

A New Sheriff in Town

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Interview

There’s no clear solution for Lebanon crises: academic

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN – A professor at the Lebanese International University says that there is no obvious solution for Lebanon's woes unless the political and economic groups abandon their “exclusive privileges”.

“There are no clear solutions for Lebanon, because the political system per se is the generator of crises, and because the political, economic and financial groups supported by religious authorities, are reluctant to give up their exclusive privileges,” Tariq About tells the Tehran Times.

Lebanon is enduring serious economic hardship created by a financial meltdown. The World Bank has called it one of the worst financial crises in centuries. It really feels like the country is melting down.

Weekly grocery bills can equal months of a typical family’s income. Banks are refusing to let people withdraw money. ► Page 5

Mehdi Kamrani called up to Iran basketball team

TEHRAN – Mehdi Kamrani has been invited to Iran National Basketball Team after six years.

Kamrani, 39, represented Iran at the 2015 FIBA Asia Championship for the last time.

Iran head coach Mostafa Hashemi has announced his 18-man squad for the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2023 Asian Qualifiers.

Iranian iconic players Hamed Haddadi and Samad Nikkhah Bahrami have been left out of the team. Iran will host Bahrain in Tehran in Group D of the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2023 Asian Qualifiers on Nov. 26 and play the team three days later in Isa Town.

Iran Squad:

Amirhossein Azari, Matin Aghajanpour, Rouzbeh Arghavan, Mohammad Jamshidi, Mohammad Hassanzadeh, Hamed Hosseinzadeh, Saeid Davarpanah, Navid Rezaeifar, Mohammadmehdi Rahimi, Asghar Kardoust, Arsalan Kazemi, Mehdi Kamrani, Sajad Mashayekhi, Salar Monji, Meysam Mirzaei, Amirhossein Yazarloo, Behnam Yakhchali, Mohammad Yousefvand

Russia to insist on restoring JCPOA in full: Lavrov

TEHRAN – Russia will insist on the resumption of full implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on the Iranian nuclear program and on lifting sanctions off Iran, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Friday.

“On November 29, it is planned to resume talks of the signatories to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on settling the situation around the Iranian nuclear program. We will insist on implementing the agreements reached under this document in 2015, on their full implementation,” TASS quoted Lavrov as saying.

Iran, Belarus ink MOU on agricultural co-op

TEHRAN – Iran and Belarus have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for expanding cooperation in the agricultural sector, Mehr News Agency reported on Saturday.

Based on the MOU which was signed on the sidelines of the Iranian Deputy Agriculture Minister Abbas Askarzadeh’s three-day visit to Minsk, trade and commercial relations between the two countries in the fields of agricultural products, horticulture, fisheries, and aquaculture will be expanded.

The agricultural delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran headed by Askarzadeh traveled to Minsk, the capital of Belarus, to hold the second working group of the Iran-Belarus Agricultural Cooperation.

On the last day of his visit to the European country, Askarzadeh met with Belarusian Agriculture and Food Minister Ivan Krupko and discussed ways to further expand cooperation between the two countries in the field of agriculture.

During the meeting, Askarzadeh officially invited Krupko to visit Iran later this year.

The Belarusian minister also referred to

the warm and friendly relations between the two countries and the great potentials of Belarus and Iran for cooperation in the field of agriculture and animal husbandry and called for the implementation of the agreements between the two countries and the removal of existing obstacles to the further expansion of mutual cooperation.

Enumerating Belarus’ capabilities in the agricultural sector as well as dairy and food industries, Krupko said: “The Belarusian government is ready to meet some of the agricultural needs of the Iranian market, as well as the implementation of joint projects in the field of agriculture.”

Pointing to the results of the second joint Iranian-Belarusian agricultural working group, Askarzadeh said: “During a visit to the Belarusian Food Industry Exhibition and a number of dairy factories, agricultural machinery units, and livestock farms, I came to the conclusion that there are unique capacities for developing cooperation and implementing joint projects.” ► Page 4

Iran’s deputy FM says talks with British officials is a step forward

TEHRAN — The Iranian deputy foreign minister for political affairs has described his meetings with British Foreign Office officials as “serious”, “comprehensive” and “positive”, and noted that his talks were a step forward in bringing the views of Iranian and British political officials closer together.

Ali Bagheri Kani, who is Iran’s new chief negotiator with the West to lift sanctions on Iran, visited London after concluding his diplomatic consultations in Paris and Berlin. He met on Thursday with his British counterpart and several other Foreign Office officials.

Britain, France and Germany, known as European trio or E3, are party to the 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

In an exclusive interview with IRNA correspondent in London late on Thursday, Bagheri Kani said he met with several British Foreign Office officials on regional, bilateral relations and political affairs.

He said he held about “five hours of continuous talks” with his British interlocutors. ► Page 2

to find ways to restore the nuclear deal in its original form. The sides discuss prospects for the United States’ possible return to the deal, steps needed to ensure full compliance with the deal’s terms by Iran, and issues of lifting the anti-Iranian sanctions.

The JCPOA, also known as the Iran nuclear deal, was signed between Iran, the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (Russia, the United Kingdom, China, the United States and France) and Germany in 2015. Under the deal, Iran undertook to curb its nuclear ► Page 2

Opinion

Tough decisions needed to revive Zayandehrud

By M.A. Saki

President Ebrahim Raisi has tasked Presidential Center for Strategic Studies director Mohammad Sadeq Khayyatian to start scientific studies on reviving Zayandehrud River, ISNA reported on Saturday.

Raisi has also ordered a study of land subsidence in different parts of the country. The order by the president followed his meeting with representatives of Isfahan, Qom, and Semnan in the parliament.

Khayyatian has also written on his Instagram page that this is the “first special mission” given to him by the president and that he plans to pursue the issue “scientifically and operationally with the support of all experts, university professors, and scientific centers.”

The order by the president is heartening if it is pursued seriously and unstoppably because such a task entails some steps which naturally will not be welcomed by a considerable number of Isfahani farmers who are growing water-intensive crops, such as onion and rice, especially in the Lenjan region. ► Page 2

Report

British government embroiled in corruption scandals

TEHRAN – In recent days, the British Premier Boris Johnson and his ruling Conservative Party have been caught up in a number of corruption scandals ranging from controversial lobbying to second jobs outside parliament and the Prime Minister’s own financial affairs all being in the spotlight.

This current round of corruption scandals started after the government’s efforts to save the now former Member of Parliament Owen Paterson from a 30-day suspension from the House of Commons.

Parliament’s own sleaze watchdog found Paterson to have breached lobbying rules when he was earning £110,000 a year in private sector work for two companies.

Encouraged by Boris Johnson, the government’s members of parliament tried to block what should have been a straightforward immediate suspension for Paterson. Instead, enjoying the power of a parliamentary majority, Tory MPs voted to change parliaments’ own standards rules with their own Conservative-majority committee. ► Page 5



180-million-year-old fossil donated to Iran museum

TEHRAN – A fossilized piece of an extinct marine animal, estimated to date more than 180 million years, has recently been donated to a major museum in northeastern Iran.

An Iranian environmentalist donated the object to the Astan Quds Razavi Museum, a vast cultural heritage exhibition located in the holy shrine complex of Imam Reza (AS) in Mashhad, Mehr reported. The object is a fossilized ammonoid that is discovered in Kalat county near the Hezar-Masjed mountain range in Khorasan-Razavi province, according to a local official in charge of museums and cultural heritage. ► Page 6

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Op-ed

Afghanistan: From American strategic defeat to regional integration platform

By Stefano Vernole

TEHRAN – Afghanistan is a strategic defeat for the United States. The U.S.A. has lost credibility towards its international allies, it has failed to prevent the peaceful rise of China nor the renewed foreign leadership of Russia, it is no longer the economic engine of the world and from a geopolitical point of view it risks failing theirs “anaconda strategy”, that is the attempt to suffocate the Eurasian blockade preventing it from reaching the oceans.

In fact, if the Heartland were to succeed in joining the Rimland, the maritime superiority of the United States and more generally of the thalassocratic powers would be over. At that point, the U.S. would only have to shift all its military weight to the Indo-Pacific region and unleash a war directly against China, perhaps under the pretext of Taiwan and claims on the South China Sea. Of course, much will depend on the ability of the Eurasian powers to stabilize Afghanistan, to provide for the risks of Daesh terrorism and other Salafist groups closer to Washington’s interests than to Kabul’s.

The role of other regional and international players has been crucial in Afganistan since the U.S. withdrawal. On August 24, Russia hinted that it does not want to see U.S. troops deployed in Central Asia, by Foreign Minister Serghei Lavrov: ► Page 5

Iran's deputy FM says talks with British officials are a step forward



From page 1 ► “The scope of these discussions began with bilateral relations and extended to regional discussions as well as issues related to the forthcoming negotiations (in Vienna to lift sanction on Iran),” he explained.

The top diplomat went on to say that in all these discussions, both sides expressed their views.

Given that there had not been such comprehensive talks between the Foreign Ministry officials of the two countries for some time, these talks were in fact a step forward to bring the views of Iranian and British political officials closer together, the deputy foreign minister for political affairs stated.

Asked if there had been any progress in

the negotiations with the British side over London's 400m pounds debt to Iran, the high-ranking diplomat underscored: “In fact, it has been a while since this issue was discussed for the payment of the British government debt to the Islamic Republic of Iran between the two sides. This issue was also raised in Tehran in several meetings that I attended, and this issue was raised in London as well.”

The deputy FM stated that the debt issue, and the payment and the amount of debt agreed between the two parties.

The only point that has caused this debt not to be paid is the method of payment in which the parties are consulting, he remarked.

The diplomat said that the British side has offered methods on how to pay the debt. “We have not yet reached a final conclusion in this regard and we are going to continue the discussion when I return to Tehran, and I hope in the near future to reach the final conclusion.”

Regarding some measures by the British government, including a travel advice by the Foreign Office, which has called on British citizens to travel to Iran only in emergency cases, he said, “In meetings a range of issues were discussed, but I think we are far from the level at which we can bring relations to a normal level.”

Russia to insist on restoring JCPOA in full: Lavrov

From page 1 ► activities and place them under total control of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in exchange of termination of economic and financial sanctions imposed previously by the United Nations Security Council, the European Union and the United States over its nuclear program.

The future of the deal was called in question after the United States' unilateral pullout in May 2018 and Washington's unilateral oil export sanctions against Teheran. Iran argued that all other participants, Europeans in the first place, were ignoring some of their own obligations in the economic sphere, thus making the deal in its current shape senseless. This said, it began to gradually scale down its commitments under the deal.

Iran's move was in accordance to paragraph 36 of the JCPOA which has “provided a mechanism to resolve disputes and allows one side, under certain circumstances, to stop complying with the deal if the other side is out of compliance.”

Meanwhile, incumbent U.S. President Joe Biden has repeatedly signaled his readiness



to return the U.S. to the deal.

