

# What Iran's New Economic Reforms Mean for Vienna Talks?

► Page 3

## Report

## U.S. gun murders spiked to record numbers in 2020

According to new data from the Centers for Disease Control and Protection (CDC) Gun murders skyrocketed in the United States in 2020, the first year of the pandemic.

Among the figures is another worrying display of racial inequity in the U.S.

More than 45,000 Americans died in gun-related incidents in 2020. The gun murder rate was the highest reported on record since 1994. It's also the highest one-year increase in modern history.

CDC experts say the study doesn't explain why gun homicides increased. But, they pointed to pandemic-related factors that could have possibly exacerbated the gun epidemic in America.

This is while the CDC Acting President Dr. Debra Houry warned "firearm violence is preventable, not inevitable"

In a new report, the U.S. national health agency registered 19,350 firearm murders in 2020, marking a nearly 35 percent increase from 2019.

The CDC says it has not finished compiling its data and research for the year 2021.

The sharp spike in people were gunned down came during the same time when calls to defund the police were sweeping the nation.

The national agency also recorded 24,245 gun suicides, an annual increase of 1.5 percent which is in line with recent trends, and the surge in gun deaths was mostly driven by the increase in murders.

The CDC data shows firearms were involved in 79 percent of all homicides and 53 percent of all suicides in 2020. ►Page 5

## Iran's Yousefi sets record in IWF Junior World Championships

TEHRAN - On the final day of the 2022 International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) Junior World Championships in Heraklion, Greece, Iranian weightlifter Alireza Yousefi put on a record-breaking performance.

The superheavyweight won the gold by a 28-kilogram margin and set a new Junior world record clean & jerk of 239 kilograms.

The 18-year-old weightlifter won the gold medal for a total of 416kg in the Men's +109-kilogram category.

Yousefi's new Junior world record clean & jerk is one kilogram heavier than the previous one, which he also held, scored at the 2021 IWF World Championships in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Uzbekistan's Mirkhosil Mirzabaev (176-212-388) and Ukraine's Bohdan Taranenko (167-207-374) won silver and bronze, respectively.

Yekta Jamali, another Iranian representative, had finished in fourth place in the competition.

She was fourth with a personal best of 100-121-221, and she took silver in the snatch to complete a good year.

Jamali has won medals in all her three appearances at World Youth and Junior Championships in the past year, an impressive performance.

The gold medal went to Uzbekistan's Tursunoy Jabbarova with a total of 238kg.

Elizabeth Reyes finished second on 99-127-226 and Avery Owens of the US was third on 99-123-222.

## State terrorism



© File photo

TEHRAN— Early on Wednesday, Al-Jazeera reported on its Telegram channel that Israeli forces had attacked the Jenin camp and surrounded a house in al-Jabriyat neighborhood.

Al-Jazeera first reported in a breaking news item that its correspondent, Shirin Abu Akleh, had been shot by the Israeli army and

wounded while covering the Israeli army's attack on the camp, but announced her martyrdom a few minutes later.

The seasoned Al-Jazeera journalist was martyred while wearing a press uniform and a helmet.

Initial reports said that the Israeli sniper manages to shoot her in the head, and the bullet hit the lower part of the reporter's ear, which was not covered by her helmet.

Eyewitnesses also said that the Israeli soldiers prevented an ambulance's access to the crime scene. ►Page 2

## Yerevan hosts 17th Iran-Armenia Joint Economic Committee meeting

TEHRAN - Iranian Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian, who traveled to Yerevan to attend the 17th Iran-Armenia Joint Economic Committee meeting, met with Armenian Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan on Tuesday evening.

During the mentioned gathering, the officials discussed the preparations for the Joint

Economic Committee meeting, the portal of the Iranian Energy Ministry Paven reported.

In this meeting, which was attended by a large number of deputy ministers, senior officials, ambassadors, and members of parliament of the two countries, the main issues that play a key role in the development of relations between the two countries were

discussed.

According to the officials, the purpose of holding the 17th meeting of Iran-Armenia Joint Economic Committee is the real and tangible development of relations between the two countries. ►Page 4

## Japan seeking to use IRCS volunteer experiences

TEHRAN - Otohiko Hori, Executive Director General for Operations Sector of the Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS) is seeking to use successful experiences of the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) in volunteer services.

He made the remarks in a meeting with the head of the IRCS Volunteers Organization, Vahid Salimi, in Tehran on Tuesday, ISNA reported.

Praising the plans of the IRCS Volunteers Organization to attract and keep volunteers active by using modern technologies and defining humanitarian programs, Hori said that with strategic cooperation, these successful experiences can be transferred to Japan.

Referring to the diversity of voluntary services and the high motivation of Iranian volunteers to participate in various charitable programs, he announced that after this meeting, he will create a new ►Page 7



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## EU's Mora meets Iranian chief nuclear negotiator Bagheri Kani

Enrique Mora, the European Union's coordinator for the nuclear talks, held talk in Tehran on Wednesday with Iran's chief nuclear negotiator Ali Bagheri Kani. Mora visited Tehran late last night in new efforts by the EU to push the nuclear talks forward. The talks, which started in Vienna in April 2021, are intended to lift illegal sanctions on Iran by revitalizing the 2015 nuclear agreement.

## Lebanese culture minister visits National Museum of Iran

TEHRAN - Lebanon's Minister of Culture Abbas Mortada toured the National Museum of Iran on Tuesday.

In the company of a number of Iranian cultural officials, he visited different sections and galleries of the museum, ILNA reported on Wednesday.

"I had the privilege of visiting this extraor-

dinary museum today and experiencing the cultural and artistic heritage that represents the Iranian people and their civilization," Mortada said during his visit.

National Museum of Iran is a state museum under the auspices of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts. The Museum consists of the Iran Bastan Museum

(Ancient Iran) and the Museum of Islamic Archaeology and Art of Iran, as well as eight research departments, the conservation department, the library, and the archives. The research departments are organized by specific archaeological and historical periods and topics. ►Page 6

## From Inside

- Bagheri: Iran's regional cooperation not "temporary tactic" **P2**
- Iran demands release of diplomat jailed in Belgium on spurious allegations **P2**
- Iran FM sends messages to Uzbek, Montenegrin counterparts **P3**
- IRGC pounds terrorist sites in northern Iraq **P3**
- Iranian production, industry achievements exhibit held in Tashkent **P4**
- Iran's private sector welcomes co-op with UNIDO **P4**
- RAI in talks with Russia to supply locomotives for railway fleet **P4**
- Sassanid fortress hosting national festival of ethnic groups **P6**
- North Khorasan handicrafts receive National Seal of Excellence **P6**
- Germany, Norway ready to support Iran improve refugee services **P7**
- Over 1,600 inmates of involuntary crimes released in Ramadan **P7**
- Tehran photo exhibit explores WWII Polish refugees' odyssey from Soviet Union to Iran **P8**
- "Lady of the City" crowned best at Sydney World Film Festival **P8**

## Leader praises teachers' efforts during Covid pandemic

TEHRAN— On Wednesday, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei met with a group of teachers and education ministry officials to thank them for their efforts in educating the youth, especially during the coronavirus pandemic.

The Leader called teachers people who are proud to lead future generations and said the purpose of his meeting with teachers is to highlight their role and establish and perpetuate the value of the teacher in public opinion so that both the teacher and his or her family would be proud of his or her job as a teacher.

The Leader of the Revolution also thanked the good points mentioned by the education minister during the meeting, saying, "The country is not deficient in terms of law, document and good decisions. It is important that these decisions and laws are pursued and implemented with serious and diligent work." ►Page 2

## Interview

## Americans have increasingly become disenchanted with both established political parties: writer

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN - An American writer says that the American people are disappointed with both established parties, the Republicans and Democrats.

"Since 1992, Americans have increasingly become disenchanted with both established political parties," Charles Ortel tells the Tehran Times.

The American investor and writer, who is interested in lasting peace, is of the opinion that moderate Democrats are unhappy with progressives whose left-wing views circulate in universities, in media editorial meetings and swirl across social media platforms.

"Socially open-minding economic conservatives do not support rigid positions of the religious right-wing in the Republican Party," Ortel argues.

He also says, "Meanwhile, there is growing acceptance that supposed 'elites' merely enrich themselves while destroying realistic opportunities to prosper at home and weakening America's global standing abroad."

Following is the text of the interview: ►Page 5





**REMEMBER  
PALESTINE**  
by Tehran Times

## State terrorism

From page 1 ► In a video posted on social media, Abu Akleh's colleague described the details of the tragic event. "At 6:30am, a vehicle carrying a group of journalists arrived at the first roundabout in the Jenin refugee camp.

They were there to cover an Israeli raid on the camp, and a number of Israeli snipers were stationed on rooftops

Shireen Abu Akleh got out of the vehicle, wearing a helmet and a flak jacket clearly marked with PRESS. An Israeli sniper shot her, hitting just below her ear. She fell near a wall, and the shooting continued, hindering other journalists from reaching her. Her colleague, Ali al-Samoudi, was also shot in the back," he said.

He then added that they were both transferred to Ibn Sina hospital in Jenin, and her death was announced there.

"Don't believe the Israeli lies about 'exchange of fire'. Don't fall for the vacuous wording of headlines.

This was targeted killing of a journalist by Israel, something which they have done with impunity time and time again. Its standard procedure for them at this point," he noted.

Later in the day, Al-Jazeera correspondent reported that the Israeli occupation police stormed the house of Abu Akleh in Jerusalem and is currently dispersing the gathering in its surroundings.

The scandalous crime of killing this veteran journalist committed by the Israeli military has provoked many reactions from Palestinian institutions, the Palestinian Authority, the media and legal institutions, and many countries, some of which are close allies of the regime.

In a statement, the French Foreign Ministry said that the killing of Shireen Abu Akleh is very shocking.

"We condemn it and demand a transparent investigation into the circumstances of the killing," it added.

The Palestinian Authority condemned the Israeli operation and blamed the Israeli government for the scandal.

Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammed Shtayyeh and Palestinian National Assembly Speaker Rouhi Fattouh condemned the move by Israeli forces and offered their condolences on the martyrdom of Abu Akleh.

The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs also wrote that Israel's request for an investigation into the killing of Shireen Abu Akleh is a scandalous attempt to eliminate this crime.

Qatar's Foreign Ministry, the Arab League, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Al-Jazeera, Human Rights Watch, the Iranian, Jordanian and Dutch foreign ministries, Hezbollah, the

Iraqi Journalists' Union and the Al-Hashd al-Shabi Organization are among the other parties condemning Israel's brutal atrocity and expressed their condolences and demanded that the perpetrators of this crime be tried.

In an effort to disprove the truth, the Israeli army announced that it had made a proposal to the Palestinian Authority to conduct a joint investigation into how Al Jazeera correspondent was shot dead.

Israeli army spokesman Ran Kochav said Tel Aviv had made the offer to the Palestinians to jointly investigate the details of the killing of Abu Akleh in the Jenin camp on Wednesday morning.

Kochav claimed that, contrary to what the Arab media reported, initial estimates indicated that the journalist had been shot dead by Palestinian gunmen in the Jenin camp.

He also claimed that Israel had worked with the reporter for many years and that the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) attached great importance to freedom of the press!

Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett also claimed that according to available information, there was a high probability that Palestinian gunmen had killed the Al-Jazeera reporter in an indiscriminate shooting.

