

Sayyed Nasrallah on General Soleimani's Martyrdom

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Military chief: Wherever there's a trace of Gen. Soleimani some events occur

TEHRAN — Chief of Staff of Iran's Armed Forces said on Tuesday that wherever there is a trace of martyr Qassem Soleimani, some events occur.

Major General Mohammad Bagheri made the remarks at a commemoration ceremony held for General Soleimani in Kerman.

Lt. Gen. Soleimani, who was assassinated in a U.S. terrorist attack in Baghdad on January 3, 2020, is buried in Kerman, his birthplace.

He added, "After the martyrdom of General Soleimani, we also see that the Americans fled Afghanistan in a humiliating way that they could not even take their allies and spies with themselves, and they are desperately trying to stay fraudulently in Iraq, and they won't succeed, and in Syria as well."

The senior commander also said the U.S. is forced to leave the region.

"We will see the shivering of the Zionists and the United States thanks to the blood of martyr Soleimani," he added.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the military chief named Kerman as the capital of the Islamic Resistance, saying, "We make a pact with ourselves to continue the path of the martyrs and martyr Soleimani until we have a soul in the body and to stand and resist for the ideals of Imam Khomeini (RA) and the martyrs." ► Page 2

Aluminum ingot production up 23% in 9 months on year

TEHRAN – Production of aluminum ingot in Iran rose 23 percent during the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 21, 2021), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) announced.

The country's nine-month aluminum ingot output stood at 400,481 tons, while the figure was 325,223 tons in the same time span of the previous year.

As previously announced by IMIDRO, the production of aluminum ingot in Iran rose 61 percent during the previous Iranian calendar year 1399 (ended on March 20, 2021), compared to the figure for the preceding year.

The country's aluminum ingot output stood at 446,800 tons in the previous year.

Iran's major aluminum producers had managed to produce 278,318 tons of the product in the Iranian calendar year 1398.

The country's aluminum ingot production in the Iranian calendar year 1398 had declined

Archaeologists discover 300,000-year-old relics, traces of hunter-gatherers in northcentral Iran

TEHRAN – Archaeologists have recently discovered a considerable number of prehistoric relics and clues about the Paleolithic hunter-gatherers who once roamed across the Garmsar country of Iran.

"Archaeological quarries in Eyvanekey (district of Garmsar country) have uncovered vast landscapes from the Paleolithic period and a significant number of stone tools and artifacts," Seyyed Milad Hashemi who led the archaeological survey said told reporters on Monday.

"Preliminary studies indicate the presence of human beings in this region in the two eras of the Middle Paleolithic period, about 300,000 years (before present), and in the New Paleolithic period of about 40,000 years ago."

The archaeologist said the recent archaeological excavations at Eyvanekey have uncovered vast landscapes from the Paleolithic period and a significant number of stone structures.

Some of the stone tools are associated with the Pleistocene era, he noted. Pleistocene, often referred to as the Ice Age, is the geological epoch that lasted from about 2,580,000 to 11,700 years ago, spanning the earth's most recent period of repeated glaciations.

Most of the discovered stone artifacts bear a shiny layer of burnt brown to black, which is called "desert polish", Hashemi noted.

Of the technical characteristics of the artifacts are their relatively large dimensions (which are expected to be shaped) with the help of hard hammer blows; evidence of the use of The Levallois technique and the existence of tools attributed to the Middle Paleolithic period such as jagged and concave side scrapers on large chips deemed to be used for making fine blades, the researcher explained. ► Page 6

Straight Truth

TEHRAN TIMES

From Inside



Credible guarantees vital for success of Vienna talks

TEHRAN – As negotiators from Iran and the P4+1 group of countries resume talks in Vienna, a set of thorny issues appears to require more time and energy.

While the recent rounds of talks focused on crafting a document setting out the principles for result-oriented negotiations, the current round is expected to get down to brass tacks. There are two main issues on the table in Vienna: First, how U.S. sanctions on Iran should be lifted. In other words, how Iran can verify the lifting of U.S. sanctions. On this issue, it seems there is a sort of consensus that the U.S., as the first party to renege on its commitments under the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, should take the first meaningful step.

Second, the nuclear measures Iran needs to take if the nuclear deal is to be revived. Iran has constructively engaged on this issue over the course of talks.

In addition, there are major points of contention within these issues. One issue is the advanced centrifuges Iran installed after the U.S. withdrew from the nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), in May 2018. The Europeans have demanded the centrifuges be destroyed, something Iran rejected. A Politico report on Monday suggested that the Europeans have come up with a new idea: destroying the infrastructure, such as cables and other electronic installations, that are needed to get advanced centrifuges up and running.

The other issue is the guarantees Iran is demanding to make sure that the U.S. won't back down on its word again. That has been the thorniest issue during the talks due to American intransigence and reluctance to provide assurances whose raison d'être originates directly from the U.S. track record in dishonoring its JCPOA commitments.

As regards the guarantees issue, Politico suggested that U.S. President Joe Biden could provide a political pledge ► Page 3

Artists pay tribute to General Soleimani

TEHRAN – Artists have paid tribute to General Qassem Soleimani on his second martyrdom anniversary by organizing exhibitions across Iran.

The Dar al-Marhamah Porch in the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS) in Mashhad was hosting a group of artists painting portraits of General Soleimani during a workshop from December 29 to 31.

A collection of the works produced at the workshop is currently on view at the Reza-van Gallery of the holy shrine in an exhibition, which will run on Wednesday.

"The workshop was organized to mark the tasks General Soleimani accomplished and the security he secured for the whole region," said Kazem Chalipa, one of the artists attended the workshop. ► Page 8

Interview



Women volleyball coach Imani optimistic on future in AJM FC Porto

By Farrokh Hesabi

TEHRAN – Iranian women's volleyball coach, Samira Imani Fouladi, has talked about her ambitions after starting a new chapter in her career in Europe.

Imani joined the Portuguese team AJM FC Porto as a coach and became the first Iranian women's coach to work in Europe.

"I've started my work in the Porto's women team. Mr. Carlos Carrêno, the head coach of the team, give us the plans for every training session and everything is according to the program. I was warmly welcomed by the club officials, especially ► Page 3

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Interview



Gen. Soleimani changed the game after U.S. invaded Iraq: Australian National University researcher

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN – An international relations expert says that Gen. Qassem Soleimani changed the rules of the game in the region via highlighting identity structures.

Dr. Alam Saleh says after U.S. invaded Iraq in 2003 the Islamic Republic decided to change the game.

"Soleimani and his military fellows and theorists were worried about the U.S. presence as one of the most powerful military forces of history in the eastern, western and southern borders of the country," Saleh tells the Tehran Times.

Saleh believes that since the United States cannot be confronted in a "direct military clash," the Iranians tried to design the game in such a way that they have something to say.

"Qassem Soleimani highlighted the identity structures of the region and recruited them," notes Saleh, ► Page 5



Leader mourns Hazrat Fatima (SA)

TEHRAN — Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei mourned the martyrdom of Hazrat Fatima (AS) at the Imam Khomeini Hosseiniyeh on Monday night. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, only a cleric and a eulogist attended the martyrdom ceremony. The martyrdom anniversary of Hazrat Fatima (SA) will fall on January 6 this year.

If Israel does ‘stupid’ act against Iran, it will face crushing response ‘in seconds’: parliament speaker

TEHRAN – The Iranian parliament speaker has warned if Israel commits a “stupid” act to take military action against Iran, it will get a response “in seconds and without any delay”.

“They will get a response instantly for any missile and air aggression,” Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf asserted.

Qalibaf, a former IRGC commander and police chief, added, “I hope such an incident will never happen but if it happens, our response will be very tough and crushing.”

The parliament speaker, who was speaking to al-Manar TV on the second anniversary of the assassination of Lt. Gen. Qassem Soleimani, also cautioned that if a such a thing happens “all people and places” that are involved in that action will also be targeted with the same speed and power.

The senior lawmaker went on to say that the Tel Aviv regime is fully aware of Iran’s military power.

Qalibaf said Israel is an illegitimate regime and “we should admit that its power its fake”.

The parliament speaker added, “If they (Israeli) seek to take the slightest military aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran, they will face with the harshest military reaction.”

Israeli political and military officials have ratcheted up military threats against Iran as the talks are underway in Vienna to revitalize the 2015 nuclear agreement, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The Zionist regime of Israel was seriously opposed to the JCPOA from the very beginning. Former Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu was one of the key instigators who provoked Donald Trump to quit the agreement and introduce harshest sanctions in history against Iran.

Writing in the New York Times on November 30, opinion columnist Thomas Friedman said, “The judges have voted and the results are in:

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From page 1 ► He also praised the Leader of the Islamic Revolution’s description of martyr Soleimani. From the point of view of the Leader, Bagheri said, General Soleimani and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis should be seen as a school of thought.

He added, “The school of thought has depth, originality, roots, accuracy and precision and has fundamental effects and is historical, honorable and inspiring and the Soleimani school will play a role in educating the generation of this nation and the oppressed and Muslim nations of the world.”

Stating that the school of martyr Soleimani is not clarified yet, the senior commander added,



President Donald Trump’s decision to tear up the Iran nuclear deal in 2018 — a decision urged on by his secretary of state, Mike Pompeo, and Israel’s prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu — was one of the dumbest, most poorly thought out and counterproductive U.S. national security decisions of the post-Cold War era.”

“Israeli threat against Iran are a dream”

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian said on Monday that the Islamic Republic will defend its interests with power.

Amir Abdollahian’s remarks came in tweet in response to earlier claims by Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid that the Zionist regime “could attack Iran if necessary without informing the Biden administration.”

In an interview on Friday, Lapid claimed that “Israel has capabilities, some of which the world, and even some experts in the field, cannot even imagine.”

Reacting to Lapid’s threats, Amir Abdollahian took to Twitter saying that the senseless remarks made by the “fake Israeli regime against the great Iranian nation” are a dream, which will never come true.

“We will defend the nation’s rights, interests and progress with power and wisdom,” Iran’s foreign minister said, according to Press TV.

“Zionism has no place in the future world,” Iran’s top diplomat emphasized.

“We are currently at the peak of this incident and do not have a proper understanding of the Soleimani school, and this school becomes clearer over time, and although martyr Soleimani is a person, this person is a legend and has a school of thought.”

Bagheri added, “God blessed martyr Soleimani from early youth during the holy defense to the day of martyrdom. He served in the fronts indefatigably and without interruption in various forms, and taught lessons to us and it is up to us to recite them and pass on from generation to generation.”

Expert: Iran has valid reasons not to trust U.S.

TEHRAN — An international affairs expert says there are various valid reasons for Iran not to trust the United States.

“Iran has not yet forgotten the withdrawal of the United States from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and its negligence, so there are good reasons for distrusting the United States,” Nozar Shafiei said in an interview with IRNA published on Tuesday.

When asked about the process of the Vienna talks in the eighth round, Shafiei said that when satisfactory comments are heard from the Vienna talks, it is clear that important events have taken place behind the negotiating table that make the negotiators comment positively.

The expert added, “So these events are a kind of adjustment of the demands of the parties. In other words, Westerners seem to have taken a departure from their maximalist demands and are moving towards a middle ground.”