Iran has been insisting that it is seeking result-oriented talks. So far, Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has held phone talks with foreign ministers of Britain, Germany and France on lifting sanctions against Iran in accordance with the JCPOA.

Last week Iran's new nuclear negotiator, Ali Bagheri Kani, also started a diplomatic tour to the three European countries party to the JCPOA and Spain. On Friday, Bagheri Kani held talks in Madrid with Enrique Mora, the European Union political director who acts as coordinator of the talks between Iran and the remaining parties to the nuclear agreement and the United States.

Tough decisions needed to revive Zayandehrud

From page 1 ► The first vital step to revitalize Zayandehrud, which passes through the tourist city of Isfahan, is to ban the cultivation of water-intensive crops by farmers living in the upriver.

Farmers in upstream areas who excessively pump waters from Zayandehrud should be warned that their irrigation system has inflicted damages on other farmers in the downriver to the extent that they cannot even irrigate their wheat farms. Additionally, they have deprived the city of Isfahan of the flowing river for years.

Farmers should be reminded that making high profits from rice cultivation or other water-intensive crops is not sustainable. They should be informed that if they go on with this kind of farming, in the not-too-distant future they will have no water to irrigate crops such as wheat, barley, and beans cultivated for centuries.

The cultivation of water-intensive crops is not the only culprit for the current situation. Part of the problem is due to climate-induced droughts. However, protecting the country, not just Isfahan, Yazd, and Semnan provinces from the environmental harms, necessitates tough

decisions.

Farmers should be encouraged or “even forced” to grow alternative crops. But in order to keep jobs in the agricultural sector and ensure food security, the government should grant long-term and interest-free loans to farmers to develop greenhouses, which reduce water consumption considerably.

It should be borne in mind that even countries which are in a much better situation in terms of rainfall and snowfall are building greenhouses to conserve water.

Farmers in Isfahan are complaining that a considerable portion of Zayandehrud water is used by industrial complexes. This is true. Scientific experts should find a way to either recycle the water used for industrial purposes or if necessary, relocate these industries.

The Presidential Center for Strategic Studies, which has been given the mission to study restoration of Zayandehrud and land subsidence, should not just restrict itself to particular provinces because the arid and semi-arid Iranian plateau may suffer greatly if water consumption is not regulated, especially as climate change has been taking tolls on Iran for more than three decades.

Iran: Good agreement within reach if sanctions removed

TEHRAN — In an Instagram post on Friday, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian outlined the Iranian approach towards the Vienna negotiations in November's end.

He emphasized that Iran will be entering the talks with a “pragmatic and result-oriented” approach and it is determined to reach a good deal.

According to the top diplomat, this entails “effective and verifiable” removal of sanctions and return of all sides to full compliance with their commitments.

In his post, Amir Abdollahian wrote, “After the date for holding the Vienna talks was finally set, it was necessary to once again clarify the views of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the other sides. For this reason, over the past week, during the detailed and separate phone calls with the foreign ministers of the five signatories to the nuclear deal, JCPOA (China, Russia, Britain, Germany and France), I placed emphasis on several points including: The Islamic Republic of Iran is entering the talks with a pragmatic and result-oriented approach and it is determined to reach a good deal, but this necessitates effective and verifiable removal of sanctions and return of all sides to full compliance with their commitments.”

The chief diplomat also pointed out that the U.S. actions and violations including its imposition of fresh bans on Iran made it “inalienably necessary” that Washington give tangible guarantees.

“In light of this, my deputy Dr. Ali Bagheri has held candid, transparent and useful talks in European capitals,” he added.

Amir Abdollahian noted that Iran



does not intend to remain stuck in the stalemate of previous talks, as it already has access to the negotiation records.

“I believe if the other sides come to Vienna with a serious and positive view, it is possible to reach a good deal in a short time,” he emphasized.

Amir Abdollahian added that as he has reiterated time and again, the government of Iran will “diligently” pursue the policy of developing balanced ties with other countries based on “mutual respect and common interests” and it is resolved to avoid linking the expansion of bilateral and multilateral economic cooperation to the JCPOA.

Amir Abdollahian held phone talks with all his counterparts on the P4+1 countries last week. He spoke with the foreign ministers of France, Germany, the UK, China, and Russia. In all these conversations, the JCPOA

was the main focus.

In his conversation with the French foreign minister, Amir Abdollahian recalled the United States' responsibility for the current situation of the JCPOA as well as the role that the three European countries' silence has played in Washington's excessive demands.

“Iran wants a good agreement, but it has requirements, including the other sides fully complying with their commitments and the effective lifting of sanctions,” said the top Iranian diplomat.

He referred to the United States' recent sanctions against Iran, saying the move is yet another reason why Iran keeps distrusting the U.S.

In his phone conversation with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi, Amir Abdollahian voiced hope the U.S. and the European signatories to the nuclear deal will enter the Vienna talks realistically so that an

agreement is reached swiftly. He added that the U.S. cannot push ahead with its failed maximum pressure policy and economic terrorism and at the same time claim it wants talks and an agreement.

Iran's top negotiator said on November 10 that there will be no nuclear negotiations at the Vienna talks later this month and the talks would only focus on the implications of the U.S. withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and the major world powers.

Ali Bagheri Kani, Iranian deputy foreign minister for political affairs, made the remarks in an interview with the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) news agency on Wednesday while on a tour of European countries. Bagheri Kani visited France on November 9 on the first leg of his tour, which included visits to other European signatories to the nuclear deal.

He also stated that he had “detailed”, “frank”, “serious”, “constructive” and “forward-looking” talks with the political director general of the French Foreign Ministry, according to Fars News.

Regarding the remarks made by French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian that the talks should pick up where they left on June 20, the deputy foreign minister said, “We do not have nuclear talks, because the nuclear issue was fully agreed in 2015 in the form of an agreement reached between Iran and the P5+1.”

The Iranian diplomat noted, “The main issue we are facing now is the consequences of the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA, which are limited to the illegal sanctions imposed on the Islamic Republic of Iran.”

MP says new round of talks should ensure national interests

TEHRAN - The deputy chairman of the parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee has stressed that the Vienna talks which will start in late November with the purpose of lifting sanction on Iran should ensure the country's interests.

“If the negotiations serve our interests, we will pursue them seriously, and if the interests of the Iranian people are not served, there is no reason to pursue attritional negotiations,” Abbas Moqtadaei said, Fars reported on Saturday.

Moqtadaei, the representative of the Isfahan constituency in the Parliament, said, “Iran's negotiations with the JCPOA parties are simple on the one hand and complex on the other, and this simplicity and complexity must be considered at the same time.”

The MP added: “The simplicity of the negotiations is due to the fact that the Islamic Republic of Iran fully fulfilled its obligations based on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), but the Western parties, especially the Americans, did not fulfill the obligations they had accepted and harmed Iran's interests by not adhering to their commitments.”

The parliamentarian pointed out: “The Islamic Republic of Iran has announced that it is pursuing negotiations in which the interests of the Iranian people are ensured. The law passed by the Majlis (Parliament) called ‘Strategic Action to Lift Sanctions and Protect the Interests of the Iranian People’ also emphasizes the same point, and now we must answer the question of whether to accept breaking the obligations or not?”

On the recent measures by the IRGC in the face of the U.S. piracy in the Sea of Oman, the MP said: “The recent actions of the Islamic Republic of Iran in defending the interests of the Iranian people at sea, air and land show that we can

held on Tuesday.”

The MP also said President Ebrahim Raisi would probably not be present in the confidence vote session and instead First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber would be present.

“According to the internal regulations of the Majlis

(Parliament), the Majlis committees, especially the Education and Research Committee, as a specialized committee, have one week to review the records and career of the proposed minister of education and announce their view,” the parliamentarian stated.

In a letter November 8, Ayatollah Raisi named Massoud Fayyazi as the

blocked money should be exchanged in different countries, because we currently have tens of billions of dollars of blocked money in different countries that cannot be accessed due to anti-Iran sanctions. Therefore, in the first step, these assets must be returned to the Iranian nation.”

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said on Thursday that the United States needs to revise its policy of draconian sanctions against Iran so as to help revitalize the 2015 nuclear agreement.

“The utmost must be done so that the negotiations ensure the restoration of what's known as the ‘factory settings’ of the JCPOA,” Ryabkov said, according to TASS.

“Political will is now required. From the U.S. side, it is important to prove and demonstrate in practice that the sanctions policy, which has been carried out over the recent years is being reviewed and the Iranian side is given the opportunity to reap those economic advantages that are included in the package of agreements that lies at the heart of the JCPOA,” the Russian diplomat said.

On Monday, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh once again spelled out what the U.S. must do to restore the deal.

The U.S. must agree to return from the path it took as the party to blame for the current situation.

Khatibzadeh explained that the U.S. then needs to remove all the cruel and illegal sanctions it imposed on Iran after its unilateral withdrawal from the nuclear deal “in one go and in an effective way.”

Then the U.S. has to guarantee that “no administration in the United States would belittle the world and international law” again by repeating the withdrawal from the JCPOA, he added.



proposed education minister to the parliament.

A new sheriff in town

TEHRAN – The new government of Iran is preparing for a new round of talks in Vienna later this month aimed at removing U.S. sanctions on Iran.

A flurry of diplomatic efforts on the part of Iran shows that the upcoming talks are going to be dealt with from a different perspective.

Iran's chief negotiator, Ali Bagheri Kani, has toured a number of European countries in a bid to set the stage for what Iranian officials called "result-oriented" talks whose success would only be measured with their effectiveness in removing the U.S. sanctions on Iran.

The deputy foreign minister of Iran met with his counterparts in France, Germany, and the UK ahead of the seventh round of the Vienna talks scheduled to take place on November 29.

Prior to Bagheri Kani's visit, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian held telephone conversations with the foreign ministers of the countries participating in the Vienna talks, including the European trio of France, Germany, and the UK.

The foreign ministers of the three European countries – collectively known as the E3 – pressed Iran on resuming the Vienna talks where they ended on June 20 when the sixth round was concluded under former Iranian President Hassan Rouhani.

Undaunted by the Europeans' pressure, the Iranian foreign minister straightforwardly announced to his European interlocutors that the



Vienna talks would resume in a new spirit.

"The Vienna talks' success is contingent on the removal of all sanctions, the return of all sides to their obligations, giving necessary assurances about the implementation of all talks' results, and verification of actions by the other sides," Amir Abdollahian told his British counterpart Liz Truss.

This appeared to be part of a broader Iranian strategy to redefine the agenda of talks. Bagheri Kani ushered this new approach while on his European tour. He said there will be no nuclear negotiations at the Vienna talks later this month and the talks would only focus on the implications of the U.S. withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and the major world powers.