Also, in a tweet posted on Wednesday noon, Yair Lapid, Israel's foreign minister said, "We have offered the Palestinians a joint pathological investigation into the sad death of journalist Shireen Abu Aqla. Journalists must be protected in conflict zones and we all have a responsibility to get to the truth. Israel's security forces will continue to operate wherever necessary to prevent terrorism and the murder of Israelis."

This means only one thing: Israelis will keep killing press members, as well as ordinary citizens, including women and children.

Among the many reactions to Israel's brutal act, the deafening silence by the UAE and Saudi Arabian officials are noteworthy. The countries that have normalized ties with the Israeli regime are supporting this child-killing regime to go on with its aggressions against everyone who tries to reflect a true image of Israel's atrocities.

Even the U.S. embassy in Quds called for a comprehensive investigation into the martyrdom and wounding of two Al Jazeera journalists in support of Israel's plan to conduct an investigation.

"We are saddened by the killing of the American-Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh and we call for a thorough investigation into circumstances of her killing and injury of another journalist in Jenin," the statement by the U.S. embassy said.

Israel is more secluded than ever!

## Iran demands release of diplomat jailed in Belgium on spurious allegations

TEHRAN- Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh has denounced the detention of an Iranian diplomat in Belgium on bogus terror-related allegations, demanding his immediate release.

Khatibzadeh noted that Assadollah Assadi's imprisonment and conviction were faulty and violated the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

"The European parties involved in the case of Assadollah Assadi have been called to account," Khatibzadeh said.

His comments came after an appellate court denied appeals filed by three persons who are said, in line with "unfounded and baseless accusations," to have been "connected" to Assadi.

"Unfortunately, today, under the pretext of holding appeals court for the three foregoing people, we are once again witnessing fabricated lies by Western media about Mr. Assadi, a diplomat of the Islamic Republic of Iran," he remarked.

"As said in the past, the entire procedures of detention, trial, and issuance of legal verdict against Assadi have taken place in complete violation of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations," the spokesman underscored.

"The Islamic Republic has officially

communicated its protest over the matter to Austria, Germany, and Belgium, repeatedly rejecting the accusations that have been leveled against the diplomat, and insisting that he should be immediately released," Khatibzadeh stated.

He described the entire situation as a pre-planned scenario carried out by the MKO with the objective of inciting Iranophobia.

Belgian officials said in June 2018 that they had seized a vehicle carrying homemade explosives and a detonation device, stating that Assadi had already sent the materials to two persons in Belgium. The next day, he was caught in Germany and told that he could not use his diplomatic immunity.

After being accused of organizing an assault against the anti-Iran terrorist MKO organization, a Belgian court sentenced him to 20 years in jail.

Since the triumph of Iran's Islamic Revolution in 1979, the terror group has carried out countless killings and bombings against Iranian authorities and civilians. About 12,000 of the roughly 17,000 Iranians murdered as a result of the MKO's act of terror.

The group is notorious for taking sides with the former Iraqi despot, Saddam Hussein, who inflicted a war on Iran.

# Leader praises teachers' efforts during Covid pandemic

*Human resources form the cornerstone of any civilization, Ayatollah Khamenei says*



He then noted that students must understand the value of resistance.

"What's a resistant nation? One that doesn't submit to extortion and coercion. The elixir to cure the country's problems is a spirit of resistance. A nation must be able to resist coercion. This must be formed in us from childhood," Ayatollah Khamenei elaborated.

Referring to the long-term goal of creating a new and flourishing Islamic civilization, the Leader said that human resources are the infrastructure of any civilization and the founders of the new Islamic civilization are the generation that is now available to teachers, so the importance and value of a teacher should be understood from this perspective.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution said, "This generation with this great goal must have an Iranian-Islamic identity, strong and deep beliefs, be confident, self-made, aware of the obsolete civilizations of the East and the West, be a scientist and proficient in order to shape that great civilization."

Referring to the training of prominent persons in post-Revolution education, Ayatollah Khamenei added, "Thanks to the efforts of teachers in the last four decades, effective elements have grown in various fields, but it is not enough, and for that flourishing civilization, such cultivations must be widespread."

**"A nation must be able to resist coercion. This must be formed in us from childhood."**

## Official rebukes Sweden's hostile approach towards Iran

TEHRAN- Kazem Gharibabadi, Secretary of Iran's High Council for Human Rights, has condemned the wrongful verdict and extended incarceration of former Iranian official Hamid Nouri in Sweden, saying that the Scandinavian country has taken a "hostile" stance towards Tehran on national security concerns.

"The Swedish government, with support of some other European countries particularly the British government, has certainly sought the prosecution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Over the past few years, Sweden has pursued a hostile approach concerning national security issues against the Islamic Republic of Iran," Gharibabadi said.

Sweden has long sponsored anti-Iran terrorist groups, according to the top Iranian Judiciary official.

"The attitude of the Iranian people was not negative towards Swedes. Swedish operatives, just like certain countries that follow an openly hostile against Iran, would not disclose many aspects of their actions against Iran's national security, probably as to continue their anti-Iran actions easily and with no trouble," he commented.

Gharibabadi went on to say that Sweden has been drafting anti-Iran resolutions at the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) for years, but once Nouri's trial began, it handed up the duty to Britain and two or three other countries.

He said that Sweden was the SMLA terrorist group's primary stronghold, with its ringleader Habib Farajollah Chaab – also known as Habib Asyud – located there and the Swedish secret service providing him and his companions with considerable assistance.

"Even when Habib Asyud was arrested at request of the Iran Interpol in one of the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf region, the Swedes intervened immediately and returned him to Sweden on a private flight. Sweden has also been home to members of the terrorist Mujahedin Khalq Organization (MKO)," Gharibabadi added.



"Why does Sweden claim to be an advocate of human rights, fight against terrorism and a world of peace, security and stability, while it is hosting terrorist groups?" he questioned.

"At whose behest has Nouri's trial been launched? Sweden was supposed to prosecute the MKO for its crimes against the Iranian nation; but has instead filed a lawsuit on their part," the Iranian official pointed out.

"I believe that Sweden has used both Nouri's case and support for the MKO terrorist group as an excuse to try the Islamic Republic of Iran," Gharibabadi underlined.

The Iranian Judiciary and Foreign Ministry, according to the official, have organized professional teams to assist Nouri in the matter, with his family receiving legal guidance.

**"Why does Sweden claim to be an advocate of human rights, fight against terrorism and a world of peace, security and stability, while it is hosting terrorist groups?"**

## Bagheri: Iran's regional cooperation not "temporary tactic"

TEHRAN — Diplomats from Iranian and Qatari foreign ministries held talks in Tehran on Tuesday to discuss bilateral relationship.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Ali Bagheri Kani told Secretary General of Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ahmed bin Hassan Al-Hammadi that that prioritizing neighbors is a basic strategy and not a short-lived tactic of the Islamic Republic.

Their meeting was held within the framework of the Iran-Qatar Political Consultative Committee.

"If we hesitate to pay the price of regional interaction and convergence, the costs of disagreement and divergence will undoubtedly be imposed on everyone," Bagheri said.

He added that the price of regional interaction and convergence will be creating and strengthening mutual political trust and strengthening economic ties.

Noting that national and regional interests overlap, the Iranian

diplomat

said there is no conflict between national interests and the collective interests of the countries in the region.

Bagheri Kani added foreigners must not be allowed to use the pretext of conflict of national interests between regional countries as a cover to legitimize their hegemonic policies.

Involvement of foreigners and their military presence in the Persian Gulf will not create stability and security, and that the countries of the region can ensure stability and security through political cooperation and economic convergence, he pointed out.

Emphasizing that Iran's regional interaction and cooperation policy is not a "temporary tactic" but a "strategic policy," Bagheri Kani said the stability of the neighborhood policy in the region is based on convergence and proximity of regional nations and resistance to foreign intervention and that these two pillars will work synergistically

and will produce power coming from within the regional countries.

Bagheri Kani added that the existing relationship between the two sides is still significantly distant from what it should be, so all capacities should be tapped to improve relations.

For his part, Al-Hammadi referred to the successful February visit of the Iranian president to Doha and the forthcoming visit of the Emir of Qatar to Iran as well as the formation of a political consultation committee, saying relations between the two countries are vast and deep.

The Qatari government considers the development of bilateral cooperation and the holding of regional political consultations with Iran as an added value for the realization of peace and stability in the region.

He said the history of strong relations between Iran and Qatar dates back to the time before the two countries established diplomatic relations.

The charges against Nouri come from allegations made by MKO members against him.

In 2019, he was detained and imprisoned upon his entry in Sweden at Stockholm Airport. Nouri, aged 61, has been detained in solitary confinement for more than two years, and his family has been denied access to him.

There are claims that Nouri was involved in issuing death sentence against MKO members and torturing them. Nouri categorically denies such bogus charges.

Gharibabadi further stated that Iranian national Ahmad Reza Jalali was convicted of espionage for Mossad and admitted to spying for Israel and complicity in the assassination of Iranian nuclear experts.

**"Rest assured"**

In a tweet on Tuesday, Gharibabadi said, "Iran will NEVER tolerate Sweden's violation of the human rights of Hamid Nouri, including any illegitimate and flawed court ruling against him, which merely seeks to advance its orchestrators' political goals. Anyone violating Iranians' rights will be held accountable. Rest assured!"

Iran's Judiciary spokesperson Zabihullah Khodaeian has confirmed that the death sentence against Jalili will be carried out. Khodaeian also stated that Tehran will not trade him for Nouri.

"Jalali has been sentenced to death and the verdict is final and will be carried out," Khodaeian reiterated.

Jalali, a resident of Sweden, was apprehended in Iran in 2016. He was convicted of espionage for Mossad and participation in the assassination of Iranian scientists based on his confession.

In December 2017, Iran's Supreme Court affirmed his death sentence.

Jalali was given Swedish citizenship in late February 2018, according to Stockholm.

"The roots of friendly ties between the two sides are so strong that no incident in the history of relations has been able to disrupt it, and this pattern of relations can be offered among regional countries and other nations, and a few years ago, during the embargo on Qatar by some countries in the region, it was the Islamic Republic of Iran that cooperated and provided sincere assistance to Qatar," Al-Hammadi stated.

Secretary general of the Qatari foreign ministry stressed the need to strengthen regional dialogue to eliminate problems and facilitate cooperation between the two sides, and said that the agreements reached during the visit of the president of Iran to Doha are being seriously pursued by the Qatari side.

At the end of the meeting, the minutes of the first meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of Iran and Qatar were signed by the deputy foreign ministers of the two sides.



# What Iran’s new economic reforms mean for Vienna talks?

TEHRAN – The administration of Ayatollah Ebrahim Raisi has begun rolling out new economic reforms that have long been eschewed by previous administrations for their possible painful fallout.

On Monday night, 72 million Iranian citizens received SMS messages from their back accounts informing them that a government handout of 3,000,000 – 4,000,000 million rials (about \$10–\$14) has been deposited into their bank accounts, minutes after President Raisi wrapped up a live televised speech in which he explained the reasons behind his new economic reforms.

“Reforming how basic goods subsidies is paid is difficult but this difficult decision should not be eschewed,” he told the Iranian people.

Ayatollah Raisi explained in detail why his administration had to swallow the bitter pill of cutting government subsidies for a number of basic goods and medicines, a move that almost all his predecessors refused to make for fear of public backlash.