According to Shafiei, if this assumption is correct, it is clear that the slowness of the negotiations in the seventh round was due to two things. “One is the existing mistrust and the other is the testing of the parties. So as our country’s officials have repeatedly emphasized, it is the Westerners who must be serious in the negotiations and move towards reasonable demands and expectations.”

But the expert said the important thing is that there are concerns about the future.

“What has forced the United States to adjust its demands is that the U.S. is at war with China and Russia over Taiwan and Ukraine, as well as the U.S. efforts to reduce its presence in West Asia and, of course, make that presence smarter,” he opined.

Iran has always proven that it will continue its peaceful nuclear activities and is serious in the negotiations in order to reach an agreement, he said, adding it is these factors that can be the driving force that can move the negotiations forward.

Shafiei highlighted that there are two factors igniting Iran’s mistrust towards the United States.

“First and foremost, Iran has not forgotten the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA, and secondly, the issue of the Republicans’ threats over the agreement with Iran in case of a possible victory in the 2022 congressional and 2024 presidential elections and the fear of large Western companies not to enter into stable relations with Iran due to another exit of the United States from the deal, so Iran has the right to be pessimistic about the West, especially the Americans and discuss the issues of guarantees and the verification mechanisms,” he concluded.

Senior Western diplomat: U.S. should take ‘meaningful first step’ to put JCPOA on right track

TEHRAN – A senior Western diplomat has said since it was the United States that quit the nuclear deal and imposed sanctions on Iran it must take a “meaningful first step” to revitalize the agreement, Politico reported on January 3.

“Since the U.S. unilaterally exited the nuclear deal, it is Washington that will probably have to take a “meaningful first step,” as one senior Western diplomat put it, and lift some sanctions before Tehran will take measures to reduce its nuclear program,” Politico said.

The U.S. under Donald Trump unilaterally left the nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), in May 2018. Through such a move the U.S. violated UN Security Council Resolution 2231 that endorsed the agreement. Iran remained fully compliant to the JCPOA for a full year after the U.S. withdrawal.

Following is an excerpt of the report by Politico:

The latest round of talks on the Iran nuclear deal kicked off on Monday after a short pause.

Some officials close to the talks said the window to negotiate a return to the 2015 deal could close by the end of January or the beginning of February, although others said that there is no fixed date.

Diplomats from the UK, France and Germany noted last week that while they didn’t want to set “an artificial deadline for talks,” there remained “weeks, not months” to restore the accord.

The nuclear deal has been on life support ever since Trump abandoned it. The deal between Iran and global powers put limits on Iran’s nuclear

program in exchange for the lifting of crippling economic sanctions.

That the U.S. and Iran are still not talking directly in Vienna is not making things any easier.

Instead, Enrique Mora, the senior European Union official who is coordinating the talks, is forced to carry potential compromise solutions back and forth between Robert Malley, the U.S. special envoy for Iran, and Ali Bagheri Kani, Iran’s chief negotiator. Tehran says this is the price the U.S. must pay for pulling out of the agreement in 2018.

One senior Western diplomat said that as of this week “all issues will have to be negotiated in parallel.”

Here is a look at the major sticking points and some of the potential solutions.

Talks on the nuclear file are highly technical, as steps have to be specified that will bring Iran’s nuclear program back to where it was in 2015. On some issues, there are solutions in sight. On others, it’s more complicated.

For example, one way of getting rid of Iran’s excess nuclear material would be to ship it to Russia. This would take time but is feasible and has been done in the past.

What is far more difficult and still not agreed on is how to deal with Iran’s many advanced centrifuges — machines that spin at great speed to enrich uranium.

Iran has been enriching uranium to 60 percent. Under the JCPOA, Iran was allowed to enrich uranium to



3.67 percent with a limited number of its first-generation centrifuges at the Natanz fuel enrichment plant. However, Iran has installed hundreds of advanced centrifuges that are much more efficient and powerful at both of its main plants in Fordow and Natanz.

Some countries want Iran to destroy its advanced centrifuges, but Iran prefers to store them away, according to Western diplomats.

One key aspect in this discussion is the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN nuclear watchdog that will be tasked with verifying whether Iran complies with its nuclear commitments. IAEA inspectors pay regular visits to Iran’s

nuclear facilities although their access has been limited in recent months.

Iran will have to restore full access for inspectors for any deal to be approved. Iran will also have to provide the IAEA with access

to the memory cards of cameras installed inside nuclear facilities. Tehran is currently withholding this information.

Sanctions and verification

While verification of the nuclear side of the deal is done by the IAEA, there is no corresponding entity looking at sanctions. Negotiators, therefore, have to agree on how this can be done. This is one stumbling block that will have to be solved quickly. Western diplomats said they are waiting for Iran to come up with proposals this week in Vienna.

One option would be for the U.S. Office of Foreign Asset Control

to issue guidance on how to do business with Iran and to publish the repealing of relevant executive orders. Another tool could be the conclusion of contracts on oil exports or the opening of foreign bank accounts.

Since the U.S. unilaterally exited the deal, it is Washington that will probably have to take a “meaningful first step,” as one senior Western diplomat put it, and lift some sanctions before Tehran will take measures to reduce its nuclear program.

Guarantees

Tehran has insisted publicly on many occasions that it wants Washington to provide a legal guarantee that the U.S. will not pull out of the deal again if it is restored.

“There must be a serious and sufficient guarantee that the U.S., which is not trustworthy, will not leave the JCPOA again,” Iranian Foreign Minister Amir Abdollahian said during a phone conversation with EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell in November.

But U.S. President Joe Biden will not be able to provide such a legal guarantee. But there could be other ways, such as allowing for the continuation of contracts for some time even after the theoretical reimposition of sanctions by a future U.S. administration.

The Biden administration could also provide a political pledge that it will stick to the agreement similar to Biden’s pledge made on the margins of the G20 summit in October. This would also be important for companies that want to do business with Iran as they need to have sufficient confidence about Washington’s intentions.

MP says Iran’s nuclear capabilities are vast

TEHRAN — Fereydoun Abbasi, former head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) and a current member of the Parliament Energy Committee, said on Saturday that Iran’s nuclear capabilities are vast and is beyond the current assumptions.

“The capabilities of our nuclear scientists are very high scientifically, and we are moving to the edge of technology, and we can have enrichment at a higher level, and in addition, we can build small reactors and produce plutonium as well as mastering the technology required to recycle reactor fuel,” Abbasi, a nuclear physicist, told the

ICANA news agency.

He added Iran has made great advances in the field of chemistry and engineering and great talents are being raised in the country

What it is shown today is just a part of Iran’s capability that the world is witnessing, he remarked.

The former head of the AEOI added, “We are an emerging world power and the Westerners know this; they are looking for an economic war to weaken Iran and we will definitely come out of this war proudly.”

Regarding the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known

as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), he said Iran has accepted the limitations that the JCPOA has put on its nuclear program in order to show to the world that its science and technology in the nuclear field are for peaceful purposes, but the Westerners are pursuing other goals through the pact.

“They seek to limit Iran’s regional and defense power, while our regional influence is intended to thwart Western conspiracies intended to disintegrate countries in the region, and in the future our policy is to support independence, order and security in the region,” he concluded.



Credible guarantees vital for success of Vienna talks

From Page 1 ► that he will stick to the agreement similar to Biden's pledge made on the margins of the G20 Summit in October. Such a pledge, Politico continues, would also be important for companies that want to do business with Iran as they need to have sufficient confidence about Washington's intentions.

But the original JCPOA was much more than a political pledge. And the whole world saw how the U.S. treated it.

Politico also pointed to another option in respect to verification that amounts to entrusting mice to a cat. It said one option in this regard is for the U.S. Office of Foreign Asset Control to issue guidance on how to do business with Iran and to publish the repealing of relevant executive orders.



OFAC was, and continues to be, a major tool in the hands of the U.S. in its economic warfare against Iran and thus it is neither reliable nor suitable an institution to be tasked with assuring Iran over the viability of a Biden decision to lift the sanctions.

A middle-ground option for verification and guarantees is a credible legally-binding mechanism under the auspices of international institutions such as the UN Security Council. One option is for the UN Security Council to adopt a resolution clearly banning the U.S.

from punishing other countries from doing business with Iran in case Washington reneged on its commitments again.

The Vienna talks are highly technical and have their own legal jargon. And concerned experts can come up with innovative solutions. Progress in the talks, therefore, hinges on flexibility on the part of the U.S. But so far, the U.S. and its European allies have been stonewalling instead of engaging constructively. Their latest unconstructive move is setting an unofficial deadline of early February. Iran strongly rejected any kind of deadlines, underlining that the talks should be directed by results, not deadlines. Of course, Iran is open to a deal as soon as possible. But it is unlikely to acquiesce to artificial deadlines.

Iran vows to bring culprits for Soleimani assassination to justice

TEHRAN – Iran will continue to work tirelessly to bring those involved in the assassination of General Qassem Soleimani to justice, the spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry has said.

In a tweet on Monday, Saeed Khatibzadeh described the assassination of General Soleimani as a cowardly act that made him an eternal hero for generations to come.

"The US cowardly assassinated Gen Soleimani, but his name shines brighter than ever as eternal #Hero inspiring generations to come," he said.

He added, "Iran won't rest until culprits are brought to justice. And his mission to end nefarious US presence continues as our region's more awake than ever."

Earlier, the Iranian Foreign Ministry said that the United States has committed a serious violation of the right to life by assassinating Iran's top general.

"With the assassination of Iranian General Qassem Soleimani, the US committed a serious violation of the right to life and the principle of non-use of force," the ministry said on Twitter as Iran commemorated the second anniversary of the assassination of the top general.

The ministry added that all those involved in the assassination of the Iranian general bear "criminal responsibility."

"All perpetrators and orchestrators of this crime have 'criminal responsibility,'" it added.

It also said that the assassination reinvigorated the resistance front. "The disgraceful assassination of Qassem Soleimani activated the resistance front, and forced the US to flee from Afghanistan & Iraq: A déjà vu of the US escape from Vietnam. This situation is nothing short of the strategic disarray of the US," the Foreign Ministry tweeted.

On Monday, several commemoration ceremonies were held to mark the second anniversary of the assassination of General Soleimani. In one of these ceremonies, President Ayatollah Seyed Ebrahim Raisi showered the slain

general with praise.

"A man of love for God and sincerity"

Speaking at the ceremony held at the prayer hall of Tehran, Ayatollah Raisi described General Soleimani as a "culture" and a "school of thought".

He said, "If a person's existential personality develops, he is no longer just a real person, but has an existential development, which is referred to as a nation and an ummah."

He added, "By following the verses of the Quran and the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt, Martyr Soleimani has acquired an existential scope; he is not a person, he is a school, and this school is not destroyed by terror or missiles. The school stays, the school survives."

The president noted, "The path and school of Haj Qassem Soleimani is along the school of Imam Khomeini and Imam Khamenei. He was a man of truth; he was a man of love for God and sincerity."

Ayatollah Raisi emphasized, "Haj Qassem deeply believed that the United States cannot do a damn thing against us. He deeply believed that excuses such as 'it is not possible', 'can we?', 'there are obstacles' and 'we must somehow compromise' were not in Haj Qassem's logic."