The Europeans seem to have not yet come to terms with the new Iran strategy and still think it's business as usual. This required Amir Abdollahian to bring his French counterpart

Jean-Yves Le Drian down to earth. "Iran wants a good agreement, but it has requirements, including the other sides fully complying with their commitments and the effective lifting of sanctions," the Iranian foreign minister told Le Drian. Furthermore, Amir Abdollahian appeared underlining the importance of Iran's missile program. "Iran, like any other country, is entitled to have a defense program as a sovereign right," he said, adding, "Tehran will move full steam ahead to increase its defense power without paying attention to the United States' unconstructive sanctions policy."

It's believed that Bagheri Kani relayed the same message during his European trip, something that prompted the British Foreign Office to call on Iran to seize the "opportunity" and conclude what is on offer now, that is the 2015 nuclear deal. The British officials "reiterated that Iran should take the opportunity to conclude the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action

(JCPOA) deal on the table now," said a British statement on Bagheri Kani's visit to London.

The Iranian foreign minister reiterated Iran's position again on Instagram. "The Islamic Republic of Iran is entering the talks with a pragmatic and result-oriented approach and it is determined to reach a good deal, but this entails effective and verifiable removal of sanctions and the return of all sides to full compliance with their commitments," he said.

Hinting at Iran's new approach, Amir Abdollahian pointed out that "Iran does not intend to remain stuck in the stalemate of previous talks, as we already have access to those negotiations."

The current state of play between Iran and the negotiating partners in Vienna is well nigh clear: Iran has had enough with the previous atmosphere that prevailed in the last six rounds of talks and produced no tangible results. Therefore, it's high time to, as a famous Persian poet put it, rinse eyes and start viewing things differently.

But this approach is likely to draw criticism from the Europeans. And Iran is not fearful of this backlash. "On the path to the talks and in media terms, using a language of force and threats is not helpful and the Islamic Republic of Iran will not give in to unfounded propaganda. Any inaccurate comment, which does not comply with the facts, can jeopardize ongoing efforts," Amir Abdollahian told his German counterpart, Heiko Maas.

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

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

The Jordanian foreign ministry said in a statement that the two sides "also discussed efforts to resolve regional crises, contacts and dialogue paths taking place in the region to resolve differences, and build regional relations that consecrate security and stability, and serve the interests of all its peoples and countries."

Safadi stressed that the Kingdom always works for dialogue, and wants healthy regional relations, based on the principle of good neighborliness and non-interference in internal affairs, the Jordanian statement added.

Jordan, together with the United Arab Emirates, is leading a new Arab effort to normalize relations between Syria and other Arab states.

On Tuesday, UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed landed in the Syrian capital Damascus to meet Syrian President Bashar Assad, the most senior Emirati visit to the war-scarred country in a decade.

After Damascus, the top Emirati diplomat immediately traveled to Jordan, where he met with Jordanian King Abdullah II, an indication that regional issues were on the agenda of Emirati-Jordanian talks.

The Saudi-owned Ashraq Al-Awsat claimed that it has seen a Jordanian-drafted document outlining a quid pro quo process under which Arab states would normalize ties with Syria in exchange for concessions from the war-torn country.

He responded to a question on whether the reopening of diplomatic missions in Iran and Saudi Arabia has been on the table. "Certainly, we're willing to consider all issues and proposals if they are serious and if they are tied to substantive progress," the foreign minister said, adding that the reopening of diplomatic missions "could happen." But he also said that no determination has been made in this regard.

After years of rivalry and lack of diplomatic relations, Saudi Arabia and Iran are slowly moving toward mending ties thanks to at least four rounds of behind-closed-doors talks mediated and hosted by the government of Iraqi Prime Minister Mustaf al-Kadhimi.

Tehran and Riyadh have been involved in security-oriented talks in Baghdad ever since April when Tehran also resumed

All countries in the region want good relations with Iran: Jordan FM

TEHRAN - Jordan's Minister of Foreign Affairs Ayman Safadi has said all countries in the region want better relations with Iran based on the principle of good neighborliness and non-interference in internal affairs.

In an interview with the Arabic service of France 24, the Jordanian foreign minister said his country believes that a lot of regional issues need to be addressed and that's why he talked to his Iranian counterpart Hossein Amir Abdollahian.

"We do not speak with anyone's proxies, and when we spoke, we spoke with the Iranian government directly through a phone call that the Iranian Foreign Minister had with me," Safadi said, according to Ammon News, referring to his October telephone conversation with Amir Abdollahian.

He added, "Our position is clear. We want regional relations based on good neighborliness and non-interference in internal affairs, and many issues need to be addressed and discussed in this regard."

The top Jordanian diplomat underlined that everyone in the Arab region wants good relations with Iran, but in order for these relations to be achieved, they must be based on clarity and transparency and on the principles of respect for neighborliness and non-interference in internal affairs, according to Ammon News.

The last telephone conversation between the foreign ministers of Iran and Jordan was held on October 11. In this conversation, Amir Abdollahian explained that Iran is in favor of friendly and brotherly relations based on mutual respect with regional countries and noted that the Islamic Republic and Jordan should benefit from economic and trade opportunities of the region to improve bilateral ties, according to the Iranian foreign ministry.

In the telephone conversation, Amir Abdollahian

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

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

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

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

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

During the telephone conversation, Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi also said Amman views relations with the Islamic Republic as important and respectable. He stressed the need for developing an understanding based on collective interests in light of regional conflicts.

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

addressing the concerns that we and other countries in the region have, that would allow us to come to a normal relationship with our neighbors Iran," bin Farhan said.

He added, "We think that an alignment of interest is possible. But that would require to address the concerns that we all have. So far, we have not reached any substantive conclusion at these talks. But we have made enough progress that would allow us to move forward."

Responding to a question on whether there would be another round of talks soon, the foreign minister said, "We hope so. It had not been scheduled yet but we are open to it."

Bin Farhan also said that it has not been discussed yet where to hold the next round of talks.

Saudi FM says 'enough progress' made in talks with Iran

TEHRAN – The top diplomat of Saudi Arabia has said that enough progress was made during several rounds of talks with Iran that allows the two regional heavyweights to proceed with the negotiations, though they are yet to reach a concrete result.

In an interview with the English service of France 24, Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan said talks with Iran would continue and that an additional round of negotiations between the regional rivals was expected soon.

He pointed out that the four previous rounds of talks were merely "exploratory" rather than substantial, but said both sides were committed to engagement.

"The talks so far have been exploratory in nature. They have been casual but not substantive. We are committed to a substantive discussion with Iran on

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SPORTS

Para athlete Nikoeimajd handed four years ban for doping

TEHRAN – Iranian Para athletics athlete Mehran Nikoeimajd has been suspended for a period of four years for committing an anti-doping rule violation (ADRV).

Nikoeimajd was stripped of his silver medal he won in the 2019 World Para Athletics Championships in Dubai, the UAE.

The athlete was found to have committed an ADRV pursuant to IPC Anti-Doping Code Article 2.2 of the IF Rules: Use or Attempted Use by an Athlete of a Prohibited Substance or a Prohibited Method, Paralympic.org reported.

A WADA-accredited laboratory reported an adverse analytical finding, under the Prohibited Method class M2 Chemical and Physical Manipulation for urine substitution. The relevant sample was collected out-of-competition from the athlete prior to the Dubai 2019 World Para Athletics Championships. The independent Anti-Doping Tribunal found that the athlete was not able to adequately explain why his sample that was received at the lab was not consistent with urine.

As a result of his violation, Mehran will be ineligible for competition for four (4) years from 7 September 2020 to 6 September 2024. The results obtained by the Athlete from the date the Sample was collected will also be disqualified, with all resulting consequences, including forfeiture of any medals, points and prizes.

As a signatory of the World Anti-Doping Code (WADC), the IPC remains committed to a doping-free sporting environment at all levels. The IPC has established the IPC Anti-Doping Code (Code) in compliance with the general principles of the WADC, including the WADC International Standards, expecting that, in the spirit of sport, it will lead the fight against doping in sport for athletes with an impairment.

Omar Khribin misses Iran match in World Cup qualifier

TEHRAN – Syria football team forward Omar Khribin will be absent in the match against Iran in the 2022 FIFA World Cup qualifier.

The striker suffered an injury in the match against Iraq on Thursday, where the game finished in a 1-1 tie.

Iran will meet Syria on Tuesday in Amman, capital of Jordan and a win will guarantee qualification for Team Melli.

Dragan Skocic's team will also play without their iconic striker Mehdi Taremi.

Soldo on verge of taking charge of Tractor

TEHRAN – Tractor football club have reportedly reached an agreement with Croatian coach Zvonimir Soldo.

Soldo, 54, will join the Iranian football club on a two-year deal, Tasnimnews.com reported.

He started his coaching career in 2008 with Dinamo Zagreb and has also worked in FC Köln, Shandong Luneng and Admira Wacker.

Fiروز Karimi stepped down last week as head coach of Tractor following poor results in the Iranian top-flight club.

Zvonimir Soldo was part of the Croatia national football team who won the bronze medal in the 1998 FIFA World Cup.

Iran's Foolad Sirjan learn fate at Volleyball Club World Championships

TEHRAN – Foolad Sirjan learned their fate at the FIVB Volleyball Men's Club World Championships.

The Iranian team have been drawn with Italian club Itas Trentino and Sada Cruzeiro of Brazil in Pool B.

Pool A consists of Italy's Cucine Lube Civitanova, Argentina's UPCN Vóley Club and Brazilian Funvic Natal.

The Polish club Grupa Azoty ZAKSA Kędzierzyn-Koźle, originally qualified for the event as 2020-2021 CEV Champions League winners, were unable to confirm their participation due to the challenges posed by COVID-19.

The competition will be held in Betim, Brazil from Dec. 7 to 11.

Betim previously hosted the Volleyball Men's Club World Championship in 2019 with the Italian Cucine Lube Civitanova claiming gold, Brazilian club Sada Cruzeiro winning silver and Russian club Zenit Kazan taking bronze.

The current champions are Italy's Lube Civitanova, who defeated Brazilian club Sada Cruzeiro 3–1 in the final of the 2019 edition, to win their first title in the competition.

Italian teams have been the most successful with nine titles.

The FIVB Volleyball Men's Club World Championship is an international men's club volleyball competition organized by the Fédération Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB), the sport's global governing body.

The competition was first contested in 1989 in Italy. It was not held between 1993 and 2008, but since 2009, the competition has been held every year, and has been hosted by Qatar and Brazil.

Persepolis held by Shahr Khodro in friendly

TEHRAN – Persepolis football team were held by Shahr Khodro in a friendly match on Saturday.

Persepolis and Shahr Khodro played out a goalless draw in Tehran.

The match was held as part of preparation for the Matchday 5 of Iran Professional League.

Persepolis, defending champions, sit in sixth place, three points behind Iran Professional League (IPL) leaders Esteghlal.

It was also a good test for Akbar Misaghian, who has been recently named as head coach of Shahr Khodro.

Heartbreak for spirited Lebanon as Taremi-less Iran bounce back: AFC

TEHRAN – Perhaps the finest performance of Matchday Five was produced at Saida International Stadium, and it did not belong to the winning team, the-afc.com wrote.

