصار آمریکا بوده به موفقیت چشمگیری در زمینه صنعت هوانوردی دست یافت.

به گزارش ایرنا، روز یکشنبه با حضور امیر سرتیپ خلبان عزیز نصیرزاده فرمانده نیروی هوایی ارتش و سورنا ستاری معاون علمی و فناوری ریاست جمهوری از نقشه‌های هوانوردی تولید داخل رونمایی شد.

چارت‌های هوایی دیجیتال شامل نقشه‌های پروازی IFR و VFR یک محصول دانش بنیان با فناوری بسیار بالا است که پیش از این انحصار آن در اختیار آمریکا و شرکت جپسن (Jeppesen) قرار داشت که به دلیل اعمال تحریم‌های ظالمانه شرکت‌های هواپیمایی ایرانی از دسترسی به این نقشه‌ها محروم شده بودند.

COVID-19 UPDATES ON OCTOBER 31

New cases	8,427
New deaths	177
Total cases	5,924,638
Total deaths	126,303
New hospitalized patients	1,108
Patients in critical condition	3,888
Total recovered patients	5,508,815
Diagnostic tests conducted	35,516,399
Doses of vaccine injected	87,186,623

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NOVEMBER 1, 2021

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

That knowledge which remains only on your tongue is very superficial. The intrinsic value of knowledge is that you act upon it.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:11:48 Evening: 17:29 Dawn: 5:01 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:26 (tomorrow)

Aquatic performance shares sad story of migrants drowning in Mediterranean

TEHRAN – An Iranian Kurdish troupe has performed a play in Zrebar Lake in Marivan, depicting the sufferings of the migrants drowning in the Mediterranean on their way to Europe in the hope of a better life.

"Suffering of the Water" was performed on Saturday during the 15th Marivan International Theater Festival, which is currently underway in Marivan, a town located in Kordestan Province, the Persian service of IRNA reported on Sunday.

A large number of people flocked to the beach on a gorgeous sunny day to see a different kind of performance, which was being staged for the first time at the festival or maybe in Iran.

Farzad Hassanmirzai, the director play, said that his troupe realized the potential of Zrebar Lake, also known as Zarivar Lake, to dramatically illustrate the issue of migrants from West Asia who have lost their lives in the Mediterranean in the hope of finding a better life in Europe.

A troupe from Baneh performs the play "Suffering of the Water" on migrants drowning in the Mediterranean in Zrebar Lake in Marivan on October 30, 2021. (IRNA)

Due to the limitations facing this kind of play, Hassanmirzai said that only one performance was arranged by the organizers of the festival, which will be running until Monday.

His cast of 15 actors had only one previous rehearsal at Baneh Dam, located near Baneh, the town where the troupe hails from. The actors have to swim in the lake for half an hour to allow their bodies to adapt to the water temperature.

"Our works are mostly performed on stage, but our desire to stage a different type of performance attracted us to the festival," Hassanmirzai said.

He praised the people of Marivan for their enthusiasm for street theater and said, "People of Marivan have a better understanding of theater."

Every year, hundreds of migrants fleeing from wars and political pressures in West Asia are drowned in failed attempts to sail to Europe.

The most heartrending one is the story of 3-year-old Aylan Kurdi, whose remains were found lying face-down in the surf on a beach near the Turkish resort town of Bodrum in 2015.

Aylan's family, including his 5-year-old brother who died on the same boat, was from the north Syrian town of Kobani, which was the scene of heavy fighting between ISIS extremists and Kurdish regional forces at that time.

History of music in Iranian lands: Pre-Islamic Iran

South side of the stone sarcophagus of Shi Jun, Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, China, 580 C.E. (Institute of Archeology of Xi'an)

Part 8

Sogdians were the most active traders on the Silk Road, and their language became its lingua franca. Sogdian merchants settled in China, maintained Sogdian habits, and decorated their sarcophagi and funerary beds with scenes of mythology and daily life, including music making.

These monuments have become an important source on their music, richer than anything in the home country. The funerary monuments in China are either closed stone sarcophagi or open stone beds.

Both types display scenes related to the interred person. Hunting scenes, banquets, Zoroastrian imagery, such as fire altars, and music making were common subjects.

Epitaphs give names and dates. The names are often Sogdian, the title sabao (Chin. caravan leader) is common, and the dates refer to the last quarter of the sixth century.

The music scenes depict instruments typical of Sogdia. Lutes, angular harps, flutes, and hourglass drums are the core of Sogdian instruments, and they were remembered in China.

So was the vigorous Sogdian dance with bent legs. But the arched harp and the lyre were never shown on Sogdian monuments in China. The preference for small groups was retained by Sogdians in China.