The president said, "Martyr Soleimani acted as a school and a lofty ideal, he was a commander, he was a general, he was a military figure, but he should not be seen only as a high-ranking military figure, he had a culture."

Emphasizing that Haj Qassem sought to solve the problems of the people and the families of the martyrs, Ayatollah Raisi said, "Martyr Soleimani was a powerful diplomat and a field diplomat who excelled in both fields."

"Powerful diplomat and a field diplomat"

Ayatollah Raisi stated, "Martyr Soleimani was a great commander and strategist who did not create a dichotomy between the field and

diplomacy; He was a powerful diplomat and a field diplomat who excelled in both fields."

"He was a revolutionary commander and a supra-factional commander whose task was to save Islam and Muslims, to ward off evil, corruption and oppression," he said, according to the official website of the Iranian presidency.

The president continued, "Martyr Soleimani's goal was to defend Sunni, Shiite, Palestinian, Lebanese, Yemeni, Yezidi, Christian and all religious people in the Abrahamic religions, so his vision was how to remove the enemy from the region and how to liberate the region."

Ayatollah Raisi said, "The enemy was worried about the Hezbollah front in Lebanon, but several Hezbollah factions were created and became the Hezbollah and Resistance Front in the region, and the international resistance movement."

"This is the recognition of capacities; Capacities must be recognized in a timely manner and used in the face of an arrogant current with courage, bravery, motivation and readiness," said Raisi.

The president advised the youth that Martyr Soleimani was an impasse-breaker and that you, the young, should not be disappointed until an obstacle stands in your way, adding, "He did not recognize any obstacle in front of him, he overcame all obstacles by relying on God and with confidence."

Addressing the Americans, the president said, "Haj Qassem Soleimani was the official guest of the Iraqi Prime Minister. You both broke the sovereignty of Iraq and assassinated a nation, not a single person."

"What should be done in this horrible crime that was very hard and expensive for the whole Islamic Ummah? The aggressor and murderer and the main criminal, who is the then President of the United States must be brought to justice, retribution must be carried out," he said.

The president stressed, "If the mechanism for a fair trial of Mr. Trump, Pompeo and other criminals is provided, they will be punished for their shameful acts in a fair trial for committing this horrific crime. If not, I tell all American statesmen that do not doubt that revenge will come."



sensitive target with 100-percent precision. Perhaps, this was the most remarkable part of the drill as Iran's state-run TV showed the missiles roaring up into the sky and then raining down on a mock target very much resembling Israel's Dimona nuclear plant which is thought to harbor Israeli nukes. The target was totally razed to the ground after it was hit with the missiles, possibly creating a scene of how the real Dimona would look like in case there was an Israeli attack against Iran.

IRAN IN FOCUS

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SPORTS

Women volleyball coach Imani optimistic on future in AJM FC Porto

From Page 1 ► Mrs. Marria Augusta Moreira, the general manager of Porto's women's volleyball team.

"I'm looking forward to putting myself under the club's orders to make better days for FC Porto's volleyball," Imani said in his interview with Tehran Times.

AJM FC Porto have hired two Iranians for the women's volleyball team. Zahra Moghani, 19, a setter and a promising volleyball talent, who stole the show in the Asian U17 Volleyball Championship in 2018. The blue and white team have also hired Samira Fouladi, who joined the technical staff led by Spanish expert Carlos Carreño.

"According to club officials, I am the first women who have ever worked as a coach in Porto's volleyball teams at all levels; I'm proud of that, and I hope to have positive effects on the club," added Imani.

When asked about Italian coach Alessandra Campedelli, who was named as new head coach of Iran's women's volleyball team on Sunday, Imani said: "She comes from a country where women's volleyball has a lot to say. From a few months ago, I knew that FIVB would introduce a world-class coach to the Iranian volleyball federation. They introduced Alessandra Campedelli, which is very good for the Iranian women's volleyball."

"As a person who worked as assistant coach of Majda Cicic, former head coach of Iran national women's volleyball team, I'm sure that high-level foreign coach can help Iranian volleyball to improve. They have a lot of things to teach to our volleyball in the long term," Imani concluded.

Taremi among Puskas Award 2021 final three

TEHRAN – FIFA has announced the final nominees for the FIFA Puskás Award. Iranian forward Mehdi Taremi is among the final three.

The Porto star was nominated for his brilliant bicycle kick against Chelsea in the Champions League – an effort that won UEFA's 2020/21 Goal of the Season award.

This prize is given to the player judged to have scored the most aesthetically pleasing goal, regardless of the competition in which it took place and the player's gender or nationality.

Taremi will have to vie with former Tottenham's Erik Lamela for his goal against Arsenal on March 14, 2021.

Czech Republic forward Patrik Schick is also a nominee for the prize for his strike against Scotland in the UEFA EURO 2020] on June 14, 2021.

The ceremony will take place on Jan. 22 in Zurich, Switzerland.

Tottenham's Heung-min Son won the award in 2020 for his wonder goal against Burnley.

Allahkaram Esteki withdraws from Iran handball team

TEHRAN – Iran national handball team left back Allahkaram Esteki will not accompany the National Team in the 2022 Asian Handball Championship.

The 34-year-old player has withdrawn from the National Team due to the lack of preparation.

Esteki, who currently plays in Al-Ahli of Qatar, has asked Manuel Montoya Fernandez not to

invite him to Iran and the Spaniard has accepted it.

The 2022 Asian Men's Handball Championship will be held in Dhahran, Saudi Arabi from January 18 to 31.

Iran are in Group B along with Saudi Arabia, Australia and India.

Asian Youth Athletics Championships postponed

TEHRAN – The fourth Asian Youth Athletics Championships, scheduled to be held in Kuwait City from March 1 to 4, has been postponed to October 2022, the Asian Athletics Association (AAA) announced.

The AAA has also informed member federations of the cancellation of the event due to the COVID-19.

This is for the second time the Asian Youth Athletics Championships has been canceled.

Iran's Sayyadmanesh in IFFHS Men's Youth AFC Team of Year 2021

TEHRAN – Iranian rising star Allahyar Sayyadmanesh was chosen in the International Federation of Football History and Statistics (IFFHS) Men's Youth (U20) AFC Team of the Year 2021.

The Fenerbahce winger stole the show in the last year in Ukraine league. He joined Zorya Luhansk on loan in October 2020 and scored 12 goals in 35 matches for the team.

Japan has three players in the list. Sou

*IFFHS MEN'S YOUTH (U20) AFC TEAM OF THE YEAR 2021

Goalkeeper: Abduvokhid NEMATOV (Uzbekistan/Nasaf Qarshi)

Right Back: Shumpei NARUSE (Japan/Nagoya Grampus)

Center Back: Ibrokhimkhalil YULDOSHEV (Uzbekistan/Pakhtakor/Nizhny Novgorod)

Center Back: Jassem GABER (Qatar/Al Arabi Doha)

Left Back: Thomas AQUILINA (Australia/Western Sydney)

Offensive Midfielder: LEE Kang-in (South Korea/Valencia/RCD Mallorca)

Center Midfielder: Daiki MATSUOKA (Japan/Sagan Tosu/Shimizu S-Pulse)

Offensive Midfielder: Takefusa KUBO (Japan/Getafe/RCD Mallorca)

Right Winger: JEONG Sang-bin (South Korea/Suwon Bluewings)

Forward: Allahyar SAYYADMANESH (Iran/Fenerbahce/Zorya Lugansk)

Forward: Mohammed MARAN (Saudi Arabia/Al Nassr/Al Tai Club)

Abbas Avarsaji remains head of Iran kabaddi federation

TEHRAN – Abbas Avarsaji has been re-elected as president of Iran kabaddi federation on Tuesday for a four-year term till 2026.

In the elections held at the Iran's Academy Olympic in Tehran, Avarsaji secured 47 of 51 votes cast.

Saeid Moghaddam Bagha came second with four votes.

Iran's kabaddi has improved in the recent years. The Iranian men's and women's teams claimed the gold medals of the 2018 Asian Games.

Aluminum ingot production up 23% in 9 months on year



From page 1 ► Annual production of the aluminum ingot in the country is planned to increase 63 percent by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20).

Last year, during the inauguration ceremony of Iran's biggest aluminum production complex (in the central Fars province), the former industry minister said the

country's aluminum production is expected to be doubled with that unit going operational.

The official put the value of the Iranian mining industry's production at about \$22 billion, saying that the country is relatively self-sufficient in minerals and a great deal is also exported every year.

He went on underlying the country's capacities in the sector, saying that Iran is ranked 18th among the world's top aluminum producers, and with this new plant going operational the country will climb four places to stand at 14th place."

Iran plans to reach the annual production of 1.5 million tons of aluminum ingot by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 2025-March 2026).

Non-oil export development roadmap discussed at ICCIMA meeting

TEHRAN – Members of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Export Development Committee gathered on Tuesday to discuss the details of the Trade Development Organization (TPO)'s export development roadmap document.

As reported by the ICCIMA portal, during the meeting while reviewing the draft of the non-oil export development document, the attendees emphasized the need for assessing the level of achievement for the goals defined in the roadmap in certain intervals.

According to the members of the ICCIMA Export Development Committee, if the implementation of the defined programs and the achievement of goals set in this document are not assessed and monitored

periodically, it will eventually fail like the previous documents.

In this meeting, Amir Abedi, chairman of the ICCIMA Export Development Committee, announced that the committee has planned a meeting with the TPO Head Alireza Peyman-Pak to further explore various aspects of the mentioned document, saying that this meeting will be an opportunity for exporters to review the draft document, and raise any issues or opinions.

Abedi criticized the inactivity and ineffectiveness of exports in Iran's economy over the past decade and said: "The diversity of the country's export products and the markets with which we are associated has sharply decreased and unfortunately adverse environmental factors have neg-

Nearly 2.4m Iranians register in govt. new housing program

TEHRAN – Following the government's public call for the registration of people needing affordable housing units under the framework of a new program called the National Housing Movement, so far 2.387 million people have registered in this program, IRNA reported.

As reported, the registration for the first phase of the program ends on Wednesday, January 5, and the final number of applicants is expected to exceed the above-mentioned figure.

According to the Transport and Urban Development Ministry, in the first phase, the registration system has been available for the residents of 726

cities across the country, and applicants in another 674 cities will also be provided with the opportunity in the near future.

After the National Housing Action Plan, the National Housing Movement is the government's second major program for providing affordable housing units to low-income classes.

As reported, the construction of 750,000 such housing units is underway across the country under the framework of the National Housing Movement.

Since the beginning of the National Housing Action Plan in 2018 so far over 1,461,528 people have registered in the program and considering the applicants in the new program,



a total of 3,812,655 people have registered in the government's housing plans.

Back in November 2021, Transport and Urban Development Minister Rostam Qasemi had said the land for the construction of 2.4 million affordable housing units was prepared and allocated across the country.

The official noted that in the first phase of the new program, the construction of two million housing units has been put on the agenda and the share of each province has been determined.

"In today's meeting, which was attended by governors of different provinces in the form of video conferences, it was de-

cided that the land allocations for the construction of four million housing units will be determined by the end of the current [Iranian calendar year] year (late March 2022)," the minister told the press on the sidelines of the second meeting of the government's Supreme Housing Council on November 17.