The lowest ranked side of Group A faced Asia's highest ranked national team, and it did not look like Islamic Republic of Iran were 70 places better off than their hosts Lebanon. The Cedars had been flying high, losing only one of their previous four, keeping two clean sheets and capping off an impressive start with a famous 3-2 away win against neighbours and archrivals Syria on Matchday Four, and on Thursday they showed just why, putting in a masterful tactical display against coach Dragan Skocic's men.

Soony Saad showed excellent composure to control a long ball and apply the finish, beating goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand at his near post. The Al Wahdat man's second goal in as many games was the difference after 90 minutes, but a cruel turn of events awaited the Cedars still.

With FC Porto star Mehdi Taremi dropped from the squad, his strike partner Sardar Azmoun needed 91 minutes and an error from defender Felix Michel to poke home the equaliser. And 20 seconds before the end of the five added minutes awarded by the referee, midfielder Ahmad Nourollahi pounced on a blocked Azmoun shot, drilling home on the half-volley to give IR Iran the win and break the Lebanese hearts.

Iran, Belarus ink MOU on agricultural co-op



From page 1 ► “Belarus can supply part of Iranian market needs for grains, oilseeds, chicken, eggs, and dairy products and in return, Iran can meet Belarus’ needs for a variety of fish and seafood, fruits, vegetables, and nuts,” he said.

According to IRNA, In January-September 2021 the exchange of food and agricultural products between Iran and Belarus totaled \$8 million, 114.5 percent more than the figure for the previous year’s same period.

Export to Nigeria rises 8% in H1

TEHRAN- The value of Iran’s export to Nigeria rose eight percent during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, an official with Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) announced.

Making the remarks in a meeting with Iran’s Ambassador to Nigeria Mohammad Ali-Bak, Farzad Piltan, director-general of TPO’s Office of Arabian and African Countries, said that Iran has exported commodities worth nearly \$44 million to the African country in the six-month period.

Regarding the facilitation of trade with this country, he announced Iran’s readiness in the field of exchanging trade delegations, exhibition cooperation and holding a meeting of the joint economic committee of the two countries and establishing a private sector relationship with the Iranian embassy in Nigeria.

Urea was Iran’s most important exported product to Nigeria, followed by tires, pastes, biscuits and human injection syringes, Piltan said.

The Iranian ambassador to Nigeria for his part expressed satisfaction with the growing trend of exports from Iran to Nigeria, and called for more cooperation from TPO to guide and encourage the private sector to use the large market with a population of 220 million of the African country.

Back in February, Piltan had announced the opening of a €200 million credit line for the TPO to use for developing exports

of commodities and services to African countries.

“The mentioned fund has been allocated as part of a \$2-billion support package which has been allocated by National Development Fund (NDF) for developing the country’s non-oil exports,” the official said.

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

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

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

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

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

Iran’s non-oil trade rose 47% in first half of current year

Investment making in West Azarbaijan industry sector increases 87%

TEHRAN – As announced by a provincial official, over 23.904 trillion rials (about \$570 million) of investment has been made in the industry sector of West Azarbaijan province in the northwest of Iran, during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22), showing 87 percent rise as compared to the first half of the past year.

Gholamreza Babaei, the head of the province’s Industry, Mining, and Trade Department, also said that 1,057 permits have been issued in the six-month period for the establishment of new industrial units, and development of some existing ones, which indicates over 40 percent rise as compared to the same time span of the previous year.

Meanwhile, the mentioned permits and investment have laid the ground for the employment of 1,699 persons, with 46 percent growth year on year, the official noted.

According to the data released by Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry, during the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year, 18,000 permits have been issued for establishing new industrial units in the country, while 485 licenses have also been issued for mining exploration units.

The estimated investment made for the establishment of the mentioned units was more than 5.76 quadrillion rials (about \$137.142 billion).

The units are predicted to create jobs for 438,895 persons.

Based on the Industry



Ministry data, the number of issued licenses during the said period has declined three percent compared to the figure for the previous year’s same six months, while the volume of investment made in the units has increased by 155 percent and the number of jobs expected to be created has also increased by 6.1 percent.

The number of issued licenses for mining exploration operations during the first half of the current fiscal year

IPO head meets ICCIMA members to discuss privatization

TEHRAN – The Head of the Iranian Privatization Organization (IPO) Hossein Qorbanzadeh attended a meeting with the members of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) to discuss the issues related to privatization in the country.

As reported by the ICCIMA portal, the meeting was held with the aim of examining IPO’s models for continuing the privatization process in the future, describing the previous methods, discussing

the problems and shortcomings that followed, and in general the approach that the organization has taken.

During the meeting, Qorbanzadeh pointed to the current state of privatization in the country and said: “Based on our research, we have come to the point that in order to succeed in privatization, we must reward ownership for a productive management.”

According to the official, the IPO intends to follow a new strategy based on which the ownership of government-



Head of Privatization Organization Hossein Qorbanzadeh

owned entities will be rewarded to private sector bodies if they succeed in managing those entities in the best possible way and making them productive.

He announced the formation of several working groups to update the valuation system in the transfer process, noting that the companies that are handed over to the private sector must grow and be productive, and for this purpose, we need far-sighted perspectives on the national economy.

Further in the meeting, Hamidreza Salehi, deputy head

of the ICCIMA Energy Committee, stressed that the correct meaning of privatization must be established in order to ensure progress, development, and job creation.

“Unfortunately, in this area, the main goal has always been revenue generation for the government. In many countries, we are witnessing valuable experiences, and the disregard for the competence and role of the actual private sector is a weakness that we are witnessing in the privatization process in our country,” he stressed.

‘Mining sector needs 11,000 machinery items’

TEHRAN – Deputy head of Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA)’s Industry and Mining Committee has said the country’s small and medium-sized mines are currently in need of 11,000 mining machinery items, the TCCIMA portal reported.

“Based on the statistics provided by the Iran Mining House (IMH) for the previous year, only small and medium-sized mines need more than 11,000 mining machinery and equipment,” Sajad Ghoroghi said.

According to Ghoroghi, since the government’s policy is to support the domestic production of machinery, therefore obtaining permission to import the necessary machinery has become a very long process.

The official noted that even if the country’s machinery producers operate at full capacity, there would be still the need for importing 9,000 machinery items.



“Certainly, the development of mining machinery production in the country will give the miners easy access to the required equipment, but in addition, the activity of 6,000 mines in the country should not depend on the production of machinery inside the country,” he stressed.

In the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21) which is named the year of “Production: Support and Elimination of Obstacles” by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Seyed Ali Khamenei,

Iran consumes natural gas equal to 12 European countries: NIGC head

TEHRAN – Head of National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) has said Iran is the world’s fourth consumer of natural gas and the country’s gas consumption equals that of 12 European countries, Shana reported.

“We are the third-largest gas producer in the world and the fourth largest consumer after Russia, the United States, and China, and the amount of gas consumed in Iran is almost equal to that of the 12 rich countries in Europe,” Majid Chegeni said on Saturday.

He said that many factors affect natural gas consumption, adding: “in the field of mechanisms that are used



all over the world to reduce consumption little work has been done in our country and people are not properly educated.”

Emphasizing the need for national determination to create a culture of proper gas consumption, Chegeni said: “This year, our conditions are not favorable in terms of production

and consumption, and for the stability of the network, we have to impose restrictions so that we can pass the cold season without any disruptions in supply.”

Despite the forecasts, this year the cold season started earlier than last year, which led to an increase in gas consumption, he stated.

According to the official, the country’s gas consumption in the domestic and commercial sectors reached 480 million cubic meters (mcm) on Saturday, about 90 mcm more than the figure for the same period last year.

He noted that the increase

in domestic consumption will result in a decrease in supply to power plants and also the decrease in the country’s gas exports to Iraq and Turkey.

Chegeni also called on domestic consumers to manage their consumption saying: “As for the government subscribers, letters have been issued that they take the necessary measures for optimal consumption and reduce their gas consumption.”

“We hope to be able to supply the fuel needed by major industries and power plants because not supplying fuel to these two sectors will have negative consequences for the economy,” he said.

TEDPIX drops 17,000 points on Saturday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 17,301 points to 1.439 million on Saturday (the first day of Iranian calendar week).

As reported, over 5.748 billion securities worth 45.521 trillion rials (about \$1.083 billion) were traded at the TSE.

The first market’s index lost 13,916 points, and the second market’s index fell 30,950 points.

TEDPIX rose 58,000 points (4.1 percent) to 1.456 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, Social Security Investment Company, Bandar Abbas Refining Company, Iran Khodro Group, and Saipa Company were the most widely followed ones.

Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Ehsan Khandouzi hosted a meeting with the representatives of over 30 major companies active in the capital market on November 1 to exchange ideas for resolving issues and developing the economy.

Speaking in the meeting, Khandouzi said his ministry plans to make the economy more predictable and eliminate pricing systems that are harmful to the capital market and the stock exchange industry, Mehr News Agency reported.

The official noted that the government will follow new strategies to compensate for the budget deficit by making government assets more productive and also by selling surplus properties.

“The task of the Economy Ministry and the Securities and Exchange Organization is to develop tools and institutions in order to create a transparent, efficient, and predictable market,” Khandouzi stated.

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

Iranian people, who used to invest their money in some traditional ways such as buying gold, or deposit money in the banks, have taken a new approach for investment over the past two years, as they have been investing more and more in the stock market.

There’s no clear solution for Lebanon crises: academic

From page 1 ▶ Basic medicines are often unavailable, and gas-station lines can last hours. Every day, many homes lack electricity.

Meanwhile the Lebanese politicians seem to be indifferent to what is going on.

“These groups are keen to continue looting the state and from exploiting public budgets, up to selling state assets, because of greed and in order to appeasement of some foreign powers that are trying to keep Lebanon at the same level of economic and social crisis to invest in the ballot boxes,” Aboud remarks.

“These powers like to maintain Lebanon as a backward country engulfed by corruption, under the rule of corrupt politicians who are protected from Western powers.”

Following is the text of the interview:

What are the reasons for the Saudi move to expel the ambassador of Lebanon?

The direct reason was the remark of Lebanese Minister of Information, George Kordahi, before he took over the ministry.

His remark was about the absurd war on Yemen. As for the indirect causes, they are numerous, including Saudi Arabia's dissatisfaction with the performance of the Lebanese authorities and the Lebanese governments in dealing with the resistance axis. Riyadh expects the Lebanese government to encounter the Islamic Resistance in Lebanon.

Why does Saudi Arabia seek to aggravate the situation in Lebanon, which suffers from various economic crises?

Saudi Arabia is trying to exploit the economic crisis in Lebanon by putting pressure on the political class to control it and push them to serve its interests.

The Saudi authorities expect the Lebanese political figures to confront its opponents in Lebanon and the region.