So far there are four properly excavated monuments, and most show orchestras. Clearly, émigré Sogdians loved music. An example is the tomb of Shi Jun and his wife.

The tomb is entered through a gate decorated with seven musical instruments: two lutes, a panpipe, a conch trumpet, a vertical angular harp, a flute, and a pipe.

The tomb contains a house-shaped stone sarcophagus. Its entrance door occupies the center of the wide southern side, and the typical Zoroastrian fire altars attended by priestly bird-men are placed on either side.

A row above the door shows kneeling musicians, four on each side. They are playing, moving from left to right, panpipes, a flute, a lute, a vertical angular harp, a lute, a waisted drum, an undetermined object, and a pipe—again seven instruments. Since attendants and musicians face the door, they probably act in concert and their instruments form one single ensemble. Since the septet plays near fire altars, we may consider their music Zoroastrian.

The short eastern side of the sarcophagus has three scenes, two of which are joined by an arched bridge. This is the Chinwad Puhl, over which righteous souls pass into the Zoroastrian paradise, the earlier mentioned House of Song.

On it winged musicians who swirl in a maelstrom of other winged creatures—similar to apsarases in Indian and Buddhist art—play several instruments: A vertical angular harp, a flute, a lute, panpipe, and possibly small cymbals.

This ensemble spreads out across the scene, and several horses gallop right through it. Evidently, the House of Song was thought to contain instrumental music. But no mouths are open, and so there would have been little song.

Master Shi's sarcophagus gives the first evidence of Zoroastrians imagined instruments in paradise. Beside the two orchestras, Shi's sarcophagus has four other orchestras. On the average, there are 5.3 "instruments per orchestra" (or "size of the orchestra").

(4) Chinese inventories of Sogdian orchestras

Chinese dynastic histories provide another view of Sogdian émigré orchestras. They give the names of instruments and the size of foreign orchestras present in the Chinese capital during the Sui (581–618) and Tang (618–907) dynasties.

Western translations, given by Courant and Liu, simplify many idiosyncratic names, especially those of percussion instruments. But the original names are conveniently supplied by Yin.

Considering the diversity and precision in the Chinese names, we may assume the accounts to be factual. Here, however, I will only count sizes.

According to the histories, most of the orchestras were large, with more than 20 instruments. In contrast, ensembles from Sogdia (i.e., Samarqand and Bukhara) are said to have comprised seven or eight instruments, less than half, so that they had been the smallest.

They had two types of drums, called straight and harmonizing; both are probably waisted drums of different size, since two sizes are in fact shown on funerary monuments.

The other instruments are a four-stringed and a five-stringed lute, a harp, two flutes, and a pair of cymbals, and all are often shown on Sogdian monuments.

The relatively small number of instruments agrees with the low number depicted. In these histories, Sogdian ensembles are the only orchestras not dominated by percussion.

In this respect, the texts also agree with the depictions on funerary monuments and on images from Sogdia and Iran. The only exception is a large orchestra playing at Taq-e Bostan, but the situation is special because Chinese and Iranian instruments appear at an unusually large royal celebration.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica

Concluded

"Ballad of a White Cow" wins Pilar Miró prize at Valladolid film festival

TEHRAN – Pilar Miró' Prize for the best new director has been awarded to Behtash Sanaeiha and Maryam Moqaddam for their joint movie "Ballad of a White Cow" at the SEMINCI – Valladolid International Film Festival in Spain.

The Iranian-French co-production is about Mina, a young woman who lives alone with her deaf child while her husband had been executed for a murder charge a year ago. She tries to get her life together, take good care of her child and make both ends meet. However, her life gets more sorrowful when she finds out that her husband was innocent.

Co-written by Sanaeiha, Moqaddam and Mehrdad Kouroshnia, it won third place in the 2021 Berlinale Competition Audience Award.

The SEMINCI–Valladolid festival announced the winners on Saturday by honoring "Last Film Show", a co-production between India and France by Pan Nalin, as best film with the Golden Spike.

The drama tells the story of Samay, whose life turns upside down after he passionately falls in love with films after watching a movie at Galaxy Cinema. But Samay's father discovers his nine-year-old son's "immoral" obsession; he beats him up, and warns him to stay away from the "filthy" world of films.

As the runner-up, the Spanish drama "The Odd-Job Men" directed by Neus Ballus won the Silver Spike.