He further mentioned a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed with the Mostafazan Foundation, noting: "According to the signed memorandum, 900 hectares of the foundation's lands throughout the country will be handed over [to the Transport Ministry] free of charge to be allocated for the National Housing Movement."

Lavan Oil Refining Company saves over \$30m using Iran-made equipment



TEHRAN – Iran's Lavan Oil Refining Company (LORC) has used over 25,000 domestically-made equipment items in recent years which has saved the company over 8.98 trillion rials (about \$30.2 million), the company's managing director announced.

According to Mohammad-Ali Akhbari, in recent years, LORC has been able to benefit from the capacities of domestic knowledge-based companies and producers by forming a domestic manufacturing committee in the company.

"Domestic producers have managed to produce over 2,200 commodity groups including about 25,000 different items for the first time at the request of Lavan Oil Refining Company," Akhbari said.

The head of Lavan Oil Refining Company said LORC achieved the best performance in terms of profitability among the country's refining companies in the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22, 2021).

Based on comparative statistics for the first six months of this year, the company's profits increased 225 percent compared to the same period last year, the official noted.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Akhbari addressed the social responsibilities of Lavan Oil Refining Company and said the company has taken many steps in this regard so far, including the construction of Shahid Ghasem Soleimani wharf, reconstruction of schools, reconstruction of asphalt of roads, and establishing Lavan clinic.

In addition, the refinery has also created job opportunities for more than 350 locals, he added.

LORC is based in Lavan Island in the Persian Gulf in southern Iran. The company was founded in 1951 under the name of Lavan Distillery Complex and under the supervision of the Shiraz Refinery with a processing capacity of 20,000 barrels per day (bpd).

Loading, unloading of goods rises 23% at Bushehr port

TEHRAN – Loading and unloading of commodities at Bushehr port in the southwest of Iran rose 23 percent during the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 21, 2021), as compared to the same period in the previous year, a provincial official announced.

Siavash Arjomandzadeh, the director-general of Bushehr province's Ports and Maritime Department, said that 3.257 million tons of goods were loaded and unloaded at the port during the nine-month period.

Of the mentioned figure, 2.129 million tons were non-oil and 1.127 million tons were oil products.

As previously reported, loading and unloading of goods in the ports of Iran rose 15.2 percent during the first nine months of this year, as compared to the same period in the previous year.

As announced in a report by Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO), loading and unloading of goods in the country's ports reached 109.09 million tons in the mentioned period, while the



figure stood at 94.72 million tons in the past year's same time span.

During the said seven months, unloading and loading operations in the container sector reached 17.19 million tons, for dry bulk the figure stood at 35.01 million tons, in liquid bulk the figure was 3.05 million tons, while for general cargo (general and miscellaneous goods) it was 15.25 million tons, and for the petroleum products loading and unloading volume amounted to 38.59 million tons, the PMO report said.

The report noted that the loading and unloading operations in the container sector rose by 11.5

percent in the mentioned period compared to the last year's same time span, while in the dry bulk sector the figure grew by 16 percent, in the liquid bulk sector increased by 21 percent, in the general cargo sector the growth was 10.7 percent, and the petroleum sector also experienced a growth of 17.1 percent compared to the same period last year.

While Iran is combating the U.S. unilateral sanctions on its economy, the country's ports as the major gates of exports and imports play some significant role in this battle. This role makes all-out support to ports and more devel-

opment of them serious and vital.

Such necessity has led the government to define projects for more development of the ports and also take some measures to encourage investment making in ports, in addition, to facilitate loading and unloading of goods, especially basic commodities, there.

It is worth mentioning that PMO has defined a high number of projects to develop and improve the country's ports, as the country aims to double the capacity of its ports in a course of five years.

According to the Ports and Maritime Organization, the capacity of the country's ports has increased from 180 million tons in the Iranian calendar year 1392 (ended in March 2014) to 250 million tons in the previous calendar year.

The total capacity of the country's ports is expected to reach 280 million tons by the end of the current fiscal year (late March 2022).

TEDPIX loses 13,000 points on Tuesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), lost 13,255 points to 1.362 million on Tuesday.

Over 4.269 billion securities worth 23.581 trillion rials (about \$79.3 million) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index lost 3,263 points, and the second market's index dropped 2,051 points.

The government has applied several new changes in the national budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year (begins on March 21, 2022) which according to experts and analysts will ensure the stock market's stability

and growth in the coming years, IRNA reported.

Reducing taxes on production units active in the stock market, strengthening the Capital Market Development and Stabilization Fund, eliminating subsidized foreign currency allocations, and stabilizing the ownership interest of the mines are some of the measures considered in the budget bill to support the capital market.

Allocating a 20-percent tax on legal entities is considered in next year's budget bill which is less than the previous years. Reducing the taxes imposed on production units will make them

more profitable and therefore their performance in the stock market will improve.

Also, the direct taxes collected from production units is expected to be injected into the Capital Market Development and Stabilization Fund in order to be used to improve and develop the market.

Based on the next year's budget bill, no subsidized foreign currency will be allocated to special entities to import certain goods. Experts and analysts believe that this decision is going to have a very positive impact on the stock market since it will prevent rent and unrealistic pricing.

The draft of the national bud-



get bill also indicates that the government will be less reliant on the stock market to compensate deficits and fund various development projects, which is another positive aspect of the mentioned bill since the stock market will be less affected by the politics and will follow a normal trend created by supply and demand.

TCCIMA, parliament committee member meet to explore private sector issues

TEHRAN – Heads of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) committees met with the member of the Parliament Economic Committee Mojtaba Tavangar on Tuesday to discuss issues related to the country's private sector activities.

In this meeting, the representatives of the private sector raised some of the most important problems in various areas of the economy and offered some solutions, while Tavangar stressed the need for the parliament and the private sector to work together to revise unnecessary regulations.

According to the TCCIMA committee members, one of the ways to resolve the problems of the country's traders is for them to interact with the regulatory bodies and provide them with the necessary consultations in making economic decisions.

Meanwhile, Tavangar welcomed the idea of communication between the private sector and the parliament and noted that this would be an ideal opportunity for TCCIMA and the private sector to share their ideas and groundbreaking economic plans with MPs.

During the meeting, Mohammad Lahouti, head of the TCCIMA Export Development Committee, criticized the parliament's supervision and monitoring on the implementation of economic regulations, and noted that much of the parliament's power has been wasted on revising inef-



fective regulations.

He stressed the need for the parliament to return to its supervisory role and reminded that some laws, including the law on removing barriers to production and the law on continuous improvement of the business environment, have not been fully implemented and different interpretations of these laws have created problems for the country's business sector.

Further, Reza Padidar, head of the TCCIMA Energy and Environment Committee, called for the establishment of an independent regulatory body in the oil and energy sectors and stressed the need for cooperation between TCCIMA and the parliament to implement this idea.

Ali Naqib, head of the Industry and Mining Committee of the TCCIMA, also said that the lack of an industrial development strategy in the country is a major problem which can be solved with the participation of parliament and the private sector in drafting a roadmap in this regard.

Gen. Soleimani changed the game after U.S. invaded Iraq: Australian National University researcher

‘Soleimani is someone whose friends and enemies praise him’

From page 1 ▶ a lecturer in Iranian Studies at the Australian National University.

Saleh says that these structures existed before Gen. Soleimani, “but his military genius helped him identify these structures and deploy them to create a deterrent power against any potential enemy.”

Following is the text of the interview:

In the humanities, we have two main approaches towards the subjects: the objective approach, which tries to address its subjects and topics objectively, and the Verstehen School of Understanding that tries to understand in a deep way; in the second approach, when a researcher aims to understand another person's experience, he can try to put himself in the other person's shoes. Different positions were taken when it came to General Soleimani and his regional role and influence. Some pundits have sympathized with Soleimani's causes and thoughts making an effort to look at the events with the general's view, while another group sought to explain his discourse based on his behavior regardless of his thoughts and understanding.

On the one hand, the United States and its allies accused General Soleimani of supporting terrorism, while Iran and the axis of resistance considered him a hero of the fight against terrorism. During your research about General Soleimani, which approach was more helpful and insightful?

One of the main problems we face in the humanities and political sciences is methodology. We have always had a gap in methodological methods and interdisciplinary topics to study an individual, a region or a country. Many researchers working on the Middle East (West Asia) usually have a fundamental problem with part of their methodological subjects. For example, it is not possible to talk about Qassem Soleimani unless we have enough knowledge on the situation in the Middle East (West Asia).

It is impossible to study Qassem Soleimani without properly analyzing and critically examining the complexities of the multilayered societies of the Middle East (West Asia).

Then we will be able to understand and examine to some extent the character and influence of a prominent figure like Qassem Soleimani.

Since Qassem Soleimani was not a theorist or writer, we did not have enough resources to see how he was thinking as the one of most popular military figures in the world.

Therefore, not only we need to analyze his political and security attitudes and even his individual behaviors in order to cast a light on Qassem Soleimani's life, but we must study the events and developments in the Middle East (West Asia).

Qassem Soleimani has created and dealt with the events in the Middle East over the past twenty years and perhaps in the last forty years.

That is why I always say that we need an interdisciplinary and complex research to study a subject in the Middle East (West Asia).

None of the researches alone can tell the truth unless we put them together.

If we want to analyze only Gen. Soleimani's biography, our work will be incomplete, or if we concentrate on the IRGC and neglect the situation in the Middle East (West Asia), it will still not reflect the real political-security complexities ruling the region.

What is needed methodologically is a comprehensive study of what is going on in the Middle East (West Asia) and its security challenges, as well as studying societal intertwined layers of the Middle East (West Asia) to understand how Soleimani was thinking and what his security



concerns were, or how he tried to tackle this concern and advance his plans.

How do you assess the view of Westerners - politicians and academics- on Qassem Soleimani? It seems they have more a critical approach to Soleimani, or have no motive to understand his goal and causes.

In the case of Qassem Soleimani, I can say he was a formidable figure who could gain a great deal of respect especially in Western media and even among some Western figures.

This respect was for the ideas, behaviors and plans he could implement successfully.

It was basically the Western press that highlighted Qassem Soleimani as a prominent military figure.

It is interesting that Soleimani's enemies and Western generals were praising him as a military and security figure, especially due to his capacities and experiences in handling military conflicts.

That is why when we examine Soleimani without ideological prejudice, we see that he was a very successful commander; it doesn't need many years of research to figure it out.

Suffice it to recall that dozens of countries over the last twenty years have been directly and indirectly attacked in the region; from Libya to Sudan, Egypt, Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen and Afghanistan, etc. But so far not a single bullet has been fired at Iran. This is a sign of military success.

It is the mission of a military commander to protect the security.

Soleimani, his think tanks and his fellows have been able to prevent an invasion on Iran for the past twenty years.

Soleimani is someone whose friends and enemies praise him.

Iraqi officials have always said that Baghdad would have fallen without Suleimani. If Soleimani did not supply weapons to the Kurds in Erbil, the city would fall. If Damascus did not fall into the hands of ISIS, it was all due to the success of Qassem Soleimani.