For so long, the Iranian government has been allocating billions of dollars in subsidies for basic goods and services such as flour, cooking oil, chickens, eggs, and sugar among other things. Considering that most of these staples are imported from abroad, the government had to provide much-needed hard currency



to make sure that ordinary people have access to the food they need on their table. But the government says huge corruption took place in the process of importing subsidized food and that the subsidy system needs to be reformed as soon as possible.

The Raisi administration says it is not cutting government subsidies for basic goods. The way subsidies are allocated, instead, will change. Under new reforms, people will be given monthly food vouchers to buy basic goods at subsidized rates. In other words, the government says it seeks to change the current piecemeal subsidy system into a more targeted, smart one.

The administration is all in for the new economic measures. And it has the support of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei. “The measures the [Raisi] administration is taking

today are important and that everyone should help including the [government] branches and the various apparatuses as well as the people so that the administration, God willing, achieve [positive] results,” the Leader said in a recent speech delivered in a meeting with workers.

The measures have been described by Raisi himself as “economic surgery” because they are painful and necessary. In addition, Raisi has been hailed as a president staking his credibility to save the economy despite the risks associated with reforms.

Aside from the economic impacts of reforms, the administration’s decision to proceed with its economic measures could have implications at political and diplomatic levels. Painful reforms are being implemented while talks over reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal continue to hang in the balance for the

second month in a row with no silver lining in sight.

On Tuesday, the European Union’s coordinator of the Vienna talks, Enrique Mora, arrived in Tehran for meetings with Iranian officials. There are hopes for a breakthrough. But the chances of the deadlock over the talks getting broken remains low. Iranian officials told the press that if Mora has come to Tehran to urge Iran to back down on its demands, then one should not expect much coming out of his trip.

Embarking on painful economic reforms while Iran continues to be under sanctions could also signal that the differences currently clouding the talks are here to stay.

President Raisi has said time and again that he is not going to tie the economy to what comes out of the Vienna talks. He made it clear that his management of the country’s economy will by no means be impacted by the Vienna talks. And current reforms are a translation of that position on the ground.

But his economic measures have another connotation: That Iran is undertaking painstaking reforms means that the other side in the talks should not expect Iran to make further concessions to revive the JCPOA. The Raisi administration is seemingly signaling that it is capable of running the country regardless of what happens to the JCPOA.

## Iran FM underlines red lines in Vienna talks

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has said that Iran still pursues the path of negotiations but the lifting of U.S. sanctions on Iran should be done in line with Iran’s red lines.

“Both paths of neutralizing sanctions and lifting them are being pursued,” Amir Abdollahian said on Twitter.

He also pointed to new economic reforms the Raisi administration has introduced in recent days regarding the elimination of subsidies for a number of basic goods. The new measures have been hailed by Iranian officials as “economic surgery” intended to address shortcomings in allocating subsidies and bring about more economic equity.

“Immunizing the country through the path of economic development and the equitable distribution system for subsidy allocation is the main strategy,” Amir Abdollahian said.

The foreign minister appeared to be viewing subsidy reforms in parallel with Iran’s efforts to make a strong deal in Vienna.

“The talks to lift sanctions are being pursued through sticking to Iran’s red lines for reaching a good, strong and lasting agreement,” Amir

Abdollahian noted.

The tweet comes as the European Union’s coordinator of the Vienna talks, Enrique Mora, is in Tehran for talks over how to resume the stalled talks. In Tehran, Mora met with Iran’s chief negotiator, Ali Bagheri Kani.

“Travelling again to Tehran for meetings with Bagheri Kani and other officials on the Vienna talks and other issues. Work on closing the remaining gaps of this negotiation continues,” Mora said on Twitter before heading to Tehran.

Mora’s visit comes as the EU foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell, is pushing for resuming the Vienna talks over reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), as soon as possible.

He said the current stalemate cannot continue. “We cannot continue like this forever,” Borrell said.

In a bid to get the talks going again, the EU foreign policy chief said he was dispatching Mora to Tehran in what he described as a “last bullet” push. In remarks to the Financial Times, Borrell said he is pushing for a “middle way” on the U.S. designation of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) as a

foreign terrorist organization.

Meanwhile, an Iranian official told Al Jazeera that more than 90% of the nuclear issues were verbally agreed upon, but that did not turn into a written agreement.

“Executive guarantees are the most important outstanding differences with Washington in the nuclear negotiation,” the official said, noting, “There are 6 issues that form the core of the main differences with America in the nuclear negotiations.”

The official said achieving agreement in the Vienna nuclear negotiations depends on America’s seriousness and goodwill.

In the last round of the Vienna talks which was concluded nearly two months ago, Iran demanded that the United States remove the IRGC from its terrorist list, among other things. The U.S. refused the Iranian demands and the talks ground to a halt.

Borrell said the EU is going to strive for a middle ground on the IRGC designation. Borrell is considering a scenario whereby the designation on the guards is lifted, but kept in place on other parts of the organization, according to the Financial Times.

the detainees, the IRGC targeted the terrorist group’s headquarters in northern Iraq with missile and artillery attacks, according to the statement.

In March, the IRGC targeted a vast compound in Erbil with at least a dozen missiles. Iran said at the time that the target was a Mossad intelligence hub.

The Beirut-based news television Al-Mayadeen said some agents were killed and injured in the attack. Citing sources familiar with the matter, the news channel said the attack was carried out with more

than 10 precision-guided ballistic missiles that succeeded in targeting an Israeli intelligence and security headquarters in the vicinity of Erbil. The sources confirmed that the attack led to the destruction of the Mossad headquarters on the Masif road on the outskirts of Erbil.

Iran’s Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) claimed responsibility for the attack, saying it targeted an Israeli “center of conspiracy” in the Kurdish city. “Following the recent crimes of the fake Zionist regime

and the previous announcement that the crimes and evils of this infamous regime will not go unanswered, the strategic center for conspiracy and evil of the Zionists was targeted by powerful and pinpoint missiles of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps,” the IRGC said in a statement at the time.

It also warned Israel against further moves against Iran. “Once again, we warn the criminal Zionist regime that the repetition of any evil will face harsh, decisive and destructive responses.”

relations between the two countries, the efforts of the two sides have led to political exchanges at the highest levels, the expansion of trade and economic relations, and the strengthening of human and cultural ties between the two friendly and brotherly countries,” he wrote, according to the official website of the Iranian presidency.

Raisi continued, “I believe that the two countries should try to remove the obstacles in the relations between the two countries, especially in the fields of trade, economy and tourism, with a result-oriented view, while providing the necessary legal infrastructure and structures.”

The president said holding regular joint economic, cultural, scientific and technological cooperation committees, holding special exhibitions, drafting trade cooperation agreements, revoking visa system and easy travel of citizens based on the interests and welfare of the two nations are ways to cement relations between the two countries.

Hossein Amir Abdollahian stated in the message that “this event is very important as the starting point of friendly and growing relations between the two countries. The officials of the two countries have long tried to remove obstacles and take into account the cultural and civilizational commonalities to expand cooperation in all fields.”

He concluded, “I am confident that given the positive developments in bilateral interactions in recent years and the potential capacities that exist between the two countries, we will have a very bright future ahead of us.”

Iranian President Ayatollah Seyed Ebrahim Raisi also sent a similar message to his Uzbek counterpart on Tuesday. In his congratulatory message to President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and the people of Uzbekistan, Raisi stated that the country’s independence and the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1992 provided an opportunity to re-establish and expand long-standing ties.

“Fortunately, since the establishment of

## Abdollahian sends messages to Uzbek, Montenegrin counterparts

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has sent congratulatory messages to his Uzbek and Montenegrin counterparts to felicitate them on separate occasions.

Amir Abdollahian has extended his warm congratulations on the appointment of Ranko Krivokapic as foreign minister of Montenegro.

“I hope, in light of common efforts, we will witness further strengthening of bonds of friendship and expansion of relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Montenegro in different political, international, economic and cultural fields,” Amir Abdollahian said in his message, according to the Iranian foreign ministry.

Amir Abdollahian also sent a message to Acting Foreign Minister Uzbekistan Vladimir Norov to congratulate the 30th anniversary of the beginning of diplomatic relations between Iran and the Central Asian country.

## Iranian woman archer Abdollahi wins gold at Asia Cup 2022 Stage - 2

TEHRAN – Mahta Abdollahi from Iran claimed a gold medal at the 2022 Asia Cup – Stage II in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq.

She defeated Indian archer Bhajan Kaur 6-2 in the final match of women’s recurve.

Bangladesh’s Diya Siddique defeated her compatriot Beauty Ray to win the bronze medal.

Reza Shabani, Nima Naderi, Mohammad Hossein Golshani and Mahta Abdollahi represented Iran in the recurve competition.

## Saket Elhami no longer Nassaji coach

TEHRAN – Iranian top-flight football club Nassaji parted ways with Saket Elhami Tuesday night.

The club have not announced the reasons of the termination.

Iranian media reports suggest that the club have parted company with the 51-year-old coach due to his misbehavior in locker room after the match against Mes, where Nassaji suffered a 2-0 loss against the Sirjan based football team.

Nassaji captain Masoud Shojaei is a nominee to replace Elhami in the team.

Under leadership of Elhami, Nassaji won their first ever Hazfi Cup title in late April.

With four games remaining, Nassaji are 12th in the 16-team table, 11 points above the relegation zone.

## OH Leuven not to extend Kaveh Rezaei’s deal

TEHRAN – Belgian football club OH Leuven is not going to extend Kaveh Rezaei’s contract.

The 30-year-old forward joined OH Leuven in August 2021 but failed to meet the expectations.

Rezaei joined Charleroi from Esteghlal in 2017 and has played in Belgian team Club Brugge as well.

Iranian media reports suggest that he will join Esteghlal in the summer as a free agent striker.

## Salehi Amiri to step down as president of Iran’s NOC

TEHRAN – Reza Salehi Amiri will step down as Iran’s National Olympic Committee (NOC) president after four years.

Salehi Amiri was elected as president of Iran’s NOC in January 2018 as a replacement for Kioomars Hashem.

“According to regulations, I can participate in the presidential elections but I’d rather quit my job in the committee,” Salehi Amiri.

“I did my best during my career and the people in future will judge me. We founded the National Sports Museum of Iran which is among top museums in the world,” he added.

“One of the functions of sport as part of public diplomacy is to spread peace and friendship among nations and we worked according to sports diplomacy in the four-year period,” Salehi Amiri added.

## Iran midfielder Amiri undergoes back surgery

TEHRAN – Persepolis and Iran football team midfielder Vahid Amiri underwent back surgery on Wednesday.

He was forced to leave the field in the match against Zob Ahan on Monday.

Amiri will be sidelined for at least three months to make a full recovery on back surgery.

Amiri has played a role in Dragan Skocic’s team over the past years and helped Team Melli qualify for the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

## Iran football team fail to advance to Deaflympics semis

TEHRAN – Iran football team lost to France 2-1 and failed to book a place in the semifinals of the 24th edition of the Deaflympics.

Iran had already defeated Italy, the Netherlands, Brazil and Cameroon in the competition.

The Deaflympics had initially been scheduled to take place from December 5 to 21 in 2021, but was postponed due to COVID-19 complications.

There are 209 events in 17 sports on the Deaflympics program.