Indeed, many politicians and economic figures in Lebanon are ready to be hired and sell their stances, while the Saudis know the price of this group of politicians.

Do you think that the Lebanese government will collapse under the pressure of Persian Gulf Arab states?

The formation of the government in Lebanon was an American and Western demand for the sole purpose of holding the parliamentary elections next spring, and they still are following this goal. Therefore, the collapse of the government will ruin the elections by which the Americans have planned to change the current parliamentary majority.”

The Americans have planned to change the current parliamentary majority.

What are the available solutions to save Lebanon from repeated crises?

There are no clear solutions for

Lebanon, because the political system per se is the generator of crises, and because the political, economic and financial groups supported by religious authorities, are reluctant to give up their exclusive privileges. These groups are keen to continue looting the state and from exploiting public budgets, up to selling state assets, because of greed and in order to appease some foreign powers that are trying to keep Lebanon at the same level of economic and social crisis to invest in the ballot boxes.

These powers like to maintain Lebanon as a backward country engulfed by corruption, under the rule of corrupt politicians who are protected from Western powers.

Don't you expect a breakout of civil war given the current situation and recent events, from targeting civilians to the economic blockade?

Civil war is excluded because of two reasons; the first is that the side that is able to start a civil war and win it is not willing to do so, and the second is that the one who wants this war is not able to ignite it.

Afghanistan: From American strategic defeat to regional integration platform



From page 1 ▶ “The presence of U.S. soldiers in the countries bordering Afghanistan would transform these nations in a target”. The next day, Russian President Vladimir Putin had a telephone conversation with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping. The two sides had an in-depth exchange of views on the situation in Afghanistan.

The leaders said they were ready to step up efforts to combat terrorism and drug trafficking from Afghanistan “reads the note” and stressed the importance of preventing the spread of Afghan instability towards neighboring countries. Putin noted that Russia and China share similar positions and interests on the Afghan question and has stressed that Russia is willing to communicate and coordinate closely with China, actively participating in the multilateral mechanisms dealing with the Afghan question. China respects “sovereignty, independence and integrity territorial of Afghanistan”, does not interfere in internal affairs, aiming at “a constructive role” for a political solution.

The President Xi Jinping told his Russian counterpart that China “is willing to strengthen communication and coordination with all parts of the International Community and to encourage all Afghan parties to negotiate an open and inclusive political structure”. Russia concluded Putin in the interview is willing to coordinate with China for a “gradual transition of the situation in Afghanistan, to combat terrorism, to end drug trafficking and prevent the spread of risks to safety”. In the area there are Russian military forces active in Tajikistan with about 7,000 men based around the capital Dušanbe and along the Afghan border. The recent agreement with China and military cooperation between Iran and Russia are moving in the right direction and both should be developed.

Afghanistan can become central to the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative project. Primary investors in Xinjiang, which is connected to Afghanistan via the Wakhan corridor, include the neighboring countries, namely Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, but also include Russia, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, India, Mongolia and a small amount of Afghans. The latter are likely to increase, both in FDI and in trade. This is because Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia are all members of the Eurasian Economic Union (UEE), while Uzbekistan is considering joining it. This is significant because China

signed a free trade agreement with the EAEU in September 2018. It is currently not preferential, which means that no tariff reduction mechanisms have been agreed. However, it is the subject of ongoing negotiations and, once carried out, will significantly increase Xinjiang's trade with these countries. It is also relevant to note that both India and Pakistan are currently negotiating a free trade agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union.

Afghanistan is not yet in this context; its economy is too fragile to be bound by such an agreement right away. However, this is a moot point: The country has preferential tariff agreements in place designed to incentivize Afghan exports. This move will be encouraged by China as a pillar of the common desire to develop regional peace through trade.

Afghanistan would give China and other Central Asian nations a strategic boost as the country is placed as a central hub connecting West Asia, Central Asia, and Europe. With a total population of 32 million, it is also an attractive market for many, although it will take a carefully managed program to lift it out of poverty - ongoing wars have left Afghanistan 169th out of 180 countries in the ranking, based on United Nations Human Development Index.

China is building military bases and observation points on the border between Tajikistan and Afghanistan to prevent any infiltration of Islamist militiamen from the Wakhan Corridor, in the Afghan province of Badakhshan; the Chinese have been cooperating with Tajikistan for some time on the security front, including training Tajik forces.

Bordered by Pakistan to the south, Iran to the west, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan to the north and northeast, and China to the east, with new planned and existing BRI road and rail links linking it to Central Asia, an Afghan government capable of educating and repositioning its men in industry and willing to undertake trade and investment as an alternative to bullets and bombs, certainly has great potential. The macro-region of Central Asia in the immediate export radius of Afghanistan contains 400 million people.

Stefano Vernole is an author and freelance journalist. He also serves as deputy director of Eurasia Review of Geopolitical Studies and coordinator of the Mediterranean Eurasia Study Center.

British government embroiled in corruption scandals

From page 1 ▶ What followed was a powerful backlash from opposition parties who labeled the government as “corrupt” and pledged to boycott their new committee. Johnson performed another very quick U-turn (a now trademark signature of the government). This time the U-turn was done in a matter of hours (maybe a record).

Despite pleading his innocence, Paterson subsequently went on to resign but the Prime Minister came under huge pressure, including from some members of his own party to apologize. During an emergency debate, the opposition Labour leader Keir Starmer told parliament that the Prime Minister has given the “green light to corruption.”

Johnson was absent from the session and Starmer said “Instead of repairing the damage he has done, the prime minister is running scared.” He accused Johnson of damaging “our democracy” and acting on the basis of “self-preservation not the national interest.” The main British opposition party leader added “when the prime minister gives the green light to corruption, he corrodes that trust. When he says the rules to stop vested interests don't apply to his friends, he corrodes that trust and when he deliberately undermines those charged with stopping corruption, he corrodes that trust. And that is exactly what the prime minister did”

The outrage over Paterson's lobbying triggered fresh scrutiny of members of parliament who also have lucrative secondary jobs, with special focus being paid on conservative MP Geoffrey Cox, who is one of the British parliament's biggest earners from jobs outside the legislature.

It came to light that he voted by proxy in parliament (something that was only allowed earlier this year because of the coronavirus pandemic) while earning hundreds of thousands of pounds conducting other business more than 4,000 miles away in the Caribbean. During a corruption inquiry, it has been revealed the conservative MP earned more than £800,000 for his work with a law company that represents the British Virgin Islands government. He declared hundreds of hours of work over the past months but has spoken in just one parliament debate.

Opposition parties have raised a valid point that his constituents “must be wondering if Geoffrey Cox is a Caribbean-based barrister or a Conservative MP.”

Critics are calling on the prime minister to show leadership and order an “urgent independent investigation” into the MPs lucrative work.

The holiday was not declared by Johnson in a separate register of MPs' interests. That raised speculation the prime minister did not want to declare the value of the holiday, with the Goldsmiths' holiday home reported to cost as much as £25,000 a week to rent. And



reports have just surfaced that according to Spanish courts the luxury villa is linked to property businesses owned by Goldsmith that are engaged in a multimillion-pound tax evasion scheme.

All this comes on the backdrop of the Prime Minister's Downing Street flat refurbishment earlier this year which raised many questions as to how and from where the money came for the work. In leaked emails, it has now emerged that a multimillionaire Conservative party donor offered the party a £58,000 donation last year. According to the leaked emails seen by the Daily Mail newspaper, the donor also mentioned a £15,000 donation.

However, only the £15,000 donation has been listed on Electoral Commission records, with mystery surrounding the other sum of £58,000. The Commission is looking into whether laws on political donations have been broken. Conservative Party officials have reportedly been handed the initial findings of the Electoral Commission's investigation and the Commission has reportedly raised the possibility of a soon to come parliamentary investigation.

Meanwhile, Johnson's ex-adviser Dominic Cummings has claimed the Prime Minister was busy writing a book about Shakespeare instead of dealing with the impending COVID pandemic. Cummings says the PM asked if he could spend time writing the book in January 2020 and alleges Johnson was writing it in February 2020 and dismissing COVID-19 as “the new swine flu.” The UK would go on to have the worst fatality rate from the virus in Europe.

It has been a terrible nightmare for the government that will have to work hard to regain trust and popularity from the British public again. The chain of events over the past few weeks has had a negative impact for the Tories. According to the latest poll, the main opposition Labour Party has opened up a six-point lead over the Conservatives. That means if an election was to be held today, 44% would vote for Labour compared to just 34% for the Conservatives, according to the Savanta ComRes data. Over the past few days different surveys suggest the government has lost its lead over Labour.

It does appear that during times of economic hardships, British people have had enough of hearing about wealthy politicians being greedy and corrupt while many are struggling to make ends meet.

‘Cultural passage’ to be created connecting houses of literary figures in northern Tehran

TEHRAN – Tehran Municipality is set to make a “cultural passage” that connects the house of the late poet Nima Yushij to the one that once was the home of literary couple Jalal Al-e-Ahmad and Simin Daneshvar.

Earlier this month, the fully renovated house of Yushij, who is famed as the father of modern Persian poetry, was officially unveiled by the municipality’s Beautification Organization.

In 2019, Tehran Municipality purchased the house, which is situated in northern Tehran near the house of the famed Iranian couple Al-e-Ahmad and Daneshvar who were novelists and short-story writers.

Yushij came to the scene of change at a time when all the conservative efforts of the Neo-classicists, Revivalists, and others had failed to free Persian poetry from the long decadence which was, to a great extent, the result of the ruling power of prosody over the subject matter.

Al-e Ahmad translated works by French writers



Photo depicts wax figures of the contemporary Iranian literary figures Nima Yushij (R), Jalal Al-e-Ahmad (c) and Simin Daneshvar.

André Gide, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Albert Camus into Persian. In 2008, Iran established the Jalal Al-e Ahmad Literary Awards in memory of the writer, who passed away in 1969.

Tehran webinar to put the spotlight on digitalized manuscripts



TEHRAN – On Sunday, a Tehran webinar will be turning the spotlight on the digitalized manuscripts and the latest ways to benefit from them to preserve cultural heritage elements.

Titled “eCodicology”, the event is scheduled to discuss the development, testing, and optimization of new algorithms that automatically recognize macro and microstructural elements of manuscript pages and embed them in the metadata of the images.

The webinar will be attended by Dr. Saloumeh Gholami who is a professor for Minority Languages at the Linguistics, Cultures and Arts Goethe University Frankfurt, CHTN reported.

versity Frankfurt, CHTN reported.

This method uses various image processing and feature extraction techniques which allows to detect and extract various layout features of digitized manuscript pages. As a result, humanities scholars can analyze and find new hidden relationships in thousands of pages of medieval manuscripts.

eCodicology exceeds the established standards of the virtual reconstruction of historic libraries, which aim for the reunion, textual preparation, and presentation of the collection.

Iran is home to hundreds of thousands of treasured historical manuscripts. During the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), a total of 2800 folios of manuscripts and historical documents were restored by panels of experts at the National Library of and Archives.