Could you brief us about your book and what attracted you to Qassem Soleimani's character?

First of all, we started the idea of writing the book a year before Soleimani's assassination, and even our contract with the University of Manchester was signed several months before the assassination.

Indeed, we had presented our idea in several international conferences.

The project was based on examining how Soleimani used his charismatic personality to advance political and military goals. How did he manage to legitimize Tehran's regional policies and how could he mobilize popular groups, especially in Iraq and Lebanon, and what methods did he use?

We also wanted to see to what extent Soleimani's charismatic, mysterious and successful personality has been able to attract various groups and classes inside Iran who may not necessarily be satisfied with the policies of the

Islamic Republic.

How could Soleimani spread a sense of nationalism via his charismatic personality? We were going to look at these issues until the assassination in January 2020, when I suggested that we focus our research on his policies and military-defense doctrine in the Middle East (West Asia) to see how successful his political and military behavior has been.

What methods did you apply in your book? Have you suggested a specific methodology?

We started the project based on nation branding theory; how a country can promote itself and its policies by a key person.

This phenomenon first emerged in the Middle East (West Asia) by

Soleimani. Iran was known in the region and among the foreign politicians by Soleimani.as Soleimani.

The teenagers and youth, even the secular and middle classes, were interested in Soleimani along with the religious folks. We wanted to see how Soleimani was successful in attracting various classes and spectrum.

Could you mention a distinctive feature of Soleimani that caught your eye?

As a researcher in security studies, I was interested in his military achievements. His special and unique personality, which could be mysterious and simple at the same time, had provided a special potential in his political behavior. His personal characteristics; friendly and sincere treatment of his subordinates and abandonment of classical hierarchies were his prominent features.

According to American generals, Soleimani was a military genius and was well aware of the region and its people. He knew how to impress the influential figures in the region.

Modern military doctrines emphasize order and hierarchy. How could General Soleimani, who grew up in a religious and traditional atmosphere, establish a balance between religious teachings and the modern military doctrines?

I think what made Soleimani distinguished was his capacity to strike a very good balance between Islamic-nationalistic ideology and pragmatism.

Wherever necessary, he could think beyond the ideological scope and go beyond the geographical borders of Iran in his missions.

I think what made Soleimani distinguished was his capacity to strike a very good balance between Islamic-nationalistic ideology and pragmatism.

Although Soleimani was deeply religious, he was eventually allowed to pursue his policies pragmatically wherever necessary, and this was one of the factors in his success in the region.

We are faced here with two contradictory concepts: Iranian nationalism and Islamism. Iranian nationalism has a certain definition based on Iran's historical borders, while Islamism has no border and aims to form Ummah. Therefore, Soleimani was able to redress the balance between the two.

Qassem Soleimani's slogan was that if we did not fight in Syria, we had to fight in the streets of Tehran. Here the cause of Iranian nationalism intersects with Islamic values.

Soleimani engineered this new approach in an effort to converge Islamism and Iranian nationalism based on a good understanding of Iran and its rivals, especially the United States.

I have already said that the experience of classical wars, along with the experience of irregular wars, with his precise knowledge of the region besides the vast authorities given to him, created a special position for Soleimani in so far as he was known as the second most important policy-maker of Iran when it comes to regional policies.

Your specialty is identity. Is Iranian identity necessarily in conflict with Islamic identity? Did Soleimani reconcile these two things?

Epistemologically, there are contradictions between Islamism and nationalism.

But in practice, it was possible to reconcile the two with a greater focus on Shia identity as Shiism has turned to a part of the Iranian national identity. As orthodox, it is a part of the Russian identity.

This conflict does not mean that religious and national identity cannot be used simultaneously. Perhaps when nationalism and Islamism are aligned with one another, as two engines drive identity-based conflicts, they can have a very high mobilizing power. Nationalism will be stronger if it is mixed by religion.

Of course, it should be noted that Soleimani's discourse outside Iran was different from what was inside.

It was said inside Iran that we are defending the country's national interests in Syria and abroad.

This raises the issue of strategic depth. Iran has historically always controlled and managed the geography of the region.

Has this sense penetrated the collective subconscious of Iranians that they should manage the region and have strategic depth? Do you think the religious people in Iran have such a sense?

It is said that one of the reasons why the Sassanid Empire were defeated by the Muslim Arabs was that the Sassanid alliance with the Lakhmids, who controlled the buffer zone between present-day Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula, collapsed and the balance of power changed and Iran was defeated. (The Lakhmids was an Arab kingdom in Southern Iraq and Eastern Arabia from about 300 to 602 CE. They were generally but intermittently the allies and clients of the Sasanian Empire.)

Therefore, Iran's strategic depth has always been beyond its borders.

No country likes to have rivals and enemies along its borders.

This comes at a time when the balance of power in the region has shifted in the last twenty years, especially since 2003, after the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Soleimani and his military fellows and theorists were worried about the U.S. presence as one of the most powerful military forces of history in the eastern, western and southern borders of the country.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Sayyed Nasrallah on General Soleimani's martyrdom

TEHRAN - "On the second anniversary of the martyrdom of the leaders of victory, the dear [General] Haj Qassem Soleimani, [Commander] Haj Abu Mahdi Al-Muhandis and the Iranian and Iraqi brothers, who died as martyrs in that incident.

After two years have passed, we return and commemorate this anniversary that has not disappeared during the past two years and its leaders and martyrs have not disappeared, neither their names, nor their pictures, nor their souls, nor their memory, nor their thoughts, nor their jihad, nor their achievements, nor the voice of revenge that resounds in the hearts of all their lovers throughout world.

When this occasion is commemorated today in Iran, in Iraq, in many Islamic and Arab countries, this revival is intended first to express recognition of the beauty, the kindness of these leaders and these martyrs. As you know, one of the misfortunes of mankind throughout history is the people who are in denial of the clear beauty of individuals such as these martyrs offered, what they accomplished, what they gave to their people, their nation and their region.

When we commemorate and talk about [General] Haj Qassem and Haj Abu Mahdi in relation to the incident of their martyrdom we must be wary about the enemy plots.

Let us take some lessons from their martyrdom. I want to speak, with regards to the people in this region who talk about the killer and the martyr, when we talk about Karbala. It is not enough to talk about [Imam] Hussein and Abbas, you must speak about Yazid and Ubaydallah bin Ziyad, otherwise the picture will be incomplete.

Between the killer and the martyr, our peoples, our countries, our governments, our homelands must determine a decisive position, not for the sake of the martyr, but for their sake, for their awareness, for their insight, for their battle, for their future and for the truth.

Iraq, which was battlefield of [General] Haj Soleimani and [Commander] Haj Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, and also the land of their martyrdom, the martyr [General] Haj Qassem Soleimani and his brothers from Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, the martyr [Commander] Haj Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis and his brothers from the Popular Mobilization. Iraq was also the place of the killer, which was the Americans, and what is required from an Iraqi position and the same position from all the people of our region is our position on the killer and our position on the martyr. The Americans are the killer, let us not talk about history, but just the past twenty years; who occupied Iraq, killing tens of thousands of civilians, by the Americans' own admission, destroyed many important sites, areas and other parts of the country's components, plundering Iraq's resources and still plundering, imprisoning hundreds of thousands of people, practicing the most horrific forms of torture against Iraqi men and women and the Abu Ghraib prison scandals are still in the minds of everybody.

The examples [of the U.S.] are clear, public and known to all. This is America before it killed [General] Qassem Soleimani and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis. America killed, tortured, imprisoned, displaced, destroyed, looted, ruled with a tyrannical fist and is still tyrannical in Iraq abusing its sky and land.

The [Iraqi] resistance expelled the U.S. armed forces in 2011-2012, but America itself, this killer, is the one who created Daesh, according to [former President] Trump and [Mike] Pompeo, who was the head of the CIA and later the Secretary of State and senior military leaders in the United States of America.

Through Daesh, Iraq was placed in front of a real existential threat and we all remember those days when many Iraqi provinces fell within days, and Baghdad was under threat, Karbala was under threat and the rest of the Iraqi provinces were in the circle of great danger. America bears responsibility for all the crimes committed by Daesh in Iraq, with the pretext of Daesh that it created, the [U.S] returned to Iraq with under different titles. This unjust, arrogant, hypocritical killer whose hypocrisy has no parallel in history, this is the killer.

As for the martyr, he is the one who since the occupation of Iraq, and here when I talk about the martyr about Haj [General] Qassem Soleimani, I am talking about Haj [General] Qassem



Soleimani and what he represents, not only about the person, when I talk about Abu Mahdi Al-Muhandis and who he represents and what he represents; i am not referring here only about the person. As for the martyr, he is the one who resisted this occupation and stood by the Iraqis in their resistance to the occupation and contributed to the establishment of the Iraqi resistance factions and provided them with weapons, strength, vigor, hope, confidence and enthusiasm until the great victory and the expulsion of the American forces from Iraq through resistance in all its forms, especially the military and armed resistance, and when Daesh was brought in for America to return to Iraq, he was the first to stand by the Iraqi people to defend men, women, children, sanctities, dignity, honors, cities, villages and all Iraqis.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, here Hajj Qassem represented his eminence the leader, he represented the government of the Islamic Republic, he represented its armed forces, he represented its [Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, he represented its brave and proud people. He and his brothers went [to Iraq] in the early days of Daesh's presence, these were very difficult days, and they offered many martyrs, and [commander] Haj Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis and his brothers where the first to respond to the fatwa of the honorable religious authority and its historical call for jihad.

The martyr slept on the ground and lived among the fighters, shared their pain, their hope, their joy, their sorrow, their hunger, their thirst, this is the martyr who saved Iraq and fought in defense of Iraq; and if Iraq today enjoys security, peace and stability, it is to a large degree due to the blessing of these martyrs.

This is the martyr and this is the killer! Is there anything equitable? here we come to the lesson of the martyr and the killer. Knowing the enemy and the friend, is there any equity? is there a sane person who can equate this killer with this martyr?

Between America, which occupied, killed, imprisoned, tortured, destroyed, looted, and created Daesh, and between the Islamic Republic of Iran, which supported, defended, protected and provided, is there justice for someone to say yes, America is a friend and Iran is a friend, and we deal with this friend the same way we deal with this friend?

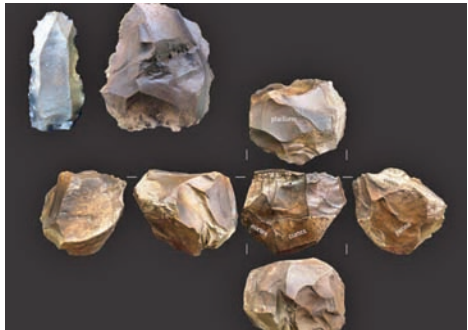
What's worst is that some people act as if America is the friend and Iran is the enemy, that the killer is [General] Qassem Soleimani and [Commander] Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis and the killer of the Iraqi people is the friend and that the martyr and whoever represents this martyr, the protectors and defenders are the enemy, this is a disaster.

A disaster in awareness, a disaster in thought, a disaster in insight, a disaster in morals, a disaster in humanity, of course this matter is made by the American embassy, the [enemy's] media, their social media sites and electronic armies, not only in Iraq but in the entire region.