Based on real situations and characters, the film tells the day-to-day life of Moha, Valero and Pep, workers in a small plumbing and electrical business on the outskirts of Barcelona. For a week, Moha, the youngest, will have to prove that he is ready to replace Pep, who is about to retire. However, Valero considers that Moha "is not the right profile" and doubts that clients will welcome a Moroccan worker in their homes.

Fred Baillif from Switzerland was awarded the Ribera de Duero Best Director Award for his movie "The Fam".

Yuriy Borisov from Russia was crowned best actor for his role in "Compartment № 6" directed by Juho Kuosmanen, while Yllka Gashi, the Albanian, Kosovo-born star of "Hive", was honored as best actress.

"The Card Counter", written and directed by Paul Schrader, won the award for best screenplay.

Maryam Moqaddam acts in a scene from "Ballad of a White Cow".

Redemption is the long game in the film. Told with Schrader's trademark cinematic intensity, the revenge thriller tells the story of an ex-military interrogator turned gambler haunted by the ghosts of his past decisions.

Iranian director Farnush Samadi was a member of the Meeting Point jury, which judged first and second fiction films. The jury also included Spanish director José Luis Montesinos and Argentinian actress Romina Paula.

DOK Leipzig honors "The Fourth Wall", "Broken Flower"

TEHRAN – Iranian movies "The Fourth Wall" and "Broken Flower" have won awards at DOK Leipzig, Germany's major international festival for documentary and animated films.

"The Fourth Wall" directed by Mahbubeh Kalai received the Mephisto 97.6 Award for the best animated film

The film was screened in the international short film competition judged by the jury composed of Tim Puls, Moritz Schlenstedt and Julia Wegner, also from Germany.

A stuttering boy transforms an Iranian kitchen into a fantastic cosmos. The father's body becomes a refrigerator, the mother's belly a washing machine whose spin cycle gives birth to a screaming baby. Even birds on tiles and detergents have a surprising life of their own.

This exuberant animation, dotted with real-life elements – fried eggs, broken plates, pieces of cheese – develops a subtle wit, ironizing ingrained family patterns.

"The Fourth Wall" directed by Mahbubeh Kalai.

The movie has been screened in many international festivals and has won several honors, including the Zlatko Grgic Award at the 31st Animafest Zagreb in Croatia in June.

Directed by Sarvnaz Alambeigi, "Broken Flower" won the Current Time TV Award at the DOK Co-Pro Market.

With the project, Alambeigi will portray a young woman from Afghanistan who, against the resistance of her patriarchal father, wants to become a Muay Thai athlete.

DOK Leipzig announced the winners on Saturday by awarding the Chinese documentary "Father" by Wei Deng the Golden Dove in the international competition long documentary and animated film.

The director's first feature film is a portrait about the generations of his father and grandfather that depicts tradition and change in Chinese society.

The Silver Dove for the best long documentary or animated film by an emerging director in the international competition went to Karol Palka for his debut film "Bucolic".

This Polish documentary observes a mother and her daughter in their secluded life in the countryside.

In the international competition short documentary and animated film, "Abyssal" by Alejandro Alonso about a ship scrapyard in western Cuba was awarded the Golden Dove for best short documentary.

The Golden Dove for best short animated film went to "Impossible Figures and Other Stories I" by Marta Pajek from Poland. The animation is about a complex exploration of transience, life and death.

"The Power of Six" bestowed upon Iranian bookstores

Front cover of the Persian translation of Pittacus Lore's book "The Power of Six".

TEHRAN – A Persian translation of Pittacus Lore's young adult science fiction novel "The Power of Six" has come to the Iranian bookstores.

The second book in the young adult science fiction series "The Lorien Legacies" has been translated by Payman Esmaeilian.

Ofoq is the publisher of the book, which is the sequel to "I Am Number Four", and was released August 23, 2011 by HarperCollins Publishers.

The book is told by various members of the Garde: Number Four/John, who is on the run with Sam, Six, and Bernie Kosar; and Number Seven/Marina, who is hiding at a convent in Spain.

Marina is Number Seven and her Cepan has chosen to stay in Santa Teresa, where they have lived in the town orphanage for over 7 years. Adelina, Marina's Cepan, has stopped believing that it is possible for them to defeat the Mogadorians and so refuses to help Marina learn about her developing "Legacies," advising her instead to concentrate on "not dying."

Reception for "The Power of Six" has been mixed to positive, with the School Library Journal writing that although the book has "a lack of character development, pedestrian dialogue, and uneven continuity... the nonstop action and violence-packed fight sequences will keep fans of the first novel happy."

Earlier this summer, Ofoq released a Persian rendition of "I Am Number Four" from the Lorien Legacies series. The book was also translated by Peyman Esmaeilian.