Athletics, badminton, cycling, golf, judo, karate, orienteering, shooting, swimming, table tennis, taekwondo, tennis, wrestling, basketball, football, handball and volleyball are the 17 sports.

The last summer Deaflympics took place in 2017 in the Turkish city of Samsun.

## Iran’s women volleyball victorious over Serbian team in friendly

TEHRAN – Iranian women’s volleyball club fought back from two sets down to beat Serbian club ŽOK Ub 3-2 in a friendly match.

Alessandra Campedelli’s women defeated ŽOK Ub 3-2 (14-25, 18-25, 25-25-23, 25-22, 15-9) in Ub, Serbia.

The Iranian team will also play two more friendlies with the Serbian club on Friday and Sunday in their camp.

Iran prepare for the Asian Women’s Volleyball Championship which will be held in the Philippines from August 30 to September 6.

## Italian club Allianz Milano reportedly eye Iran’s Ebadipour

TEHRAN – Italian volleyball club Allianz Milano have been reportedly linked with Iranian volleyball outside hitter Milad Ebadipour.

The Polish media reports suggest that the Iranian international player will leave Skra Be?chatow after five years to join Allianz Milano.

Allianz coach Roberto Piazza has previously coached Skra Be?chatow from 2017 to 2019.

Ebadipour has many successes, both in terms of club and the country. He has won the Asian and Iran Club Championships three times, and with the team he won two golds in the Asian and Asian Games, as well as third place in the Grand Champions Cup.

## Iran to play Uzbekistan in 2022 CAFA U16 Championship opener

TEHRAN – Iran will play Uzbekistan in the opening match of the 2022 CAFA U16 Championship.

Hossein Abdi’s boys are scheduled to play Uzbekistan on May 13th.

The eight-day competition will bring Tajikistan, Iran, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Afghanistan together.

The 2022 CAFA U16 Championship will be held in the Republic Central Stadium in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.



## Export from Markazi province tripled

TEHRAN- The value of export from Markazi province, in the center of Iran, has more than tripled in the first month of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21- April 20), as compared to the same month in the previous year, a provincial official announced.

Esmail Hosseini, the director-general of the province's customs department, said that over 96,000 tons of commodities worth more than \$70 million were exported from the province in the first month.

The products were exported to 51 countries, among them Turkey, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bulgaria were the major export destinations, the official said.

He also announced that about 8,000 tons of products worth \$39 million were imported to the province in the first month of the present year.

The products were imported from 24 countries, among them the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Turkey, and China were the main sources of imports, he stated.

As previously announced by Ali Jodaki, the acting head of the province's Industry, Mining and Trade Department, the value of export from Markazi province rose 39 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20), from its preceding year.

He said that over 917,000 tons of non-oil commodities worth \$1109 billion were exported from the province in the previous year.

He named petrochemical products, aluminum ingots, juices, chemicals, all kinds of glass, casting products, polyester fibers, rebar, flowers and plants, heavy and light polyethylene, and

polypropylene as the main products exported from the province in the previous year, and Iraq, Afghanistan, Turkey, Pakistan, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as the major export destinations.

The official further announced that 129,000 tons of products worth \$446 million were imported into the province in the past year.

He named alumina powder, carbon anode, aluminum coil, peanuts, juice raw materials, aluminum ingots, steel pipes and rebars, juice bags, and cotton as the major imported items, and China, Turkey, the UAE, India and Germany as the main sources of imports.

More than 2,800 production units are active in Markazi province, of which 250 units are also active in the field of export.

The deputy head of Islamic Republic of Iran's Customs Administration (IRICA) has announced that the value of Iran's export of non-oil products has increased 25 percent in the first month of the current year, as compared to the same month of the past year.

Foroud Asgari also said that the country's non-oil trade with other countries registered a \$875-million positive balance in the first month.

Iran exported 7,324 million tons of non-oil commodities worth \$3,699 billion in the said month, with 10 percent drop in weight as compared to the first month of the previous year, the official stated.

The country's monthly non-oil import stood at 2,252 million tons worth \$2,824 billion, with one percent rise in value and 10 percent growth in weight year on year, he added.

## 70 hectares to be added to greenhouses of Hamedan province each year



TEHRAN- As announced by a provincial official, 70 hectares is planned to be added to the area under greenhouse cultivation in Hamedan province each year.

Zaher Pour-Mojahed, the deputy governor-general of the province for economic affairs, said, "Given the situation we have in the field of water, we must definitely move towards optimal water consumption, and the experts recommend the best program in drought conditions is greenhouse cultivation."

"Part of the employment share of the province should be in the field of agriculture, which according to the slogan of the year, we should use new technologies and products in the field of greenhouses", the official further stressed.

The motto of the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21), is "Knowledge-Based and Job-Creating Production".

In recent years, the water crisis has caused serious challenges in Iran's agriculture sector.

To solve this problem, several solutions, including the implementation of pressurized irrigation project and greenhouse cultivation,

have been emphasized by experts and officials in this sector.

Iranian Agriculture Ministry's Greenhouse Development Program is one of the priority projects of this ministry which aims at increasing productivity, efficiency, and water consumption management in the agriculture sector.

The program was approved in the Iranian calendar year 1395 (ended on March 20, 2017) under the framework of the National Resilient Economy Plan.

The development of the country's agricultural parks and greenhouses not only is going to create new job opportunities but also increases the country's non-oil exports and helps preserve the environment and the national water and soil resources.

As announced by the director of the Agriculture Ministry's Greenhouse Development Program, 3,200 hectares of greenhouses is targeted to be established in the country in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21).

Darioush Salempour said that according to the plans and coordination made with the agriculture departments of the provinces, 3,200 hectares of greenhouses will be created in the country, and 686 hectares will be improved and renovated this year.

Greenhouse development in each of the provinces will be done based on climatic conditions and capacities, infrastructure for access to facilities, manpower status, proximity to the target consumer market and export markets, population, development history and investment in this field, he further explained.

Head of Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) Majid Eshqi has said 25 new major companies are ready to offer their shares at the country's stock exchange.

"Many initial public offerings (IPOs) are going to be made in the near future, and now about 25 companies are ready to enter the market," Eshqi told IRNA on April 24.

## TEDPIX gains nearly 25,000 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose 24,981 points to 1,564 million on Wednesday.

As reported, over 11,362 billion securities worth 65,203 trillion rials (about \$233.7 million) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index rose 21,371 points, and the second market's index gained 40,526 points.

# Yerevan hosts 17th Iran-Armenia Joint Economic Committee meeting

From page 1 ► Among the issues raised at the meeting were transit, transportation, facilitation of trade, and broader cooperation in the field of energy.

Following the Tuesday meeting, the two countries' 17th Joint Economic Committee meeting officially kicked off on Wednesday and four specialized committees including energy, trade, cultural heritage, tourism, and transportation started their negotiations.

The first meeting of the two countries' Joint Economic Committee was held at the secretariates level.

Iran and Armenia have been



taking serious measures to boost two countries' positive political economic ties in line with the relations.

In late April, Iranian Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Ehsan Khandouzi headed a delegation on a visit to Armenia to hold talks with the country's senior officials with the aim of expanding economic ties between the two nations.

During the visit, Khandouzi met with Armenia's Deputy Prime Minister Mher Herbert Grigoryan, the country's Economy Minister Vahan Kerobyan, and Minister of Finance Tigran Khachatryan.

The official discussed the preparations for holding the two countries' 17th Joint Economic Committee meeting in his meetings with the Armenian officials.

## Iranian production, industry achievements exhibit held in Tashkent



Iranian Ambassador to Tashkent Hamid Nayyerabadi (1st R) speaks to an exhibitor.

TEHRAN - An exhibition of Iranian producers and industrialists' achievements was held in Uzbekistan's capital city Tashkent during May 9-11, IRNA reported.

The opening ceremony of the exhibition was attended by officials from the two countries, including Iranian Ambassador to Tashkent Hamid Nayyerabadi, and Chairman of Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Uzbekistan Davron Abduljalolovich Vakhobov.

Speaking at the ceremony, Nayyerabadi mentioned the upward trend of the trade between Iran and Uzbekistan and noted that the volume of trade between the two countries increased by 97 percent to \$503 million in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20).

He stressed that despite significant growth, this figure is still not commensurate with the two countries' existing capacities, stating that the governments of Iran and Uzbekistan are determined to increase the trade relations between the two countries to one billion dollars in the short term.

According to the official, realization of the mentioned goal requires taking serious steps to facilitate trade relations between the two sides.

"Various measures are underway in this regard, the most important of which is the preparation and signing of the document on the expansion of bilateral relations to be signed by the presidents of the two countries

back in September 2021 in Samarkand," he added.

Nayyerabadi further underlined promoting interactions between the private sectors of the two countries as the next step in the development of trade between Iran and Uzbekistan and continued: "Holding the special exhibition of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Uzbekistan is a step towards this purpose and is aimed at introducing Iran's capabilities and capacities."

Further in the ceremony, Vakhobov for his part noted that Uzbek businessmen and traders have been waiting for this exhibition for a long time, saying: "There are many opportunities in developing trade and economic relations between Iran and Uzbekistan."

"Iran has significant capabilities in the field of industrial production, and it is possible that with the joint production of such products in Uzbekistan, they can be exported to third countries," he said.

## Iran's private sector welcomes co-op with UNIDO

TEHRAN - Deputy Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Hossein Selahvarzi has said the Iranian private sector is ready to collaborate with United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) on industrial development and digitalization of the economy.

Speaking in a meeting with the UNIDO representative in Tehran, Selahvarzi underlined the significance of cooperation between UNIDO and the Iranian private sector for the industrial development of the country and the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the ICCIMA portal reported on Tuesday.

Supporting the presence of the Iranian private sector



in regional and global arenas, creating new capacities in value-added production, developing cooperation, promoting Iran's position in the export sector, as well as improving the business environment were some of the areas that the attendees of the meeting proposed for cooperation between UNIDO and the Iranian private sector.

Addressing the meeting, Selahvarzi noted that the Iranian government emphasizes increasing the private sector's role in the economy and reducing cumbersome regulations to aid economic growth.

In recent years, ICCIMA has also taken great steps to promote the position of the private sector, and now there is a great opportunity for cooperation with UNIDO for promoting industrial development in the country, he said.

"We look forward to working with UNIDO on a variety of areas, including improving the business environment, digitizing the economy, and developing the industry," the official stressed.

The UNIDO representative

in his speech noted that his organization is ready to study different fields for working in Iran.

"Of course, UNIDO's agenda is sustainable industrial development and cooperation with the private sector. There is a lot of potentials to work on, including supporting the digitalization of the economy and improving the production chain," the official said.

"We try to identify the obstacles first and design the program after identifying the challenges," he said.

According to the envoy, UNIDO is paying special attention to the development and support of SMEs on the path toward digitalization and marketing.

## RAI in talks with Russia to supply locomotives for railway fleet

TEHRAN - Head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (known as RAI) has said that his company is negotiating the purchase of new locomotives for the country's railway fleet with Russia, IRNA reported.

Miad Salehi, who accompanied Transport Minister Rostam Qasemi in his visit to Moscow in late April, noted that during the visit the two sides also held talks about the completion of Rasht-Astara railway and the improvement and signaling of Incheh Borun-Garmsar railway.

According to Salehi, during their stay in Moscow, the Iranian officials met with Russian Transport Minister Vitaly Savelyev and Russian Railways' Chief Executive Officer Oleg Belozеров.