They distort the image of the martyr; they distort the image of the resistance and the defender. As for the one who commits the most heinous war crimes and crimes against humanity, commits massacres in broad daylight, tortures and assaults women in prisons in Iraq, these Americans? No, these are friends, friends of civilization and civilians who lent us a helping hand."



Archaeologists discover 300,000-year-old relics, traces of hunter-gatherers in northcentral Iran



From page 1 ► The Levallois technique is a name given by archaeologists to a distinctive type of stone knapping developed around 250,000 to 300,000 years ago during the Middle Paleolithic period. It is part of the Mousterian stone tool industry and was used by the Neanderthals in Europe and by modern humans in other regions such as the Levant. The method provides much greater control over the size and shape of the final flake which would then be employed as a scraper or knife although the technique could also be adapted to produce projectile points known as Levallois points.

“This archaeological study indicates the possibility of human presence in an area now called Garmsar county, and field studies are still ongoing in the area,” Hashemi added.

Amongst the most important archaeological sites of Semnan province is Tepe Hesar, which bears cultural periods from the Chalcolithic Age to the Sasanian period. Situated on the southern outskirts of Damghan, Tepe Hesar is reportedly one of the world’s five archaeological hills of the Iron Age, and the archaeological hill is considered as of the oldest prehistorical sites in the Iranian plateau as well.

Identified in 1880, Tepe Hesar was excavated in 1925 and 1931-1932 when the construction of the Trans-Iranian Railway cuts through the main mound. It was one of the first Chalcolithic and Bronze Age excavations in this area, and the stratigraphy has been very important to date similar sites. In 1976, research was briefly resumed and radiocarbon measures were taken.

The oldest layer, Hesar I, belongs to the Copper Age (Chalcolithic; after 3800 BC); it is about as old as Susa and resembles Sialk III, by which it appears to have been influenced, according to livius.org, a website on ancient history written and maintained since 1996 by the Dutch historian Jona Lendering, according to Livius.org; a website on ancient history written and maintained since 1996 by the

Dutch historian Jona Lendering.

Hesar II, which starts in about 3600 BC, is marked by the appearance of burnished grey pottery and the first objects made of bronze. Among the finds are long-shaped bottles. The next phase, Hesar III, began in about 2800 BC and saw nice metal work and grey pottery similar to Turan Tepe, which is on the other side of the Alborz mountain range. Some three centuries later, when Hesar III ended, a part of the town was violently destroyed. The ruin that is now known as the “Burnt Building”, situated in the western part of the hill, is the most recognizable remainder of this catastrophe. Archaeologists have found stone arrowheads and charred battle victims.

After this period, the site was abandoned and there was a hiatus for about five or six centuries. After about 1350 BC, people returned and settled on smaller mounds in the neighborhood of the ancient mound. If the main hill was occupied, those recent layers have eroded.

The smaller mounds from the Iron Age and later have not been investigated, although surface finds prove that Tepe Hesar remained inhabited, as one could have expected, because this part of the Silk Road, from Rhagae to Susia, continued to be in use. In the west, the Median kingdom came into being in the second quarter of the first millennium; its armies came along the road and subdued the Parthians. Later, both Media and Parthia were part of the Achaemenid and Seleucid Empires, until the Parthians turned the tables and united Iran. Directly west of Tepe Hesar, Hecatompylos flourished.

A 2019 study published in the Journal of Human Evolution, suggests that Neanderthals were roaming over the Iranian Zagros mountain range between 40 to 70 thousand years ago. Neanderthals lived before and during the last Ice Age of the Pleistocene in some of the most unforgiving environments ever inhabited by humans. They developed a successful culture, with a complex stone tool technology, that was based on hunting, with some scavenging and local plant collection. Their survival during tens of thousands of years of the last glaciation is a remarkable testament to human adaptation. According to Britannica, the oldest rocks in the Zagros range date to Precambrian time (that is, before 541 million years ago), and the Paleozoic Era rocks date to between 541 million and 252 million years ago are found at or near the highest peaks.

official added.

The coins are the first-ever minted in Iran, and some clothing from the same period is stuck to the pottery, he explained.

Cultural heritage experts have not been able to determine a price for some of these items because they are so valuable, he mentioned.

He also noted that a person has been detained in this regard and surrendered to the judicial system for further investigation.

In many ways, Iran under the Sassanian rule witnessed

provincial tourism chief Amir Arjmand said on Tuesday.

The creation of handicraft jobs could help reverse the rural-to-urban migration trend, and improve the livelihoods of the rural inhabitants, he noted.

Zanjan is considered to be one of the most important provinces in the field of handicrafts and the region's crafters have created valuable works in the fields of knifemaking, filigree, kilim weaving, and charuq (a local style of women's handmade shoes) from the distant past, the official added.

Zanjan is known for exquisite handmade products including knives, copper dishes,

Ancient petroglyphs on the verge of destruction

TEHRAN – Arrays of ancient rock-carved petroglyphs, scattered in central Iranian plains, are suffering from environmental and physical damage, Mehr reported on Tuesday.

International experts Jan Brouwer and Gus van Veen have examined the Teymareh site estimating its carvings were made 40,000-4,000 years ago.

Having a considerable potential to become a UNESCO World Heritage, the site was named a common cultural heritage between the two provinces of Isfahan and Markazi in 1389 (Mar. 2010 – Mar. 2011), the report said.

It embraces countless petroglyphs from prehistorical times to the (early) Islamic eras, yet, over the past couple of years, some local entities have issued mining licenses and allowed shepherds to graze their livestock there, the news agency said.

According to a local tourism official, currently, mines operations are a serious threat of destruction for this



area as miners demolish that landscape that contains ancient petroglyphs to obtain resources for silica (the element needed to make glass)... and they turn them into rubbish.

In 2020, a prehistorical petroglyph, which bears Pahlavi script written by ordinary people of the time, was found during an archaeological survey in Teymareh. “This is the sixth petroglyph, engraved with Pahlavi script, which has so far been found in the highlands of

Teymareh. And the petroglyph is estimated to date back to 2,200 years ago,” according to Iranian archaeologist Mohammad Nasserifard.

Nasserifard had earlier proposed a bold hypothesis on a variety of petroglyphs that are scarred in the region, saying “some prehistorical residents of the Iranian plateau migrated to the Americas.” His assumption is based on evidence from similarities between the petroglyphs and cave painting

symbols in central Iran and the ones found in the Americas.

“Appearance similarities, artistic styles, and uniform themes of ancient petroglyphs and cave paintings of this land (Iran) reveal many missing links in human history and arts one of which is the resemblance of ancient artifacts in Iran with ones found in the American continent,” Nasserifard suggested.

In March 2020, a team of entomologists and archaeologists concluded that a previously-founded petroglyph showcases a six-limbed creature with the head and arms of a praying mantis. The rare 14-centimeter rock carving was first spotted in the Teymareh rock art site during surveys between 2017 and 2018, but could not be identified due to its unusual shape.

Experts believe that prehistoric rock art provides insights into past eras and cultures as archaeologists classify the tools for the carvings by specific eras. Incising tools include flint, metal, or thigh bones of hunted prey.

Iran tourism loses \$233m due to COVID restrictions

TEHRAN – The Iranian tourism industry has suffered \$233m losses due to COVID restrictions over the past two years.

“Iranian tourism facilities have incurred a loss of 69 trillion rials (\$233 million) due to the outbreak of the coronavirus over the past two years,” an official with the tourism ministry has said.

It has been a major shock to the tourism industry when the coronavirus emerged in 2019, Rokna quoted Mohammad-Kazem Kholdi-Nasab as saying on Monday.

Citing an example, the official said, nearly all pre-scheduled trips were canceled during the new Iranian year holidays in March 2020 except for those that were necessary.

“Travel is not believed to be the cause of the outbreak, rather it is a lack of adherence to health protocols that have caused the outbreak, but people canceled their trips anyway, causing major damage to the tourist facilities



across the country,” he explained.

With only two months until the upcoming new Iranian year holidays, the tourism ministry is preparing safe and smart travel packages for Iranian holidaymakers and travelers, he noted.

Nearly 70 percent of the population has been vaccinated, so these trips may be able to partially compensate for the damage done to tourism facilities over the past two years, he mentioned.

Last year the tourism ministry announced that the tourism of the country was growing before the corona

outbreak, its revenues reached \$11.7 billion in 2019, which accounted for 2.8% of GDP, nearing the average share of tourism in the world GDP, which was 3.2 percent.

Iran was ranked as the second fastest-growing country in tourism based on data compiled by the World Tourism Organization.

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

The Islamic Republic expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 26 are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, Iran aims to increase the number of tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2025.

Mosque projected to regain original grandeur by restoration

TEHRAN – The historical mosque of Baba Abdollah in the ancient city of Na'in, central Isfahan province, has undergone some rehabilitation works, a local official said on Tuesday.

A key goal of the project is to fully repair damaged parts of the mosque's shabestan, Mahmoud Madanian noted.

Shabestan is an underground space that can be usually found in Iran's traditional mosques, houses, and schools.

The project involves strengthening walls and columns, replacing worn-out bricks, and repairing the floor, the official added.

The historical mosque, dating back to the 13th century, was inscribed on the national heritage list in 1934.

The history of Na'in dates back to nearly 2000 years, which makes it one of the oldest continuously settled towns in the Iranian plateau.

Na'in lies 170 km north of Yazd and 140 km east of Isfahan. Like much of the Iranian plateau, it has a desert climate, with a maximum temperature of 41 °C in summer, and a minimum of -9 °C in winter.

During ancient times, the city was at the junction of a desert road that connected Tabas and Mashhad, it used to be an important crossroad on converging trade routes since Sassanid times. Na'in was known for its ceramics and textiles; today it's primarily known for fine hand-knotted carpets and for hand-loomed camel-wool cloaks, which are produced in the neighboring villages.

Hundreds of job opportunities offered to Zanjan crafters

TEHRAN – The handicraft sector has provided hundreds of job opportunities across Zanjan province during the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 21).

“A total of 1110 job opportunities have been created for the artisans and crafters across the northwestern province during the first nine months of the year,”



and filigree. In January 2020, Zanjan was designated as a “world city of filigree” by the World Crafts Council after the WCC assessors visited various craft workshops, stores, exhibits, and bazaars

of the city in a two-day itinerary in December 2019.

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

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

inflicted on global trade.

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

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

Intl. journals publish seven articles on Iran-Cuba vaccine

TEHRAN – Seven articles on different stages of development and clinical trials of the Iranian-Cuban coronavirus vaccine have been published in prestigious international journals.

Developed jointly by the Pasteur Institute of Iran and Cuba's Finlay Vaccine Institute, the vaccine is called Soberana O2 in Cuba and Pastu Covac in Iran.

Preclinical stages (1 article), phase one and two of clinical trials (2 articles), and phase three of the human trials conducted in Cuba (1 article). Also, two articles have been published on the development technology of this vaccine.

The results of the study on the use of Soberana Plus (Pastu Covac Plus) as a single dose vaccine in people previously infected are also available as the seventh article in



the form of a preprint.

The results of the phase three study of this vaccine showed that in volunteers who have not yet been infected and received 2 or 3 doses, about 87 to 99 percent of people, respectively, have seen a fourfold increase in antibody.