The restored documents include 110 endowment letters, 41 handwritten books, important letters related to the Qajar-era (1789–1925), and photographs of European queens and princes from the 1880s.

Some three million historical objects are being kept in Iranian museums which are affiliated with the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts.

Mashhad is Iran’s holiest and second-largest city. Its raison d’être and main sight is the striking massive shrine complex of Imam Reza (AS), the eighth Shia Imam.

Before the coronavirus puts almost everything on lockdown, Mashhad,

played host to thousands of travelers and pilgrims who come from various Iranian cities, neighboring countries, and even across the globe to visit the holy shrine.

According to official statistics, some 37 million Iranian pilgrims and travelers visited the shrine city of Mashhad during the first ten months of the past Iranian calendar year 1398 (March 21, 2019–March 10, 2020).

Rural complex expected to lift tourism in Iranian village

TEHRAN – A vast tourism complex is being constructed in Kour Abbaslu village, Nir county, the northwestern province of Ardabil, Nir’s tourism chief has said.

A budget of 50 billion rials (\$1.2 million at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been invested in the project, which is being carried out by the private sector, Behnam Vakili announced on Saturday.

Covering an area of over 1,200 square meters, the project aims to improve rural tourism in the region and attract more tourists and travelers, the official added.

Back in September, Ardabil’s tourism chief Nader Fallahi announced that a total of four tourism-related projects worth 3.3 trillion rials (\$78.5 m) are underway across Nir county in collaboration with the private sector.

The projects include a three-star hotel, two tourist complexes, and a guest house, the official added.

Back in January, the official announced that more than 150 tourism-related projects are underway across the northwestern province. The mentioned projects will prepare the province’s tourism sector for the post-coronavirus era when the number of tourists and travelers is expected to rise magnificently, the official added.

Sprawling on a high, windswept plateau, Ardabil is well-known for having lush natural beauties, hospitable people, and its silk and carpet trade tradition. It is also home to the UNESCO-registered Sheikh Safi al-Din Khanegah and Shrine Ensemble.

The province is very cold in winter and mild in summer, attracting thousands every year. The capital city

of Ardabil is usually recorded as one of the coldest cities in the country in winter.

Rural tourism in Iran

Home to thousands of ancient villages, Iran perfectly suits the tastes of many domestic and even international vacationers who are seeking unique natural experiences, unspoiled landscapes, stay in authentic accommodation, and feel local lifestyles.

Sightseers may stop for a rest with a rural or nomadic family for a while or enjoy an independent stay and assist them with day-to-day life. It also opens up an opportunity to feel rustic routines, their agriculture, traditions, arts, and culture whose magic know-hows passed down from generation to generation.

Rural tourism as well as agritourism and farmstays can be regarded as a win-win both for local communities, and post-modern travelers who are tracing unique experiences.

Rural tourism, most of all, sets the ground for economic development in rural areas by creating additional income and employment. It can also improve the social wellbeing in rural areas, for instance by stimulating improvements in infrastructure, sanitation, and electricity networks.

The World Tourism Organization sees rural tourism as a type of activity in which the visitor’s experience is related to a wide range of products generally linked to nature-based activities, agriculture, rural lifestyle, culture, angling, and sightseeing. Such tourism also possesses characteristics such as low population density, a landscape dominated by agriculture and forestry, as well as traditional social structure and lifestyle.

Office dedicated to Sassanid archaeological landscape inaugurated in Kermanshah

TEHRAN – A permeant office dedicated to the Sassanid archaeological landscape in western Iran has been inaugurated in Kermanshah.

The official is located near the magnificent Anubanini reliefs in Sarpol-e Zahab, which is home to important Sassanid era architectural remains, CHTN reported.

Kermanshah is a cradle of civilization due to its antiquity and having Neolithic sites that have been yielded rich collections of stone tools and fossil bones.

The provincial tourism department aims to define a vast route for domestic and foreign sightseers by incorporating new destinations with already-established ones such as Taq-e Bostan, Bisotun, and the Temple of Anahita.

Inscribed into the base of a towering cliff, Taq-e Bostan comprises extraordinary Sassanian



bas-reliefs of ancient victorious kings divide opinions. Late afternoon is the best time to visit, as the cliff turns a brilliant orange in the setting sun, which then dies poetically on the far side of the duck pond.

UNESCO-tagged Bisotun is a

patchwork of immense yet impressive life-size carvings depicting King Darius I and several other figures. UNESCO has it that Bisotun bears outstanding testimony to the important interchange of human values on the development of monumental art and

writing, reflecting ancient traditions in monumental bas-reliefs.

The Temple of Anahita in the city of Kangavar is believed to have been built circa 200 BC. Several column bases and ruins of a wall remain from the magnificent Greek-style temple. The temple was used during the Parthian era (248 BC–224) as well as the Sassanid era (224–651).

In 2018, UNESCO added “Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars Region”, which is an ensemble of Sassanian historical cities in southern Iran, to its World Heritage list.

In many ways, Iran under the Sassanian rule witnessed tremendous achievements of Persian civilization. Experts say that during Sassanid times, the art and architecture of the nation experienced a general renaissance.

Frescos of historical caravanserai restored in Kashan

TEHRAN – A restoration work has recently been completed on the decorative paintings of the entrance corridor of Gomrok Caravanserai in Kashan, Central province of Isfahan, Kashan’s tourism chief has announced.

Due to previous damages caused to this caravanserai, the paintings on the entrance of the main corridor of the building have been restored in two stages by experienced restorers in recent months, Mehran Sarmadian said on Friday.

“The project involved cleaning, stabilizing, strengthening, and balancing the patterns and

color of the painting,” the official added.

“Dating back to the Safavid era (1501–1736), the historical inn is a [bustling] section of Kashan’s bazaar.”

With an area of 2,000 square meters, the caravanserai is surrounded by rooms with a courtyard, two entrances, and two exits, and is important from the architectural and decorative viewpoints, he mentioned.

The historical monument was registered on the national heritage list in 2000.

Kashan is a historical city near Isfahan in the central part of Iran. Its history dates back to

over ten thousand years ago, and it is home to some of the most beautiful buildings featuring Islamic architecture.

Many travelers opt to pass Kashan on their journeys between Tehran, Isfahan, Shiraz, and Yazd, because this delightful oasis city on the edge of the Dasht-e Kavir, is one of Iran’s most alluring destinations.

Kashan not only boasts a cluster of architectural wonders, an atmospheric-covered bazaar, and a UNESCO-recognized garden, but it also offers some of central Iran’s best traditional hotels.

Gigantic flower carpet unveiled in central Iran



plant producers union, and a group of social and cultural heritage activists designed and arranged the flower carpet, the official added.

Furthermore, the official invited

people interested in floras to grasp the opportunity and pay a visit to the “work of art”.

The oldest and perhaps most beautiful evidence of flower bouquets in Iran is found in the stone carvings of the UNESCO-registered Persepolis. Over 2500 years old, the stone carvings show Darius I (550 – 486 BC), holding the scepter of authority in one hand and a lotus flower with two buds in his right hand, a symbol of royalty.

During autumn, lots of pomegranate farmers hold festivals to thank God and to celebrate the harvest season.

The festivals include local foods and games as well as other recreational activities and performances.

Pomegranate is of numerous benefits. It both relieves hunger and improves digestion. Pomegranates themselves can vary in color from deep red to yellow flushed with pink.

Second Announcement



Khouzestan Steel Company

INVITATION TO INTERNATIONAL TENDER

No.: 52440717

KHOUZESTAN STEEL COMPANY INTENDS TO PURCHASE REFRACTORY FOR STEEL-MAKING

This Company Intends To Purchase The Refractory Items Required For Its Steelmaking By Holding A Public International Tender By Selecting One Or More Companies From Top Domestic Or Foreign Manufacturing Companies That Have The Appropriate And Acceptable Ability In Terms Of Records And Experience.

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P.o.box: 1378 - Post Code:: 61788-13111

Note1: The Closing Date For Declaration Of Readiness To Participate In The Tender Is 17.Nov.2021(1400/08/26)

Note2: All Financial And Technical Bids Must Be Delivered To The Aforesaid Address On Before The Closing Date 22.Dec.2021(1400/10/01). The Opening Date Of Technical Offer Envelopes Will Be At 11 Am On The 26. Dec.2021(1400/10/05) In The Buyer's Conference Room Located At The Head Office Of Ksc Ahvaz-Iran

Note 3: The Offered Price Should Be Valid Up To 4 Month After Oppening Date Note

4: For More Information Please Contact To Below Chanale:

Tel No: +98-61-32136118 :+98-61-32136120

Email: H.shoheitie@Ksc.ir

Website: www.kscia

COP9 adopts WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control proposed by Iran

TEHRAN – The Ninth Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP9) to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control adopted the “Declaration on WHO FCTC and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic”, proposed by Iran.

The COP9 discussions, held on November 8 to 13, brought together Parties, representing countries, United Nations agencies, other inter-governmental organizations, and civil society to exchange experiences in implementing tobacco control measures and reducing the prevalence of tobacco use by looking at strategies that improve tobacco control efforts, amid attempts by the tobacco industry to interfere in ending the tobacco epidemic that is killing over 8 million people annually.

The event also saw the highest level of participation since the initiation of the COPs, as 161 Parties were present, confirming that most countries are committed to the UN public health treaty aimed at reducing death and disease caused by tobacco consumption.

Esmail Baghaei Hamaneh, COP9 President to the Ninth Session of the Conference of the Parties to the WHO Convention on Tobacco Control said that in the context of the COVID 19 pandemic, countries face a heavier, more sustained toll as a result of the



tobacco epidemic.

And aware of the increased reports of tobacco industry interference, which acts as a barrier to effective implementation of the WHO FCTC, the declaration emphasizes the inherent and irreconcilable conflict between the tobacco industry’s interests and public health policy interests.

It stresses the need to protect public health policy from the commercial and vested in-

terests of the tobacco industry, and

to integrate tobacco control measures in our pandemic recovery efforts.

This multi-million-dollar plan is aimed at strengthening tobacco control efforts and providing much-needed financial support for the continued implementation of the Convention. It will be managed in association with the World Bank and with a dedicated oversight committee comprised of Parties

Tobacco costs Iran 1.4 quadrillion rials (nearly \$33.3 billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials) annually.

DOE drafts comprehensive bill on biodiversity protection

From page 1 ► However, only 30 percent of the country’s biodiversity is located in protected areas, he stated.

One of the most important challenges is climate change, known as the silent death of nature. In the future, a large part of the desert areas of the country will lose their capabilities. On the other hand, we will face forced wildlife migration.

Referring to the condition of leopard habitats, he said that “It is necessary to focus more on the northwest and north, considering climate change, to prepare plans to prevent the loss of leopard biodiversity.