Iran and Russia signed a comprehensive agreement to expand transportation cooperation between the two countries in late April. The agreement was signed by Qasemi and his Russian counterpart Savelyev at the end of Qasemi's visit to Moscow.

The Iranian minister, who traveled to Moscow on top of a high-ranking delegation, discussed various topics including the finalization of previously reached agreements in the field of rail, sea, road, and air transportation with the Russian official.

Speaking at the meeting, Savelyev referred to the expanding relations between the two countries and expressed hope that with the signing of this agreement, bilateral cooperation in the field of transport will be further expanded.

Russia's transport minister said the north-south railway corridor could be the basis for expanding cooperation between Russia, Iran, Central Asia, and the Caucasus, and that a deal would be needed to implement the massive project.

He also expressed hope that the two sides would collaborate in completing the Rasht-Astara railway project as soon as possible.

Pointing out that his country views the Islamic Republic of Iran as a trade and transit hub in the region, Savelyev said: "With the completion of Iran's railway lines, especially the Rasht-Astara section, northern Europe will be connected to the Indian subcontinent, and this will have huge transit revenues for the countries along the route, including Iran and Russia."

Qasemi for his part expressed the Iranian government's willingness for the expansion of ties with neighboring countries.

"If Iran and Russia work closely together, U.S. and Western sanctions against the two



countries will have no effect," the Iranian minister said.

According to the official developing transportation relations between the two countries is a prerequisite for the expansion of trade ties, saying that Iran welcomes any kind of agreement between the two countries in the field of transportation.

"Trade exchanges between the two countries and Russian exports to other countries through Iran can be the topic of new agreements and such agreements can be implemented in the shortest possible time," he said.



# Americans have increasingly become disenchanted with both established political parties: writer

From page 1 ► **How do you evaluate the public attitudes towards Democrats and Republicans?**

Since 1992, Americans have increasingly become disenchanted with both established political parties.

Moderate Democrats are uncomfortable with militant “progressives” whose left-wing views circulate on university campuses, in media editorial meetings and swirl across social media platforms.

Socially open-minded economic conservatives do not support rigid positions of the religious right-wing in the Republican Party.

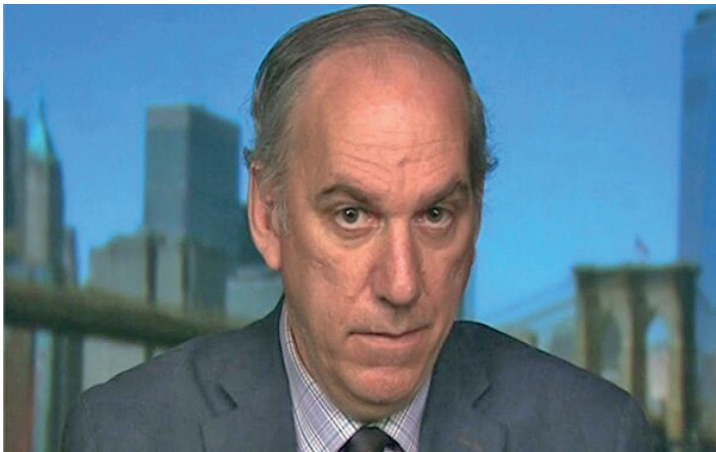
Meanwhile, there is growing acceptance that supposed “elites” merely enrich themselves while destroying realistic opportunities to prosper at home and weakening America’s global standing abroad.

The bloc that is surging is independent thinkers who are unhappy and very likely to make their voices heard at rallies and at the polls.

**Biden’s critics question Biden’s mental ability. To what extent this can affect the results of the upcoming elections? What about Trump’s emotional and psychological health?**

Joe Biden is obviously not playing near the top of his game. His public remarks are at times utter nonsense and major decisions of his administration are truly awful, whether regarding the economy or foreign affairs.

If his family truly cared about him they would urge him to transition out in a dignified manner. This is, of course, difficult because Kamala Harris has a tin ear, can-



not connect well with the electorate and demonstrates almost daily truly appalling political instincts and judgment.

In contrast, Donald Trump remains vigorous and engaged, though also getting on in his years.

**Do you think Trump enjoys sufficient support among the public to return to the political scene or his popularity is just limited to Republican masses?**

Even if Biden actually got 81 million votes in November 2020, a substantial proportion of supposed supporters then must be ashamed now to admit they actually believed his campaign promises and endorse his performance as president.

So, if Trump holds on to his health and ages well, he would defeat Joe Biden handily in 2024, assuming elections are then free and fair.

Trump would also defeat any progressive nominee commandingly. How he might fare against a moderate, young Democrat is another question. At this moment, no such spoiler comes to mind.

**Could you give us an image of the situation if Trump becomes**

**president again? What would be the future of the U.S. democracy and its international reputation?**

Long before the election, Trump would spell out his positions and field a team of uncompromised winners so that he and his administration could hold the Deep State at bay as they rushed to reverse many ruinous policies of the Biden era.

The southern border would be sealed and dangerous criminal elements would be returned to points of origin.

Spending and tax policies that triggered rampant inflation would be substantially reversed.

Incentives would be employed to help cities bring down exploding criminality across the nation.

The war on free inquiry and common sense would end through the breakup of tech monopolies and prosecution of fake charities including endowed, name-brand universities that enrich insiders and donors while canceling those who dissent from “orthodoxy”.

The war on capitalism and against fossil fuels would end and, instead, wasteful public sec-

tor bureaucracies would either be eliminated or put on starvation diets.

Learning from our many mistakes, the United States would reject diktats from Klaus Schwab and ill-conceived, unregulated globalism that project power and seed their own pockets grifting off of the United Nations and its many tentacles.

**What are the main factors that determine Americans’ attitudes in upcoming elections?**

Most important by far are “pocketbook” issues: job prospects, incomes after taxes, costs of living, and values of assets saved for retirement. On these issues, Biden and progressive Democrats are today in horrific shape. Lots can happen, in theory, before November 2022 but, at this moment, it is tough to imagine how the Biden administration might cobble together required support for sorely needed reforms given its standing in the polls.

Crime is also a serious issue that augurs poorly for Biden and for Democrats.

Finally, bad outcomes abroad, especially in military conflicts, will hurt warmongers in both parties.

There has not been a case in modern American history where a president stumbles so badly and in so many ways while a hobbled press refuses to investigate financial ties involving numerous members of his own family that are deeply concerning.

The main rival of the United States—China—clearly is better off under Biden yet few have bothered to question why Hunter Biden’s investigation has failed to lead to prosecutions and more.

These are very dangerous moments where conflicts can quickly spin out of control.

## Americans don’t want war with Russia

Even New York Times columnist Tom Friedman is getting worried about America sliding into war with Russia. The problem is not the ends, which he shares with the Biden administration. Rather, it is the means.

Despite President Biden’s assurance that Washington would not send troops to Ukraine, U.S. involvement in the Russo-Ukrainian war has steadily expanded. Officials from the president on down have been telling the world and, more importantly, Moscow that America is essentially using Ukraine as a weapon to fight the Russian Federation.

Observed an obviously disturbed Friedman: “Loose lips sink ships – and they also lay the groundwork for overreach in warfare, mission creep, a disconnect between ends and means and huge unintended consequences.” Such as war with Russia, perhaps with nuclear weapons.

Friedman is not alone in his fears. My church home group met shortly after Biden announced that his administration was going all into the war with \$33 billion in aid to Ukraine. Most of that will be lethal. The attendees, largely politically conservative and strongly patriotic, some with military backgrounds, generally opposed the president’s plan. Why are we getting so deeply involved, they wondered? They understood that the more Washington did and Washington officials said, the greater the tensions with Russia. They believed Biden’s actions contradicted his promises of military noninvolvement.

Then I watched a webinar on Biden’s fitness and the potential of removing him from office. The host and participants were all right-leaning, a couple extremely so, and none were friends of Moscow. However, they generally agreed that one of the most important reasons to force Biden from office was his administration’s increasingly irresponsible stance toward Russia.

For instance, they noted, saying that Vladimir Putin cannot remain in power and should be put on trial for war crimes was playing with fire. Shifting the administration’s objective from defending Ukraine to defeating Russia made full-scale war increasingly possible.

Coming through these views is a basic common sense lacking in Washington’s War Party. The American people, in contrast to those who make U.S. foreign policy, understand that the worst outcome of the Russo-Ukraine war is not a loss by Kyiv, but entry by Washington, with horrors that could only be imagined.

### How to think about the ongoing conflict?

\* Ukraine deserves America’s sympathy, not America’s defense. There is no vital interest at stake that warrants the U.S. going to war. Nor does Moscow’s botched campaign indicate that such a battle would be easy. Russians would fight better for their nation if attacked by Washington than when attacking Ukraine. Moreover, as the weaker power Russia likely would turn to tactical nuclear weapons as an equalizer. Having escaped the Cold War without triggering another catastrophic global conflict, Washington should step extra carefully now.

\* Europe should take the lead in providing aid to Ukraine. U.S. peace activists across the spectrum disagree on the appropriateness of military assistance. However, all agree that Washington’s involvement has become increasingly risky. Surely any role should be carefully limited and calibrated, while emphasizing the goal of ending the conflict. Ostentatiously shipping weapons of war, celebrating involvement in sinking Russian ships and killing Russian generals, and proclaiming plans to weaken Moscow are reckless acts, inviting retaliation and war. Congress was demanding blood over the fake news story of Russian payments to

the Taliban for killing U.S. personnel. Imagine the reaction of Russians, people as well as officials, to the real news of American participation in killing Russian personnel.

\* Washington should be working to end the war. Moscow’s brutal invasion was murderous, unjustified aggression. It should fail. However, the imperative is to end the conflict. Ukraine, the battleground, is suffering grievously, with thousands of deaths, millions of refugees, multiple cities wrecked, and an economy in collapse. It is up to Kyiv to decide its future, but the allies should indicate their support for a negotiated settlement. The longer the conflict continues, the greater the chance that the fighting will spread, with catastrophic consequences. Any war is dangerous. One in which some combatants and potential entrants have nuclear weapons is far worse.

\* Europe requires a new security order. It should begin with the Europeans taking over their own defense. They appear vulnerable to Russian threats only because they have spent nearly eight decades cheap riding on the U.S. It is difficult to blame them, since Washington allowed them to get away with their irresponsible behavior. However, there no longer is any reason for America to risk a nuclear confrontation with Moscow because the Europeans prefer to fund generous welfare states than robust military establishments. In fact, Vladimir Putin has never indicated much interest in invading Europe and the performance of his military in Ukraine suggests that continental conquest is beyond his means. It is time for burden-shifting, not burden-sharing, in Europe.

\* The US and its allies should seek a long-term outcome that avoids a new Cold War. Treating Russia like a very large and much better armed North Korea would make for a more dangerous world. A policy of permanent hostility and isolation would fuel continuing conflict. And new global divisions would not be as simple as the West might desire. Even today Moscow is isolated from America and Europe, not the world. The most populous nations – including China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Nigeria, Brazil, and Bangladesh – and most of the Global South have remained aloof from the allied campaign against Russia. They are even less likely to back a permanent cordon sanitaire.