The vaccine prevented symptomatic disease in people inoculated with three doses by 65 percent and its effectiveness in the prevention of severe disease and hospitalization was 96.5 percent.

It is a conjugate vaccine with two injectable doses, which consists of

the receptor-binding domain of the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein conjugated chemically to tetanus toxoid.

Pastu Covac is the only home-grown vaccine available for injection in children aged 2-18.

Health Minister Bahram Einalahi has said five coronavirus vaccines have been so far produced domestically.

Iran is one of the few countries that has all vaccine production platforms, Mohammad Reza Shanehsaz, former head of the Food and Drug Administration, said in June 2021.

Meanwhile, World Health Organization (WHO) representative to Iran Jaffar Hussain said in September 2021 that the Organization was collecting the necessary information for the registration and certification of Iranian-made coronavirus vaccines.

Flooding hits southern Iran, leaving 8 dead



TEHRAN – Torrential rain has triggered flooding in southern provinces of the country, claiming eight lives so far.

Provinces of Fars, Kerman, Hormozgan, and Sistan-Baluchestan have been affected by flooding for the past few days, IRNA quoted Mojtaba Khaledi, spokesman for the Emergency Organization, as saying on Tuesday.

The number of people injured in the recent floods reached 14, while 8 have died and 2 are missing, he regretted.

Meanwhile, Pir-Hossein Kolivand, head of the

Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS), said that over the past 6 days, 29 provinces of the country were affected by snow, blizzards, and floods.

Some 87 cities in 17 provinces of West Azarbaijan, Ardebil, Isfahan, Bushehr, Qazvin, Fars, Kerman, Kohgiluyeh-Boyer-Ahmad, Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari, Zanjan, Sistan-Baluchestan, Khuzestan, South Khorasan, Lorestan, Mazandaran, Hormozgan, and Yazd need relief services, where a total of 20,526 people have been rescued, he explained.

Additionally, water was pumped out of 233 flooded houses, and 175 cars were released from snow and floods, he added.

Relief operations for those affected by floods, snow, and blizzards have been carried out in the country with the efforts of 479 teams, including 1,926 IRCS forces.

20% of areas at high risk of flood

Twenty percent of areas across Iran are highly

prone to flooding, Khosro Shahbazi, former head of the Forests, Range, and Watershed Management Organization (FRWMO) said in January 2020.

"Precipitation in Iran is one-third of the world's average, as the country is located in a dry and fragile region where we experience 11 millimeters decrease in precipitation every 10 years and an increase in evaporation of more than 50 millimeters every year," he explained.

Rainfall fluctuations usually lead to flood and devastation, so comprehensive planning for watershed management and flood control is required, he noted.

Since most of the water supply is extracted from groundwater resources, the country is in a critical condition in terms of groundwater resources, he stated, highlighting, because perception is less than water withdrawal from the aquifers, so the best way to store rainwater is watershed and aquifer projects.

%20 of areas across Iran are highly prone to flooding.

“Health plus” plan to increase food security in deprived areas

TEHRAN – Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam and the Ministry of Health signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on Tuesday to increase food security in deprived areas of the country, IRINN reported.

Under the MOU, a plan called “health plus” will be implemented by the Ministry of Health, the Nutrition Institute, the Barekat pharmaceutical group, and the Khordad 15th Foundation to promote the health and nutritional safety of children, infants, and pregnant mothers.

The plan will be piloted in Sistan-Baluchestan province with an initial budget of 30 billion rials (nearly \$110,000), Hamidreza Alianadegan, CEO of Barekat Foundation said.

Stressing that the plan focuses on low-income areas and children aged 5 or younger, he stated that nutritional supplements for children, infants, and pregnant mothers are provided with the purpose of children's intellectual development.

The plan will eventually expand throughout the country, he further noted, highlighting that food security is as important to the country as military security.

Iran's undernourishment prevalence

According to the report, Iran experienced a relative reduction in the prevalence of undernourishment in its total population, dropping from 5.2 percent in the period of 2004-2006 to 4.7 percent in the period of 2017-2019. However, despite this improvement, the net number of people experiencing undernourishment increased from 3.6 to 3.9 million.

Hunger increases worldwide

A report jointly prepared by FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, and WHO shows that currently around 690 million people or 8.9 percent of the world population are hungry. Compared to the previous figures, this number is up by 10 million people in one year and by nearly 60 million in five years.

“The State of Food Security and



Nutrition in the World 2020” also indicates that the number of people affected by severe food insecurity has experienced a similar upward trend over the last five years. In 2019, close to 750 million—or nearly one in ten people in the world—were exposed to severe levels of food insecurity.

The figures reveal that about 2 billion people in the world did not have regular access to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food in 2019.

Considering the widespread impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic,

it is estimated that the pandemic may add between 83 and 132 million people to the total number of undernourished in the world in 2020 depending on the economic growth scenario.

While the burden of malnutrition in all its forms remains a challenge for the world, current estimates reveal that in 2019, 21.3 percent (144 million) of children under 5 years of age were stunted, 6.9 percent (47 million) wasted, and 5.6 percent (38.3 million) overweight.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Iran finds herbal medicines effective in COVID-19 treatment

Two herbal drugs that are effective in healing the symptoms of COVID-19 have been permitted to be produced domestically.

The Food and Drug Administration has approved four domestically produced herbal medicine effective in the treatment of COVID-19 and has issued a production license for two of them.

Kianoush Jahanpour, the spokesman for the Food and Drug Administration, told IRNA on Monday that “none of these drugs are a cure for COVID-19, but they have effects to reduce the symptoms of this disease and should be further investigated.”

The first herbal medicine in this collection is an oral spray containing six herbal essential oils, and according to the results of a clinical trial presented, if used, it helps to improve the pulmonary complications of coronavirus, including shortness of breath, cough, and arterial oxygenation, he explained.

تولید دو داروی گیاهی موثر در درمان کرونا در ایران

سازمان غذا و داروی ایران چهار فرآورده طبیعی تولید داخل با اجزای گیاهی برای بهبود علائم کووید ۱۹ را تأیید کرده و مجوز تولید را برای دو مورد آنها صادر کرده است.

کیانوش جهانپور سخنگوی سازمان غذا و دارو روز دوشنبه در گفت و گو با ایرنا گفت: هیچکدام از این داروها داروی درمان کووید ۱۹ نیستند اما اثراتی برای بهبود علائم این بیماری داشته اند و باید مراحل بررسی بیشتری را طی کنند.

وی گفت: اولین داروی گیاهی از این مجموعه یک اسپری دهانی حاوی ۶ اسانس گیاهی است و با توجه به نتایج کارآزمایی بالینی ارائه شده در صورت مصرف به بهبود عوارض ریوی کووید ۱۹ شامل تنگی نفس، سرفه و اکسیژن رسانی شریانی کمک می کند.

داروی دوم یک شربت حاوی عصاره دو گیاه است که با توجه به مدارک کارآزمایی بالینی ارائه شده، در صورت مصرف به بهبود علائم خستگی و بی اشتها در بیماران مبتلا به کووید ۱۹ کمک می کند.

SOCIETY

JANUARY 5, 2022

Straight Truth

TEHRAN TIMES

7

Rehabilitation of Kamjan wetland wins Energy Globe Award

TEHRAN – Restoration and protection of the Kamjan International Wetland in Korbal district of Fars province, southern Iran, a Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP) UNDP grantee was started by a local group of revivalists.

The main aim of the revivalists was not only to revive the ecosystem but also to improve the villagers' lifestyles and skills. This was achieved by teaching the locals how to reduce the over-exploitation of water resources in order to save the ecosystem.

In 1983, with an aim of agricultural development, the wetland bed was drained by Jihad Sazandegi and the Water Organization, and the wetland bed was completely dried. With the drying of the wetland, a center of dust production was created.

Due to these problems, the fertile marginal lands encountered a decrease in agricultural products and many livestock died following the wiping out of the vegetation. The dried wetland has further been damaged by the surrounding human communities and marginal farms.

The revivalists realized that it was crucial to train and encourage all age groups of the community about the protection of wetlands. They set up regional festivals and gatherings based on farm works calendars, seminars, celebrations, and workshops.

This was to create awareness about the situa-



tion and the importance of the protection of the environment. The other solution was educating the children with topics about the environment and learning about the importance of conserving wetlands in their lives.

Nature enthusiasts and environment lovers provided no-charge excavators and other machinery for the success of the project. The revivalists also carried out activities including planting tamarisk trees and reeds, educating students about wetland conservation, providing facilities for families to start traditional livestock farming, empowering women in the professions such as tailoring, and training people on how to produce medicinal and greenhouse plants.

The Energy Globe Award, World Award for Sustainability, is organized by the independent Energy Globe Foundation from Austria. The Energy Globe Award is presented in the categories of Life: Earth, Fire, Water, Air, the future-oriented category Youth, and a yearly special category.

Natural History Museum identifies more than 500 new species in 2021

Six new dinosaurs, an Indian beetle named after Larry the cat, and dozens of crustaceans critical to the planet's carbon cycle were among 552 new species identified by scientists at the Natural History Museum this year.

In 2021, researchers described previously unknown species across the tree of life, from a pair of giant carnivorous dinosaurs known as spinosaurs – nicknamed the “riverbank hunter” and “hell heron” – to five new snakes that include the Joseph's racer, which was identified with the help of a 185-year-old painting.

With international travel to field sites restricted, scientists at the London-based museum concentrated on describing existing collections and species that roamed the Earth millions of years ago.

“It has been a fantastic year for the description of new dinosaurs, especially from the UK,” said Dr Susannah Maidment, a senior researcher in paleontology at the museum, who helped describe some of the new finds. “Although we've known about the UK's dinosaur heritage for over 150 years, the application of new techniques and new data from around the world is helping us to uncover a hidden diversity of British dinosaurs.”

Spinosaurs were among four UK dinosaur species described by researchers alongside a new iguanodontian with an unusual snout from the Isle of Wight, and Pendraig milnerae, the earliest known carnivorous dinosaur from the UK.

More than half of the new species identified

at the museum this year were copepods, small shrimp-like creatures found in salt and fresh water. They form a large part of zooplankton on which krill, fish and other invertebrates feed, playing a vital role in the planet's ecology and carbon cycle.

Because of their abundance, copepods are among some of the biggest carbon sinks in the oceans. Scientists described 291 species this year, many from a collection created over six decades by French researchers Claude and Françoise Monniot.

“Copepods are not only free-living but many are parasites, and they can be found living in virtually every other major animal group,” said Prof Geoff Boxshall, a researcher in the museum's department of life sciences who identified the crustaceans with a South Korean colleague, Il-Hoi Kim.

“The huge Monniot collection was made available to Il-Hoi Kim and myself, and as we are both recently retired, we theoretically had time to finally go through it. However, the collection was so enormous it was somewhat daunting – but then Covid-19 happened and completing the series of papers became my lockdown project.”

Other newly identified species included 52 wasps, 13 moths, seven crabs, six flies and five amphipods. Beetles featured heavily, as they did in 2020, with 90 new species described. They included a pair of purple and green metallic beetles from India, a monochromatic beetle with a large pair of jaws from the Philippines, and a marsh-loving beetle named in honour of Larry the cat, the Downing Street mouser.