Every year, more than 80,000 species are killed in road crashes, while in the areas that are not protected we do not have the authority to ask the responsible organizations to install a sign on the road sidelines. On the other hand, we are facing the fragmentation of wildlife habitats, which is the product of land-use change, he regretted.

Annually, 1300 to 2000 large mammals such as goats are killed by poaching. Illegal hunting has a huge impact on wildlife populations and is not subject to certain ethics and rules, he said.

Certainly, we will not be able to attract the participation of local communities until we move biodiversity towards income generation, so we need to consider local communities’ ben-

efits, he highlighted.

Special attention should also be paid to the issue of ecotourism and the return of benefits to local communities should be on the agenda, he further emphasized.

Biological diversity protection in Iran

To preserve the existing biodiversity over the wide geographic expanse of Iran, four types of areas have been designated for preservation and protection, including, national parks, wildlife refuges, protected areas, and natural national monuments. In 1997, the DOE held supervision over 7,563,983 hectares of such areas.

Currently, the supervised areas reached about 18.5 million hectares, including, 30 national parks, 170 protected areas, 45 wildlife refuges, and 37 national natural monuments.

Iran has a high diversity of species due to geographical conditions, climatic diversity, huge water resources of the Caspian Sea in the north and the Persian Gulf, and the Sea of Oman in the south.

According to the latest studies, about 1,300 species of vertebrates, including mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and aquatic fish, about 30,000 species of invertebrates, and 8,000 species of plants have been identified in the country.

EU agency appreciates IRCS for humanitarian services

TEHRAN – The European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations has appreciated the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) for its humanitarian services, IRNA reported.

Tahin Tamangoda, the director of the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, during her visit to Tehran, emphasized her support for the IRCS humanitarian programs, according to the Iranian Red Crescent Society.

Disaster management is a top priority and the exchange of information and technical knowledge

between counterparts and agencies of the United Nations, the International Federation, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and non-governmental organizations is important and we do our best to support humanitarian programs in the face of sanctions, she explained.

Despite sanctions, the IRCS has supported the vaccination program in order to contain coronavirus by importing vaccines, and has made screening and vaccinating Afghan refugees a priority. Health and food services are also provided to Afghan

refugees in the country, she said.

IRCS services worldwide

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

Currently, some 14 medical facilities are offering humanitarian, relief, and health services to the deprived people in 13 countries, including Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, the United Arab Emirates, Bolivia, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Congo, Kenya, Lebanon, Mali, Niger, and Ecuador.

and civil society organization observers to the COP, with the goal of strengthening the support for Parties’ tobacco control measures.

Tobacco imposes annual loss of \$33b

Alireza Raeisi, the former deputy health minister, announced in May that estimates show that tobacco costs the country 1.4 quadrillion rials (nearly \$33.3 billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials) annually.

Referring to the 40 percent increase in hookah consumption over the last eight years in the country, he stated that tobacco brings the country a loss of 1.4 quadrillion rials (nearly \$33.3 billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials) annually, taking health costs into consideration.

Coronavirus has killed more than three million people in a year and a half, but smoking kills eight million people a year, and the tobacco mafia is still active, causing extensive damage to society, he lamented.

Aromatic tobacco is very dangerous and contains 7,000 chemicals, of which 70 are carcinogenic and 400 are toxic, he further noted.

In 2014, there were 7 tobacco production units, which increased to 23 units in 2020, showing that the number of these production units has quadrupled, he added.

Unfortunately, over the past two decades, human activities have led to alarming degradation of ecosystems, deletion of genes, species, and biological capabilities; Human threats to biodiversity have accelerated the most over the past 50 years over the entire history of human life.

According to the United Nations, three-quarters of the Earth’s environment and about 66 percent of the marine environment have been altered by human activities, and the latest report by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) states that more than one million species of animals and plants are in danger of extinction.

Therefore, any planning and action in the direction of optimal and principled management of biodiversity protection in the country, interaction and continuous cooperation of responsible bodies, and benefiting from international opportunities and their financial and professional resources can play a very important and key role in maintaining biological diversity alongside sustainable development.

We hope that with the common determination of officials and policymakers, the people, the media, and environmental activists, will preserve and protect this valuable asset for future generations.

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

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

Iran, Philippines to hold intl. symposium on agricultural nanotechnology

TEHRAN – Iran and the Philippines will hold a virtual scientific symposium on agricultural nanotechnology on November 18-19.

Agriculture Biotechnology Research Institute of Iran (ABRII) and the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARRD) affiliated with the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) organized the event.

The symposium aims to study and exchange information on agricultural nanotechnology, explore the role of public and private sectors in the agricultural nanotechnology fields, assess and expand Iran-Philippines cooperation in agricultural nanotechnology, and provide a platform to introduce SMEs and knowledge-based companies in the said field to potential investors.

Iran among five pioneers of nanotechnology

Iran has been introduced as the 4th leading country in the world in the field of nanotechnology, publishing 11,546 scientific articles in 2020.

The country held a 6 percent share of the world’s total nanotechnology articles, according to StatNano’s monthly evaluation accomplished in WoS databases.

Iran ranked 43rd among the 100 most vibrant clusters of science and technology (S&T) worldwide for the third consecutive year, according to the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2020 report.

The country experienced a three-level improvement compared to 2019.

Sourena Sattari, vice president for science and technology, has said that Iran is playing



the leading role in the region in the fields of fintech, ICT, stem cell, aerospace, and is unrivaled in artificial intelligence.

Iranian nanotechnology companies have increased sales by 100 percent over the Iranian calendar year 1398 (March 2019-March 2020), and it is predicted that their revenue will reach up to 80 trillion rials (nearly \$1.9 billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials), Sattari announced.

Iran has created centers in six Asian countries for exporting nanotechnology products, including China, India, Indonesia, Syria, Turkey, and Iraq.

Nanotechnology’s trend of development is growing in Iran, as the number of nanoproducts and equipment developed in the previous [Iranian calendar] year (March 20) increased to 750, compared with 647 a year before.

Some 223 product manufacturing companies and 59 equipment manufacturing companies are active in the field of nanotechnology and by the end of last year, which developed a total of 750 products and equipment.

Latest COP26 draft deal maintains need for ‘just transition’ away from fossil fuels

The president of the UN climate summit in Glasgow said Saturday that phasing out coal was still part of the agreement text as negotiators pored over fresh proposals Saturday aimed boosting the world’s efforts to tackle global warming.

“I’ve always said we want this to be a high ambition COP. That’s what I heard yesterday in the plenary, and I hope colleagues will rise to the occasion,” said Alok Sharma, president of COP26, as he arrived at the conference venue.

British officials chairing the talks released new draft agreements on Saturday after telling delegates from almost 200 nations late Friday to go and get some rest as the official deadline passed.

A proposal for the overarching decision retains contentious language calling on countries to accelerate “efforts towards the phase-out of unabated coal power and inefficient fossil fuel subsidies.”

But in a new addition, the text says nations will recognize “the need for support towards a just transition” — a reference to calls from those working in the fossil fuel industry for financial support as they wind down jobs and businesses.

Talks go into extra day

U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson said Friday

that he believed “an ambitious outcome is in sight” at the talks, which have stretched into an extra day after two weeks of negotiations.

Some campaign groups said the current proposals were not strong enough.

“Here in Glasgow, the world’s poorest countries are in danger of being lost from view, but the next few hours can and must change the course we are on,” said Tracy Carty of Oxfam. “What’s on the table is still not good enough.”

Shortening emissions reduction cycle

In another proposal, countries are “encouraged” to submit new targets for emissions reduction for 2035 by 2025, and for 2040 by 2030, establishing a five-year cycle. Previously, developing countries were expected to do so only every 10 years.

The proposed agreement states that in order to achieve the 2015 Paris accord’s ambitious goal of capping global warming at 1.5 C by the end of the century compared with pre-industrial times, countries will need to make “rapid, deep and sustained reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions, including reducing global carbon dioxide emissions by 45 per cent by 2030 relative to the 2010 level and to net zero around mid-century, as well as deep reductions in other greenhouse gases.”

COVID-19 UPDATES ON NOVEMBER 13

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| New cases | 4,306 |
| New deaths | 124 |
| Total cases | 6,031,575 |
| Total deaths | 128,042 |
| New hospitalized patients | 784 |
| Patients in critical condition | 3,533 |
| Total recovered patients | 5,683,458 |
| Diagnostic tests conducted | 36,932,280 |
| Doses of vaccine injected | 98,181,400 |

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Hospital beds capacity rises to improve medical system

Health Minister Saeed Namaki inaugurated 23 health centers, including 201 hospital beds, in Lorestan, Kermanshah, and Khuzestan provinces on Tuesday.

Built on 26,935 square meters area, the centers were constructed with a budget of 2.9 trillion rials (nearly \$70 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials).

The Ministry of Health is scheduled to add 10,600 hospital beds to the capacity of the country’s medical system within the next 7 months.

Two years ago, there were a total of 140,859 beds in the country, which means 1.7 hospital beds per 1,000 population.

افزایش ظرفیت تخت های بیمارستانی

سعید نمکی وزیر بهداشت امروز به صورت مجازی ۲۳ مرکز بهداشتی و درمانی را شامل ۲۰۱ تخت بیمارستانی در استان های لرستان، کرمانشاه و خوزستان افتتاح کرد.

به گزارش ایژنا، این مراکز در زیربنای ۲۶ هزار و ۹۳۵ مترمربع و با اعتباری بالغ بر ۲۹۸۰ میلیارد ریال ساخته شده است. وزارت بهداشت قرار است تا ۱۲ فروردین سال ۱۴۰۰، ۶۰۰ تخت بیمارستانی به ظرفیت بیمارستان های کشور اضافه کند.

در انتهای سال ۱۳۹۷ مجموعاً ۱۴۰ هزار و ۸۵۹ تخت فعال در کشور فعال بود که اگر این میزان را به ازای جمعیت محاسبه کنیم، ضریب تعداد جمعیت به تخت‌مان، ۱.۷ تخت به ازای هر ۱۰۰۰ نفر است.

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The mind of a wise man is the safest custody of secrets;
cheerfulness is the key to friendship; patience and
forbearance will conceal many defects.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:11:49 Evening: 17:48 Dawn: 5:13 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:40 (tomorrow)

Iran: Myths and legends

An image of Zahhak from the graphic novel “The Last Fiction” by Ashkan Rahgozar.

Part 4

Ahura Mazda warned him not to cut the dragon’s body, because serpents, toads, scorpions, lizards, tortoises, and frogs would fill the earth. So Fereidun bound the dragon in a cave in Mt. Damavand (relating the contents of the lost Sutkar Nask), where he remains bound until the renovation, when he will break free.

But Keresasp will be raised again to crush the dragon with his club. Like all demons, he will be done away with at the renovation. The texts give a mixture of pictures of Azhi Dahaka as mythical dragon and legendary wicked monarch, Zahhak. It is the latter picture which is set forward in the Shahnameh.