\* The American people should insist that the War Party become the Peace Party. The Putin made the decision to invade Ukraine. However, Western policy was dishonest, foolish, and reckless, ignoring Moscow’s security concerns and daring Vladimir Putin to respond. Indeed, Washington policymakers would never have tolerated similar conduct by the Russians in the Western hemisphere. Yet as was said of the Bourbons who once ruled France, America’s neoconservatives and other hawks have learned nothing and forgotten nothing. Without a sharp break in policy, Americans will find themselves again at war for nothing, other than a vain desire to dominate the earth.

U.S. policymakers may be glorying in Russia’s distress in Ukraine. For having started a war of conquest, Moscow should lose. However, Washington’s conduct risks broadening and intensifying the conduct, which would put Europe and America at risk.

Instead of talking about victory, the Biden administration should promote peace. Ukraine is being ravaged. Europe would be the immediate target if the conflict spreads. And America’s homeland would be the final target if a U.S.-Russian military confrontation spiraled out of control. Nothing involved in today’s conflict is worth taking these kinds of risks.

(Source: antiwar.com)

## Satellite images suggest China may have developed new class of nuclear-powered submarine

Satellite images of a Chinese shipyard suggest the country may have developed a new class of nuclear-powered attack submarines, Reuters reported Tuesday.

The images clearly show a submarine in dry dock, but shrouds over key areas of the vessel make it difficult to determine whether it is an entirely new class of ship or merely an upgrade to an existing model, according to Reuters. The changes in question relate to adding vertical-launching missile tubes for guided missiles as well as an upgraded propulsion system.

The images were captured at China’s Huludao Port in Liaoning province.

The parts of the ship that would house both the launch tubes and propulsion are covered with what appears to be green tarp. The propulsion upgrade, if applied, would replace traditional spinning propellers with quieter pump-jets, according to Reuters.

While the U.S. Navy has long had such vessels, the development would be a new one for China’s burgeoning Navy. The U.S. military has also been monitoring the Chinese military for development of a nuclear-powered fast attack submarine in recent years.

The images come at a time of simmering tensions between the U.S. and China over both Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and China’s ambitions toward Taiwan.

China has refused to join Western efforts to freeze out the Russian economy since President Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine in February. The country has also consistently antagonized Taiwan’s sovereignty with faux bombing runs near the island.

While the U.S. formally recognizes the one-China policy and does not have an official embassy in Taiwan, the U.S. has supplied billions of dollars in defense technology to the country.

(Source: news.yahoo.com)

## U.S. gun murders spiked to record numbers in 2020

From page 1 ► From 2019 to 2020, the overall firearm homicide rate increased 34.6 percent, from 4.6 to 6.1 per 100,000 persons and the highest rate in more than 25 years.

Firearms are also the method of injury for most homicides and suicides (79% and 53%, respectively, in 2020).

In geographical terms, gun murder rates increased coast-to-coast in large and small metro areas, as well as non-metro and rural areas, the CDC said.

The data reveals that black Americans as a whole were at least four times more likely to be killed by a gun than the overall population, and 12 times more likely than a white person.

“Programs, policies, and practices can reduce risk for violence and inequities,” Houry said.

According to the research published the reasons for this widening inequality were “unclear and potentially complex,” noting the COVID-19 pandemic might have “exacerbated existing social and economic stressors.”

However, race had played a clear role, as other minority groups were also found to have higher rates of gun deaths.

The report said “longstanding systemic inequities and structural racism have resulted in limited economic, housing, and educational opportunities associated with inequities in risk for violence and other health conditions among various racial and ethnic groups.”

Poverty levels likely reflect a range of risk factors that contribute to violence and inequities, the reports note.

According to the CDC, the circumstances of 2020, including the “COVID-19 pandemic and community-law enforcement tensions related to law enforcement use of force, have potentially contributed to increased risks for homicide and suicide, including exacerbating the social and structural factors that drive racial and ethnic inequities.”

Even though 24% of the U.S. population lived in high-poverty counties in 2020, 39% of the non-Hispanic Black population and 44% of the non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native population lived in these high-poverty counties.

Interestingly the report highlights that (despite the U.S. gun violence epidemic) “medical school curricula do not consistently incorporate firearm safety, violence prevention, or social determinants of health in training.”

In a statement, CDC Director Rochelle Wal-



ensky said “the tragic and historic increase in firearm homicide and the persistently high rates of firearm suicide underscore the urgent need for action to reduce firearm-related injuries and deaths.”

She insisted by addressing the “factors contributing to homicide and suicide and providing support to communities, we can help stop violence now and in the future.”

Increased gun violence linked to the coronavirus pandemic in 2020 has been widely noted previously, with the FBI reporting last year that murders had increased by 30%.

The CDC report goes further in placing the rate of murders caused by firearms at the highest level in 26 years, while also noting the disparities based on race, ethnicity, and poverty.

Just two weeks ago, research by the University of Michigan also showed that gun violence overtook car accidents as the leading cause of death among children and adolescents in the U.S. in 2020.

The finding was part of longer-term research effort from the university’s Institute for Firearm Injury Prevention.

These deaths included incidents of suicide, accidental shootings, and murders, but murders had overtaken the other two categories.

The number of deaths from car accidents and gun homicides among infants, children, and young adults has been growing closer since 2016.

Drug overdoses and poisoning increased by more than 80% between 2019 and 2020, the researchers found, to become the third leading cause of death among this demographic.

“We knew gun violence had increased but I was surprised by the level of increase for just one year,” said Dr. Jason Goldstick, a researcher with the Institute for Firearm Injury Prevention and associate professor of emergency medicine at the University of Michigan “I can’t re-

member ever seeing that before,” he added.

Goldstick says “these numbers are horrible, especially because these are such preventable deaths, but until very recently research has been chronically underfunded.”

He also called on the government to take action saying “our ultimate message is that a public health approach to violence prevention can work, but only if you fill in the evidence base, and to do that, you need funding.”

According to FBI data released in late 2021, the increase was again disparately felt by Black Americans, which the bureau noted “despite making up around 14% of the U.S. population accounted for nearly half of the nation’s murder victims.”

According to CDC data, although 2020 marked the first year that more children and teens were killed by guns than in car accidents, gun violence has been the number one cause of death among Black teenage boys over 15 for at least a decade.

And the Black teenage boys are not dying in high profile mass shootings on school campuses or malls. Rather, many of them lost their lives in neighborhoods where high poverty levels exist.

Amid rising unemployment and inequality rates there has been less oversight and less predictable routines for children, making it even more difficult for parents, teachers, and others to see warning signs.

Many experts blame the easy access and availability of guns as another major factor. The past year has seen consistent monthly record firearm sales. Experts say far too many of those guns are not even properly secured in homes, allowing students access to firearms.

For decades, advocates of gun control have been calling on authorities to take immediate measures to tackle the gun violence epidemic in America but many experts believe little action will be seen.

The National Rifle Association (NRA), with its increasingly record membership numbers, is such a powerful lobby group in Congress that lawmakers are unable to change the regulations.

The NRA and other gun-rights advocates claim the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects individual gun ownership.

Amid a record number of guns on the streets and more firearms among households than American citizens, these troubling death rates are unlikely to ease any time soon.



## Lebanese culture minister visits National Museum of Iran

page 1 ► This Museum houses the largest collections of archaeological objects in the country. Dating from the Paleolithic to the late Islamic period, the collections represent more than a million years of human settlement and cultural achievement in Iran. The Paleolithic personal ornaments, clay and human figurines from the early village communities, the earliest evidence of administrative technology and writing from the 4th millennium BC, Persepolis stone reliefs and capitals, Parthian life-size bronze statue of the “Shami Man”, the natural mummy of a man called “Salt Man”, the Ilkhanid Mihrab (prayer niche) of Dar-e Behesht, and the pen and ink



(Siah Qalam) paintings by Reza Abbasi of the Safavid period are among the important objects in the museum.

## North Khorasan handicrafts receive National Seal of Excellence



TEHRAN – The National Seal of Excellence has been granted to 11 high-quality works handcrafted by artisans of the North Khorasan province, the provincial tourism chief has said.

Traditional embroidery and traditional musical instruments are among the works awarded with the National Seal of Excellence, CHTN quoted Ali Mostofian as saying on Wednesday.

Quality, creativity, ability to compete in domestic and international markets, recyclability and suitability for everyday life were the criteria used to choose selected handicrafts, the official added.

The National Seal of Excellence is given to high-quality, selected works to support

craftspeople, improve the quality of their works and preserve the originality of this industry, and create sustainable employment.

With 14 entries, Iran ranks first globally for the number of cities and villages registered by the World Crafts Council, as China with seven entries, Chile with four, and India with three ones come next. In January 2020, the cities of Shiraz, Malayer, and Zanjan and the village of Qassemabad were designated by the WCC- Asia Pacific Region, putting Iran's number of world crafts cities and villages from ten to 14.

Shiraz was named a “world city of [diverse] handicrafts”. Malayer was made a global hub for woodcarving and carved-wood furniture. Zanjan gained the title of a “world city of filigree”. And Qassemabad village, which is nationally known for its traditional costumes, was also promoted to a world hub of handicrafts.

Chador Shab, a kind of homemade outer garment for women, was, however, the main subject for the WCC assessment for the village.

The National Seal of Excellence is given to high-quality works to support craftspeople and preserve the originality of this industry.

## Historical properties in Semnan to be ceded to private sector

TEHRAN –Four historical places and monuments across north-central Semnan province will be temporarily ceded to the private sector in order to receive further care and maintenance, the provincial tourism chief has said.

The historical properties are to be found profitable for the private investors as they are planned to be repurposed into a café museum, tourist complexes, and accommodation centers, Amir Karamzadeh mentioned on Tuesday.

Once the properties are completely restored, they can be used by the private sector, the official added.

Over the past couple of years, tens of historical places and monuments have been temporarily ceded to the private sector under the supervision of the Revitalization and Utilization Fund for Historical Places.

Affiliated with the tourism ministry, the Fund is in charge of concession with the aim of historical sites receiving better maintenance by repurposing them into thriving boutique hotels, eco-lodges, traditional restaurants, or other profitable niches.

The country boasts hundreds of historical sites such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bath-houses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 26 are in-



scribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

The main population centers of Semnan province lie along the ancient Silk Road (and modern-day Imam Reza Expressway), linking Rey (Tehran) with Khorasan (Mashhad). While few visitors spend much time in the area, driving through you can easily seek out several well-preserved caravanserais (notably Dehnamak and Ahowan), cisterns (the Cafe Abenbar in Garmsar is a special treat), and ruined mud citadels (Padeh is lumpy but fascinating). The large, bustling cities of Semnan, Damghan, and Shahrud (Bas-

tam) all have a small selection of historic buildings and Semnan has a fine old covered bazaar.

TEHRAN – On Monday, Mohammad Hossein Soufi, the director of the Touring and Automobile Club of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Mohammad Kazem Al-e Sadeq, the Iranian ambassador to Baghdad, discussed ways to expand tourism relations with Iraq.