COVID-19 UPDATES ON JANUARY 4

New cases	1,706
New deaths	34
Total cases	6,200,296
Total deaths	131,736
New hospitalized patients	358
Patients in critical condition	2,471
Total recovered patients	6,044,247
Diagnostic tests conducted	42,382,230
Doses of vaccine injected	120,971,244

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JANUARY 5, 2022

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Unfortunate is he who cannot gain a few sincere friends during his life and more unfortunate is the one who has gained them and then lost them (through his deeds).

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:10 Evening: 17:25 Dawn: 5:45 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 7:15 (tomorrow)

Hafez, most popular of Persian poets

Part 3
To read anything other than social outcasts and men of ill repute in Hafez’s rend and qalandar is to miss the point. A glance at the context of occurrences of rend and rendi is sufficient to show that by rend Hafez did not mean anything other than a derelict, an embodiment of sin and dissoluteness occupying the basest position in society.

He frequently associates rends with drunkenness, vagrancy, philandering, irresponsibility (laobali) and misdeeds: “Though I am a love-addict, a rend, a drunkard, and have a black record/a thousand thanks that our friends in the city are innocent” (196.2; man arche asheq-am o rend o mast o nameh-siah/hezar shokr ke yaran-e shahr bigonahand;).

In his sweeping denunciation of hypocrites, Hafez makes no exceptions. His condemnation is absolute. We do not find “good” or “exceptional” zaheds, shaikhs or mohtasebs.

They are depicted as two-faced and corrupt as a generic lot: “Let us have wine, since the shaikh, the hafez, the mofti, and the mohtaseb are all cheats when you look (at them) closely” (195.9; mey deh ke shaykh o hafez o mofti o mohtaseb/chun nik bengari hama tazwir mikonand).

He speaks, however of parsai (the virtuous) or parsai (virtue; altogether six times) darvish and darvishi, mardan-e khoda “men of God” and particularly tariqat “the Way” (17 times) in a positive sense, but never so of the zahed.

A third major theme of the poetry of Hafez is the celebration of wine and intoxication. It ranks second, in terms of frequency of occurrence, to the theme of love.

In some respects, it is a corollary of the previous theme, since drinking is forbidden by the Islamic law, and exalting it, as Hafez does, was partly meant to shock and embarrass the hypocrites.

The theme of wine drinking and its inclusion in the ghazal was not new, but no other poet made bacchanalia so frequent and integral a part of his poetry.

His Anacreontic praise of wine goes hand in hand with praise of rends and qalandars, both given to inebriation. Hafez passes himself off as a votary of wine, destined to be a drinker by the unfathomable divine decree, a habitu  of the tavern and a follower of the rends’ and qalandars’ ways in order, again, to declare that honest and open drinkers are far superior to dishonest abstainers.

Hafez’s antinomian drinking and his rapturous exultation in drunkenness have superficially a malamati aspect; a malamati, however, will commit anti-social acts in order to break his own pride and to teach himself humiliation.

Hafez, on the other hand, celebrates wine and inebriation both to honor a poetic tradition and to annoy the hypocrites and show them his abhorrence of their false piety.

Attempts at finding a mystical interpretation for Hafez’s praise of wine and drunkenness are not supported by his Divan. Many lovers of Hafez have

sought to find clues in his poetry to his mysticism or confirmation of his religious beliefs.

As Sufi centers (khaneqahs) multiplied and Sufi orders found more and more affiliates, a mystical view of life and the universe and the attainment of Truth by love rather than reason became prevalent and profoundly influenced the Persian world view.

It was only natural that a Sufistic interpretation should be applied to the poems of Hafez, ignoring in the process many indications to the contrary. Some commentators and even some Western translators of Hafez, notably Wilberforce Clarke, a translator of the Divan, satisfied themselves, to the point of utter absurdity, that every single word written by Hafez had a mystical meaning and no line of Hafez actually meant what it said.

The reading of Hafez as codified poetry implying an esoteric meaning for each line or word propounded the view that his ghazals can be read at two levels, one apparent, the other hidden—the latter representing the intended meaning.

Deciphering Hafez’s underlying meaning grew into an esoteric art, not dissimilar to the explanations offered by the addicts of “conspiracy theories” in political affairs.

There is no indication at all that Hafez said one thing and meant something else. His language is transparent. Of course he uses metaphor and allegory, intimation and allusion. When he says, for instance (in 250.1), “The lost Joseph will return to Canaan, don’t grieve” (Yusof-e gom-gashteh baz ayad be kan’an gham makhor), we understand his metaphor as a message of hope for change in the prevailing situation. Or, again, when he says (in 468.7): “With the poisonous wind that blew over the garden/it is a wonder if there is still left the scent of a rose or the color of a jasmine” (az in somum ke bar tarf-e bustan begozasht/ ajab ke bu-ye goli hast o rang-e yasamani) we know that he is alluding to a period of political convulsions and bloodshed that engulfed Fars province under a Mozaffarid ruler.

There are lines in which he talks about the recitation of the Quran, about midnight prayers (doa-ye nimeh-shab, 263.8) and early morning invocations (werd-e sahangah, 401.1), and lines that paraphrase Quranic verses or express Quranic ideas; and there are lines in which he expresses Gnostic ideas, for instance, his immigrant soul’s not belonging to this world, and lines in which he praises love beyond any divine gift and as the key to the understanding of the world.

There are lines that show how familiar he is with Sufism, the mystical Path (tariqat), and Gnostic precepts. These are clearly said, and are quite expected, since Hafez, far from being a deliberate atheist, is a Muslim, brought up in a Muslim environment, educated in traditional religious schools, and immersed in Islamic culture.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica

To be continued

Artists pay tribute to General Soleimani

From Page 1 ► “Artists need a safe haven to create their works without any concern, and officials and art and cultural centers are responsible for creating a safe place,” he added.

He also noted that the place should be created for all artists and added, “Under these conditions, we can hope prominent artists will emerge.”

Mohammad Asadi, Mehdi Amini, Abbas Barzegar, Ruhollah Parvin, Abbas Tarokh, Alireza Zakeri, Hassan Razmju, Hossein Esmati, Abbas Gudarzi, Akram Mahmudi and Ahmad Mansub were among the artists attended the workshop named “Headband Image”.

The Abolfazl Aali Gallery of the Art Bureau of the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization is also hosting an exhibition displaying 40 graphic designs on General Soleimani created by Ali Mostafavi, Mohammad Samadi, Mahmud Bazdar, Farhud Moqaddam, Hamed Maghruru and several other artists.

“I’m so sorry that I could not meet him [Soleimani] in person,” said Masud Purzarei who is participating in the exhibition with two works.

An art enthusiast visits the exhibition “Headband Image” at Rezavan Gallery in Mashhad on January 2, 2022. (IQNA/Mohsen Esmaeilzadeh)

“If I had been able to meet him, he would have provided more inspirations for me,” he added.

Copies of the artworks are also on display in an exhibit at the Yazd branch of the Art Bureau. The exhibitions named “In Line with Imam [Khomeini]’s Look”.

The Art Bureau in Tehran is also organizing an exhibition of photos reflecting on aspects of General Qassem Soleimani’s national popularity.

Entitled “Sarve Ravan”, this exhibit will continue until January 19.

The Palestine Museum of

Contemporary Art in Tehran is also showcasing a collection of photos of Soleimani’s funeral in an online exhibition entitled “In Soleimani’s Path”.

25 photos taken by Seyyed Matin Hashemi will be on view on www.honar.ac.ir until January 7.

“The Morning Son”, biopic about Imam Khomeini, to open Ammar film festival

Abdorrez Akbari acts in a scene from “The Morning Son”.

TEHRAN – The 12th edition of the Ammar Popular Film Festival will open on Saturday by screening “The Morning Son”, Behruz Afkhami’s biopic about Imam Khomeini.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the previous edition was organized online, but this year’s festival will take place at the Andisheh Hall of the Art Bureau in Tehran.

Established by a number of Iranian revolutionary figures, the Ammar Popular Film Festival has been named after Ammar Yasir, a close companion of Prophet Muhammad (S).

John Ghazvinian’s historical review of Iran-America relations published

TEHRAN – “America and Iran: A History 1720 to the Present” by Iranian-American historian John Ghazvinian has been published in Persian.

Saless, a major Tehran-based company, is the publisher of the book rendered into Persian by Saeid Kalati.

In this rich, fascinating history, Ghazvinian traces the complex story of the relations between these two powers back to the eighteenth-century’s Persian Empire, the subject of great admiration of Thomas Jefferson and John Quincy Adams and for the Iranians, an America seen as

Front cover of the Persian translation of John Ghazvinian’s book “America and Iran”.

an ideal to emulate for its own government.

Drawing on years of archival research both in the U.S. and Iran, including access to Iranian

government archives rarely available to Western scholars, the Iranian-born, Oxford-educated historian leads us through the four seasons of U.S.-Iran relations: the

“spring” of mutual fascination; the “summer” of early interactions; the “autumn” of close strategic ties; and the long, dark “winter” of mutual hatred.

With an educator’s grasp and a storyteller’s ability, Ghazvinian makes clear where, how and when it all went wrong. And shows why two countries that once had such heartfelt admiration for each other became such committed enemies; showing us, as well, how it didn’t have to turn out this way.

Ghazvinian is the executive director of the Middle East Center at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

“Augustine: The Confessions” at Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN – Iranian publisher Chatrang has recently published a Persian translation of Gillian Clark’s “Augustine: The Confessions”.

Reza Alizadeh is the translator of the book, which was originally published in 2005.

Augustine’s “Confessions”, written at the close of the fourth century CE, is a highly significant text in the history of European culture.

Augustine explains just how and why he came to abandon a successful career and the personal enjoyments of a largely secular existence to follow a life of prayer and study, leading to a true comprehension of God and the Bible.

The avowed approach of this introductory book is to “historicise” - to set Augustine’s own experiences of religion, philosophy and Christian faith against the long-standing political, cultural and religious traditions of the classical world.

Late antiquity saw the transformation of the classical heritage and its transmission by Christian authors.

Augustine’s ideas about how texts may be

presented and read, as well as how people respond to written and spoken language, find resonance in recent critical theory.

The world in which Augustine lived, the structure, style and purpose of the Confessions, and the problems of rhetoric and truth posed by its author’s personal search for himself are all scrutinized in this lucid introductory account.

Clark is an Emeritus Professor of classics and ancient history at the University of Bristol. She retired from the University of Bristol in 2010. Clark has made a significant contribution to the history, literature, and religion of late antiquity.

Clark studied Greek and Latin language and literature, ancient history, and philosophy at Somerville College, Oxford. She received her Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degrees from the University of Oxford. She has taught at the universities of Glasgow, St Andrews, Manchester, Liverpool and Bristol.

She is currently working on a commentary of Augustine of Hippo’s “City of God”, under

Front cover of the Persian edition of Gillian Clark’s “Augustine: The Confessions”.

contract with Oxford University Press. She is a Fellow of the British Academy and an editor for the “Translated Texts for Historians 300–800” series, published by Liverpool University Press.