According to the Shahnameh, Zahhak was born a courageous youth, the son of the honorable prince, Merdas. One day the devil, Eblis, arrived disguised as a visitor come to honor him, and Zahhak fell under his influence.

He asked the visitor to instruct him and agreed to swear an oath before being taught. Eblis urged Zahhak to kill Merdas, because he lingered in office, so delaying the time when Zahhak could accede to the throne. Zahhak pleaded that some other plan be devised, rather than killing his father, but Eblis retorted: “if you fail in carrying out my advice, you will dishonor your pledge and the oath you swore to me.”

Zahhak dug a pit and camouflaged it with straw, so when his father went out to purify himself before worship, he fell into the pit and died.

Eblis hatched further plots and presented himself as a renowned cook. There were few animals then, because humanity was vegetarian, until Ahriman taught people to kill animals.

Eblis provided food from the bodies of birds and animals, which delighted Zahhak, who promised him whatever he desired. The cook asked for permission to kiss his shoulders as though he was his dearest friend.

But where Eblis kissed him two black serpents grew. Whenever Zahhak tried to cut them off, more grew in their place. Eblis reappeared in the guise of a physician and said cutting them off was impossible; instead they should be fed only with human brains.

Meanwhile in Iran, King Jamshid became increasingly unpopular with his subjects, for the royal glory had left him. As turmoil erupted “Iranian knights in search of a new king turned their attention to Zahhak and proclaimed him king of Iran.”

The dragon-king raised an army attacking Iran as Jamshid surrendered. When at last Jamshid was found, Zahhak had his body sawn in two. Zahhak ruled for a thousand years, when “virtue was humiliated and wizardry esteemed.”

The end finally came through the gallantry of the hero Fereidun, on whom the royal glory had settled. Zahhak had a dream about his defeat by Fereidun and searched everywhere for the youth, killing the hero’s father, but Fereidun’s mother hid him in the Alborz mountains.

Zahhak raised an army including demons and peris (“fairies”) with men. As Zahhak was consulting his counselors, Kaveh, a blacksmith who had been grievously wronged, entered the royal presence to protest that Zahhak had executed seventeen of his children to feed their brains to the snakes on his shoulders, and he sought the life of his last son.

He thundered: “although you have a dragon’s form, you are the king and it’s your duty to let me have justice in this thing.” His son was restored to him; but, when Zahhak commanded him to sign a document proclaiming that Zahhak was a just king, Kaveh refused and raged at the councilors who had done so.

He stormed away to seek Fereidun and raise an army. Together they marched on Zahhak’s palace in Jerusalem. Zahhak was away, so Fereidun feasted and dallied with Zahhak’s wives.

Learning of this, Zahhak attacked the hero with fury, but Fereidun “advanced upon him with the speed of the storm-wind and dealt him a blow from his bull-headed mace that shattered his helmet.”

An angel quickly warned him “do not strike him down; his time has not yet come, bind him firmly as a rock and conceal him in the mountains.”

So the dragon king was bound in fetters in Mount Damavand until the end of history. This ancient Iranian myth clearly lies behind a passage in the Biblical book of Revelation.

Again, the difference between myth and legend is blurred. In the early sources Azhi Dahaka is a mythical figure and yet also appears as a king of a physical place. In the legend of the Shahnameh the one-thousand year rule, the role of Eblis, the angel guiding Fereidun make it, in parts, a myth.

Fundamental Iranian and religious values are evident throughout. Even the evil Zahhak recognizes that a king’s duty is to give justice. Details like the bull-headed mace and the belief in Farr, the royal glory, reflect the Zoroastrian elements of the narratives.

These are modified in the light of history; whereas Azhi Dahaka ruled in Babylon, Zahhak recruits Arabs—an indication of who is the key enemy changes over time. The mythical/legendary geography of Mount Damavand is an example of an enduring motif.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica
To be continued

Iranian cartoonists Hamid Sufi, Javad Takju top at Olense Kartoenale

TEHRAN – Iranian cartoonists Hamid Sufi and Javad Takju have won the top prizes of the 33rd edition of Olense Kartoenale, a Belgian international cartoon competition.

Sufi won first prize in the main theme of the contest, which was “A Visit to the Museum”. He works at the Iranian Students News Agency.

He has previously participated in many international cartoon contests in Portugal, China, South Korea and Argentina.

Due to his in-depth studies on anthropology, he has achieved a better understanding of the hidden layers of human life and the traditions of other communities, which have helped him give a better expression of his attitudes.

Takju won a special prize that Amnesty International awarded to the best cartoon on the theme “Right to a Fair Trial” this year.

Takju won second prize at the Zagreb International Salon of Car Caricatures in Croatia in 2020. He is a founding member of Gilan’s Cartoon Association.

The award ceremony took place on Friday at the council room of the town hall of Olen.

This combination photo shows works by Iranian cartoonists Javad Takju and Hamid Sufi, which won top prizes of the 33rd edition of Olense Kartoenale in Belgium.

Anneke van Steijn from the Netherlands received second prize, while third and fourth prizes were given to Leonardo Zaza from Italy and Angel Ramiro Zapata Mora from Colombia.

Emil Idzikowski won the prize of the City of Bialogard, which is only awarded

to a Polish participant every year.

In the youth category, Wolfgang De Bont received the prize for best Belgian work, while the Best Foreign Work Award Didar went to Askin Ayrançiglu from Turkey.

The winners were selected by an

expert jury from over 400 works submitted by cartoonists from 68 countries.

A selection of the cartoons will also be showcased in an exhibition, which will open at the hall on Sunday and will be running until the end of December.

Iranian troupe to lay Ira Levin’s “Deathtrap” at Tehran theater

TEHRAN – An Iranian troupe is doing its final rehearsals to perform American writer Ira Levin’s 1978 play “Deathtrap” at a Tehran theater.

The troupe will go on stage at Ahura Theater on November 21 as the tickets for the first three nights will be offered at a 25 percent discount.

Director Negar Azizi, has made some revisions to the play translated by Shahram Zargar. Azizi also will play a role in the play with her cast composed of Hamed Salehpur, Mohammad Khoshbakht and Shima Jafarzadeh.

“Deathtrap” is a play with many plot twists and that refers to itself as a play within a play. It is in two acts with one set and five characters.

The play holds the record for the longest-running comedy–thriller on Broadway, and was nominated for four Tony Awards, including best play.

“Deathtrap” was well received by many and has been frequently revived. It was adapted into a film starring Michael Caine, Dyan Cannon and Christopher Reeve in 1982.

Seemingly comfortably ensconced in his

charming Connecticut home, Sidney Bruhl, a successful writer of Broadway thrillers, is struggling to overcome a “dry” spell, which has resulted in a string of failures and a shortage of funds.

A possible break in his fortunes occurs when he receives a script from a student in the seminar he has been conducting at a nearby college, a thriller which Sidney recognizes immediately as a potential Broadway hit.

Sidney’s plan, which he devises with his wife’s help, is to offer collaboration to the student, an idea which the younger man quickly accepts.

Thereafter suspense mounts steadily as the plot begins to twist and turn with devilish cleverness, and with such an abundance of thrills and laughter, that audiences will be held enthralled until the final, startling moments of the play.

Many of Levin’s novels and plays have been adapted into successful films. His play “Veronica’s Room” was staged by director Mona Ramezani at Tehran’s Hafez Hall in June 2019.

“Cambridge Introduction to George Eliot” comes to Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN – “The Cambridge Introduction to George Eliot” written by Nancy Henry of the State University of New York, Binghamton, has been published in Persian.

The Elmi Farhangi Publishing Company is the publisher of the book released by the Cambridge University Press in 2008. The book has been rendered into Persian by Rahmatollah Qaemi.

As the author of “The Mill on the Floss” and “Middlemarch”, George Eliot was one of the most admired novelists of the Victorian period, and she remains a central figure in the literary canon today.

She was the first woman to take on the kind of political and philosophical fiction that had previously been a male preserve, combining rigorous intellectual ideas with a sensitive understanding of human relationships and making her one of the most important writers of the nineteenth century.

This innovative introduction

Front cover of the Persian translation of Nancy Henry’s book “The Cambridge Introduction to George Eliot”.

provides students with the religious, political, scientific and cultural contexts they need to understand and appreciate her novels, stories, poetry and critical essays.

Nancy Henry also traces the reception of her work to the present, surveying a range of critical and theoretical responses.

Each novel is discussed in a separate section, making this the most

comprehensive short introduction available to this important author.

Nancy Henry is also the author of “George Eliot and Politics”, which was published by the Cambridge University Press in 2006.

In this book, Henry says that “Confound their petty politics!” is the curse of Tertius Lydgate in the days leading up to the fateful vote for the chaplaincy of the Middlemarch infirmary.

A poster for “Deathtrap”, which will be performed at Tehran’s Ahura Theater next week.

Lydgate had hoped to remain above such trivial concerns and to concentrate on his medical research and practice.

Yet, as in other affairs, Lydgate’s character flaws are as much to blame for his unintentional entanglements as are the circumstances into which he is thrown.

George Eliot’s narrator describes Lydgate’s state of mind before the vote by a metaphor that points outward to a greater political scene: “He could not help hearing within him the distinct declaration that Bulstrode was prime minister, and that the Tyke affair was a question of office or no office, and he could not help an equally pronounced dislike to give up the prospect of office.”

Lydgate’s highly rationalized yet spontaneous vote for Tyke and against Farebrother wins him “office”, but he eventually finds reason to regret his desire for this prize, so uncomfortably won by his public display of party loyalty.

Anthropologist David Le Breton’s studies on pain published in Persian

Front cover of the Persian rendition of David Le Breton’s book “Anthropology of Pain”.

TEHRAN – A Persian translation of “Anthropology of Pain”, a book by French sociologist and anthropologist David Le Breton, has come to Iranian bookstores.

Published by Saleh, the book has been translated by Nasser Fakuhi, who has previously rendered Le Breton’s “Body and Society”.

In “Anthropology of Pain”, Le Breton has said that there is no pain without suffering.

Pain disrupts life proportionally to the suffering it generates, but it may be terrible or negligible.

When we are subjected to pain, it destroys our life, eats it away like a form of torture, and paralyzes our thinking, our desire and our social relations.

But if we choose pain as a means of atonement or an expression of faith, or in sports, or in altering our bodies as in body art, it contributes to building

the individual.

In the wake of his studies of the anthropology of pain, David Le Breton will discuss the way in which our perception of pain determines a more or less deep suffering that destroys, or instead builds up, the individual, but invariably influences our behavior and our values, in one word, the social and cultural fabric of our lives.

Le Breton is a professor of sociology and anthropology at the Marc Bloch University in Strasbourg, a member of the Institut Universitaire de France, and the author of a number of works on the anthropology of the body.

Among his books are “Corps et sociétés. Essai de sociologie et d’anthropologie du corps”, “Anthropologie du corps et modernité”, “La sociologie du corps”, “Ladieu au corps” and several others.