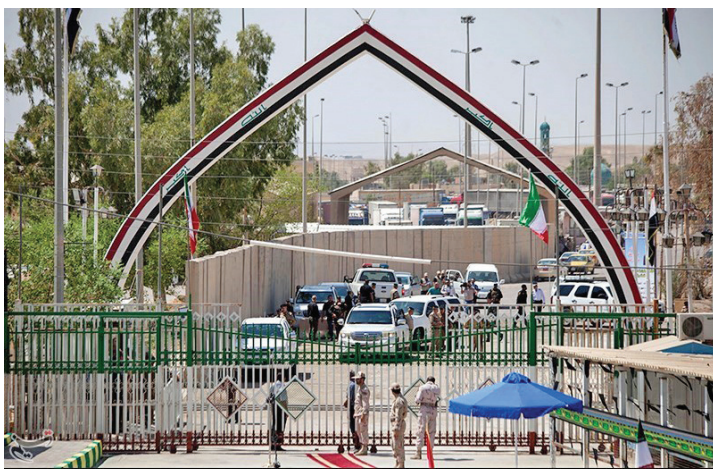
Soufi said that creating the necessary facilities, such as issuing international driver's licenses, handling customs matters, and issuing transit license plates, is one way to create prosperity in the tourism industry.

As the biggest and most important task of the touring and automobile club, it aims to improve these facilities, especially for neighboring countries sharing borderlines with Iran, such as Iraq, he added.

As Iraq is one of the countries with the highest demand for car travel to Iran, there is a need for joint cooperation between the related organizations in order to remove existing obstacles and facilitate the movement of cars and other land vehicles, he noted.

For his part, Al-e Sadeq said that currently, many tourists are traveling to Iran for pilgrimage and for medical treatments, including those from neighboring countries and Iraq, because Iran is cheaper economically, has a shorter travel route, and there are significant shrines there.

In order to earn more revenue and credit in this area, there is a need to develop more targeted and coordinated plans and programs, he noted.



# Iran plans to expand tourism ties with Iraq

Back in January, Mehr reported that some 1.47m foreign nationals visited Iran from the beginning of the last Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2021) to January 1, a span most of which was subject to severe travel bans due to coronavirus.

Of the number, 635, 862 foreign nationals arrived in Iran as of mid-October when the Islamic Republic started issuance of tourist visas after a 20-month hiatus, the report added.

Citizens from Iraq and Afghanistan were the main source of tourism for Iran from October 23

to December 22, 2021.

Over the past couple of years, neighboring Iraq has been one

Iran is potentially a booming destination for travelers seeking cultural attractions, breathtaking sceneries, and numerous UNESCO-registered sites.

## Sassanid fortress hosting national festival of ethnic groups

TEHRAN –A national festival of Iranian ethnic groups is currently underway in Falak-ol-Aflak fortress, an imposing monument of Sassanids, which dominates the city of Khorramabad in western Lorestan province.

Festival participants hail from 25 provinces and are gathered to promote societal enthusiasm through unity among Iran's tribes and ethnic groups, which is the aim of the 5th edition of the festival, IRNA reported on Wednesday.

The festival features regional arts, handicrafts, souvenirs, culinary traditions, and tourist-attraction exhibits, as well as crafts workshops and live performances.

The event, which opened on Monday, will come to an end on Friday.

Iran is home to many regional people including ones with Turk and Arab elements in addition to the Kurds, Baloch, Bakhtyari, Lurs, and other smaller minorities such as Armenians, Assyrians, Jews, and others.

Language, music, indigenous cuisine,



clothing, songs, anecdotes, crafts, live performances, and local rituals such as celebrations and wedding ceremonies have always spurred many to experience life among the tribes.

The unmissable eight-towered Falak-ol-Aflak Castle dominates the city as one of the most visited travel destinations in the region for both domestic and foreign sightseers.

The fortress dates from the Sassanid era (224–651). It seems particularly imposing

and dramatic when floodlit at night, offering picturesque views of its encircling crenelated battlements.

The Sassanid era is of very high importance in Iranian history, under which Persian art and architecture experienced a general renaissance.

Soaked in history and culture, Lorestan is one of the lesser-known travel destinations in Iran, which mainly acts as a gateway to the sweltering plains below in adjoining Khuzestan province. Lorestan is also a region of raw beauty that an avid nature lover could spend weeks exploring.

The region was inhabited by Iranian Indo-European peoples, including the Medes, c. 1000 BC. Cimmerians and Scythians intermittently ruled the region from about 700 to 625 BC.

Lorestan was incorporated into the growing Achaemenid Empire in about 540 BC and successively was part of the Seleucid, Parthian, and Sassanid dynasties.

## Preserving ancient Germi requires proper budgeting, official says

TEHRAN –The preservation of the ancient town of Germi, northwestern Ardabil province, requires an adequate budget, a senior police official in charge of protecting cultural heritage has said.

For better dealing with smugglers and illegal diggers, a specific budget line should be set aside for the necessary excavations in the historical region of Germi, Nasser Shokri explained, IRNA reported on Wednesday.

It is necessary to strengthen the cultural heritage associa-

tions in this regard to raise public awareness of the importance of conserving the cultural heritage and the need to preserve the history and civilization of the region, the official added.

The culturally-rich Germi and its surrounding lands have long been destinations for avid archaeology buffs and eco-travelers. Over the past couple of years, some seasons of excavation have been carried out in Germi and other villages nearby.

In November 2018, Iranian researchers discovered an Iron

Age tomb in Germi, dating back to a time between 2500 to 3000 years ago, belonging to a child who was between 5 and 7 years old. It was unearthed in a survey aimed to probe the history of settlements in Yel Suyi, a ruined site majority of which is associated with the early Islamic era.

In December of the same year, several relics, dating back to Seljuk (1037–1194) and Il-Khanid (1256–1335/1353) eras, were unearthed in the vicinity of Alajouq fortress in Germi county.

Ardabil province is believed to

of Iran's most important markets for tourism and pilgrimage. In January, the deputy tourism chief Ali-Asghar Shalbafian announced that Iran had renewed arrangements to facilitate travels for Iraqi nationals. “For Iraqi tourists visiting Iran, a new system has been implemented to ensure their safety and comfort.”

In 2021, the two neighbors agreed to abolish visa requirements for air travelers.

The announcement came after President Ebrahim Raisi and Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi met in Tehran, discussing various issues including visa waiver, a joint railway project, and increasing the level of trade.

Before the coronavirus pandemic, Iraqi constituted Iran's largest source of tourists. In return, hundreds of thousands of Iranian pilgrims head for the holy Iraqi cities of Najaf and Karbala each year to attend the Arbäeen pilgrimage, aka the Arbäeen trek, to mark an end to the 40-day mourning period following the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS), the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Iran is potentially a booming destination for travelers seeking cultural attractions, breathtaking sceneries, and numerous UNESCO-registered sites. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, Iran aims to increase the number of tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2025.

## Police arrest illegal diggers in Alamut

TEHRAN – The Iranian police have recently arrested four illegal excavators and antique smugglers in Alamut, a semi-mountainous region in Qazvin province, west-central Iran, the provincial tourism chief has said.

The accused people were traced and finally arrested after police received reports from cultural heritage aficionados about their misdeeds, CHTN quoted Alireza Khazaeli as saying on Tuesday.

Some excavation tools and equipment were seized from the gang, the official added.

The culprits were handed over to the judicial system for further investigation, he noted.

Better known for being home to a well-fortified ruined castle and its lush cherry gardens, Alamut annually attracts hundreds of thousands of holidaymakers to the castle

that once sheltered the followers of Hasan-e Sabbah (1070–1124), a leader of the Ismaili sect, known as ‘Assassins’. In the early 1930s, British-Italian explorer and travel writer Freya Stark described her exploration of the place in her book “The Valleys of the Assassins”.

In popular myth, Sabbah led a bizarre, much-feared mercenary organization whose members were dispatched to murder or kidnap leading political and religious figures of the day.

Alamut, which means “eagle’s nest”, is a geographic region on the western edge of the Alborz range, between the dry and barren plain of Qazvin in the south and the densely forested slopes of the Mazandaran province in the north.

Nowadays, the ruined castle, which is also

known as Alamut Castle, is a top travel destination in the northeastern side of Gazor Khan Village in the environs of Mo’alem Kalayeh, from the environs of Roudbar of Alamut, Qazvin province.

Qazvin was once the capital of the mighty Persian Empire, under Safavids, from 1548 to 98. It is a major tourist destination with a wonderfully restored caravanserai-turned-arts precinct, some quirky museums, and a handful of decent eating options.

Qazvin is also home to one of the biggest roofed caravanserais in the country, Sa’d-al Saltaneh caravanserai. Dating back to the Qajar era, it’s a place for discovering tens of Hojreh or shops, cafes, yards, and a stunning mosque. It’s a place for visitors who want to experience the culture, cuisine, and hospitality of Iran.



# Germany, Norway ready to support Iran improve refugee services

TEHRAN – The ambassadors of Germany and Norway to Tehran have said the two countries are ready to support Iran for improving services to refugees.

The envoy made the remarks during a visit to a refugee resort in Torbat-e Jam in Khorasan Razavi province, IRIB reported on Wednesday.

In recent months, due to the conflicts in Afghanistan, Khorasan has witnessed a significant inflow of Afghan refugees, which has increased the statistical population of refugee camps and settlements, and this has caused problems in the field of services, Ali Ghasemi, the director for foreign nationals and immigrants department of Khorasan Razavi, said.

“We are trying to invite different countries to provide more services to the migrants living in the camps and to be a good host, and this will only be possible with the cooperation and support of other countries,” he said.

Germany’s Ambassador to Iran Hans-Udo Muzel said that as a friend of Iran, we consider it our duty to assist the Government in resolving the problems of the Afghan people and the refugees in Iran and to provide them with various services and facilities.

Sigvald Tomin Hauge, Norwegian Ambassador to Tehran, also appreciated the efforts of the Islamic Republic for providing and providing facilities and services to Afghan refugees, highlighting that we intend to help the government of Iran to solve the



problems of these loved ones.

## World’s fourth-largest refugee community

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

Based on the latest statistics, over 3 million Afghans are living

in Iran – some 780,000 Afghan refugees, over 2 million undocumented Afghans, and another 600,000 Afghan passport-holders with Iranian visas.

## Iran has generously hosted approximately 1 million refugees for the past 30 years. The majority came from Afghanistan and Iraq.

The recent fast-paced turn of events in Afghanistan has the potential to create additional population movements; displacing families internally and potentially driving them to seek refuge in neighboring countries.

It is estimated that up to 300,000 Afghan asylum-seekers have fled to Iran this year alone in search of safety, while UNHCR has only been able to screen

some 24,000 newly arrived Afghans for protection needs.

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

The same happened for the vaccination when the country has generously considered refugees for vaccination against coronavirus.

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

Antônio Guterres, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, has praised Iran’s generosity which – for decades – has hosted millions of Afghans in need.

“At this moment, we need the global community to put their hands on the wheel of progress, provide resources, and prevent Afghanistan from spiraling any further.

I will never forget the generosity of countries like Pakistan and Iran, which – for decades – have hosted millions of Afghans in need,” Guterres said in a statement released on January 26 to the Security Council on Afghanistan.

## UNHCR lifts Level 2 emergency for Afghan refugees in Iran

TEHRAN – The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has lifted the Level 2 emergency for the Afghanistan situation in Iran in April.

However, new arrivals to Iran continue, increasing the need for more support, according to a UNHCR report published on May 9.

Level 2 is activated when an operation requires additional support and resources to respond in a timely and effective manner. The lifting, however, is not an indication that the emergency is entirely over; it means that UNHCR now has some sufficient resources to respond to the post-emergency situation.

According to evolving estimates by the Government of Iran, approximately 500,000 Afghans arrived in Iran in 2021. Some 37,042 Afghans who arrived in Iran from 1 January 2021 to 30 April 2022 have approached UNHCR requesting assistance and protection.

Afghan families who were accommodated by the Government of Iran in Fariman are now being transferred to the Torbat-e-Jam refugee settlement. Over 200 families currently reside in the settlement shelters at Torbat-e-Jam and need immediate support.

According to the head of the passport department of Afghanistan, the online registration for passports started on 9 April 2022 in Kabul. It is reported that the passport office in Kabul will issue some 2,000 passports per day and increase to 3,000 daily passports after Ramadan.

UNHCR continues to rely on the Government of Iran to share figures on the total number of Af-

ghans who arrived in Iran in 2021 and 2022. For now, UNHCR is working with the assumption that, of the approximate 500,000 new arrivals in 2021, a large number have likely been deported, others moved to Iran for livelihoods or family reasons, and have since returned voluntarily to Afghanistan, and a small number have moved onwards towards Turkey. For 2022 planning purposes, it is estimated that 278,000 will remain in Iran.

### More global support needed

In January, Ivo Freijssen, the UNHCR Representative in Iran, said that international support for Iran should be strengthened given the presence of millions of refugees in the country.

“We seek to obtain international funding through various consultations,” he noted, highlighting that “we are aware of the hardships and problems of Iran in support of refugees despite the oppressive sanctions.”

Despite the difficult path and the lack of funds, we must maintain our morale and motivation in this humanitarian field, however, the Islamic Republic has always shown that it supports refugees despite all the difficulties, he emphasized.

He also announced the formation of two working groups on the resettlement of refugees to third countries, as well as efforts to identify and register new refugees who do not have any identity documents in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iran.

“We strive to provide the necessary assistance to the people who do not have facilities and those who do not have any identification certificates,” he added.

## Over 1,600 inmates of involuntary crimes released in Ramadan

TEHRAN – A total of 1,670 prisoners of unintentional crimes have been released over the holy month of Ramadan (started on April 3 this year), according to the head of the Blood Money Organization.

As an annual tradition, benefactors come together in a ceremony to raise funds for releasing prisoners of unintentional crimes in the month of Ramadan.

Freeing prisoners of involuntary crimes is done in three ways. The first way is granting prisoners leave and the second way is providing a number of them with loans to be paid inside the prison.

The third way of assistance is the release of unintentional convicts by paying their debt.

Of the total released prisoners, 40 were female convicts and the rest were male debtors who were incarcerated due to inability to pay financial debts or inability to pay dues (workshop accidents and traffic accidents), Asadollah Joulaei said.

Isfahan’s benefactors released the highest number of inmates amounting to 194 convicts, IRIB reported on Tuesday.

Iranian benefactors donated a total of 2 trillion rials (nearly \$8.5 million) to pay the debt of the released prisoners, he stated.

Moreover, President Ebrahim Raisi, Parlia-



ment Speaker Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf, and Judiciary Chief Gholam-Hossein Mohseni Ejei made a total of 7 billion rials (nearly \$26,000) in contributions to free prisoners of unintentional crimes, ISNA reported.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei also donated 10 billion rials (about \$40,000) to help free prisoners on April 9.

A total of 7,956 prisoners of unintentional crimes have been released over the past [Iranian calendar] year (March 2021-March 2022), according to the head of the Blood Money Organization.

Since 1990, more than 150,000 unintentional crime doers who had debts have been freed. Currently, there are 10,680 prisoners of unintentional crimes in the country, of whom 4,673 are eligible for assistance.

## COVID-19 UPDATES ON MAY 11

New cases	453
New deaths	6
Total cases	7,226,672
Total deaths	141,198
New hospitalized patients	62
Patients in critical condition	818
Total recovered patients	7,012,770
Diagnostic tests conducted	51,622,353
Doses of vaccine injected	149,328,963

## Japan seeking to use IRCS volunteer experiences

From page 1 ► mechanism for implementing joint volunteering projects with the Iranian Red Crescent Society.

Some 1.1 million volunteers in 47 provinces of Japan are providing humanitarian services, he said, adding that the focus of the Red Cross services is voluntary services, which started with a blood donation to the provision of services to the elderly, given that the aging population in Japan has a profound effect on the number of volunteers.

The programs of the IRCS Volunteer Organization to attract and keep volunteers active by using modern technologies and defining humanitarian programs are very inspiring, and with strategic cooperation, these successful experiences can be transferred to Japan.

Salimi for his part said that the activity of 700,000 volunteers is trying to fulfill the slogan of this organization which is the link between the ability of the able and the needs of the needy.

Distribution of 150,000 food and health packages, implementation of 1,500 volunteer projects in low-income areas, provision of aid, medicine, and treatment to more than 93,000 needy patients, and the launch of a water donation campaign with a focus on tackling climate change, collecting public donations to

help flood victims are due to the participation and support of philanthropists and volunteers, Salimi explained.

### IRCS services

The IRCS, established in 1922, is one of the first and oldest members of the movement and is currently one of the top five societies in the world due to its significant activities in the national and international arenas.

In 2005, the IRCS received the Henry Davison Award for outstanding humanitarian services, and the IRCS initiative of volunteers was selected as the best project (out of 50 projects from 45 national societies), by the General Assembly of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

In addition to offering services to the victims

## Programs of the IRCS to attract and keep volunteers active by using modern technologies are very inspiring, and these experiences can be transferred to Japan.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## World’s first ‘subway library’ to open in Tehran

For the first time in the underground transportation system worldwide, a public library will be opened in Tehran subway, Farnoush Nobakht, director of Tehran Urban and Suburban Railway Operations Company, said.

According to the memorandum signed between the Tehran Urban and Suburban Railway Operations Company and the Tehran public libraries foundation, libraries will be launched in seven selected stations, first of which will be inaugurated on August 12, ISNA reported on Tuesday.

The library, called “Metro Book”, is in line with the cultural programs to promote the culture of reading and increase per capita reading among subway passengers during intra-city trips, the library with a capacity of more than 5,000 books provides services continuously from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., she explained.

## افتتاح کتابخانه عمومی در متروی تهران برای اولین بار در جهان

مدیرعامل شرکت بهره برداری متروی تهران و حومه گفت: برای اولین بار در سامانه حمل و نقل متروهای جهان، کتابخانه عمومی در متروی تهران افتتاح می شود.

به گزارش ایسنا، فریاد نوبخت اظهار داشت: قرار است طبق تفاهم نامه منعقد شده بین شرکت بهره برداری متروی تهران و حومه و نهاد کتابخانه های عمومی استان تهران در هفت ایستگاه منتخب «مترو کتاب» راه اندازی شود.

مدیرعامل شرکت بهره برداری متروی تهران و حومه گفت: این کتابخانه در راستای برنامه های فرهنگی معاونت امور فرهنگی اجتماعی شرکت بهره برداری متروی تهران مبنی بر ترویج فرهنگ کتابخوانی و افزایش سرانه مطالعه در میان مسافران مترو هنگام سفرهای درون شهری این کتابخانه با ظرفیت بیش از ۵۰۰۰ عنوان کتاب به صورت فیزیکی از ساعت ۸ صبح تا ۲۰ به طور مستمر به ارائه خدمات می دهد.



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MAY 12, 2022

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

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

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:13:01    Evening: 20:20    Dawn: 4:24 (tomorrow)    Sunrise: 6:01 (tomorrow)

## Omar Khayyam: As mathematician

Part 9

As for the geometrical solution, Khayyam provides three different proofs. The first proof is based on Proposition II.6 of the Elements, and is virtually the same as the one produced by Sabet ibn Qorra in his authentication of algebraic problems by means of geometrical proofs; the second proof reproduces that of Kharazmi's.

Both proofs are analytical in that it is assumed in both of them that the side of the square being looked for is given, implying that this square has already been constructed.

Khayyam produces a third synthetic proof. He supposes that the line AB is equal to 10, and that the rectangle E is equal to 39. He then applies to AB a rectangle BD equal to E and exceeding AB by a square AD, as shown in Proposition VI.29 of the Elements. The side AC of the square will be given, as shown in Proposition 59 of the Data. Thus the line AC will be the root looked for.

The equations that can only be solved by means of conics are the fourteen cubics that cannot be reduced to an equation of a lesser degree.

Khayyam informs us that neither him nor his predecessors were able to solve them numerically, adding that "possibly someone else will come to know it after us" (the numerical rules for solving cubic equations were discovered in the 16th century by the Italian algebraists Scipione del Ferro and Niccolo Fontana Tartaglia).

Khayyam solves these equations only geometrically, using the properties of conic sections. The construction of the solutions of these fourteen cubics constitutes the bulk of Khayyam's treatise.

As was the case with quadratic equations, the construction of the solutions is achieved through the introduction of a unit length; this allowed Khayyam to represent each of the terms of a cubic equation by a rectangular parallelepiped, so that the original algebraic equation would translate into an equation between solids, that is, between geometrical magnitudes.

This way, Khayyam was able to base his demonstrations on Euclid's Elements and Data, and on Apollonius's Conics.

Khayyam first proves three lemmas. The first lemma enables him to construct a cube equal to a given rectangular parallelepiped; the second and third lemmas are used each time Khayyam needs to represent the number in a cubic equation as a solid having either a given base or a given height.

He is now able to solve geometrically the equation "a cube is equal to a number" (its numerical solution being the cube root of the number).

He constructs a rectangular parallelepiped ABCD whose base AC is the square of the unit and whose height BD is equal to the given number. It is thus required to construct a cube KHIL equal to ABCD.

He takes two lines (E and G) that are mean proportionals between AB, BD (i.e., between the unit and the given number) as shown in the first lemma, and proves that the cube KHIL whose side HI is equal to E will then be equal to ABCD, that is, to the given number. Therefore, the side HI will be the solution of the equation.

Each one of the remaining cubic equations is solved by means of two single-branch conics. Khayyam investigates in each case the number of points at which these conics intersect or touch (not considering their vertices): the equation will accordingly have either one or two solutions.

In some cases, however, the conics neither intersect nor touch, and the equation is "impossible": it cannot be solved geometrically.

In this part of his treatise, Khayyam only produces synthetic proofs, in which he displays a full mastery of classical Greek geometry. However, the solution of each equation was probably found by means of an analysis; Roshdi Rashed has reconstructed such an analysis for the equation "a cube and sides are equal to a number" (i.e.,  $x^3 + bx = c$ ) by reverting the order of Khayyam's synthetic proof.

It amounts to the following, when expressed in the mathematical language used by Khayyam: let AB be the side of a square MB equal to the number of the sides (i.e., to b).

We construct a rectangular parallelepiped whose base is MB and which is equal to the given number (i.e., to c), as shown in the second lemma; and let its height be BC.

Now we assume that the problem has been solved, and that BE is the side of the cube being looked for (i.e., x); and we complete the square EL.

The parallelepiped EM will be equal to the sides (i.e., to bx), but the parallelepiped BN is equal to the number (i.e., to c). Therefore, the remaining parallelepiped EN will be equal to the cube of BE (i.e.,  $c - bx = x^3$ ), since BE is by hypothesis the root of the equation.

In other words, the solid whose base is the square of AB and whose height is EC is equal to the cube whose side is BE. Therefore their bases will be reciprocally proportional to their heights, and the square of AB is to the square of BE as BE is to CE.

Now let ED be a line perpendicular to BC and such that AB is to BE as BE to ED. Therefore, AB will be to ED in the duplicate ratio of AB to BE, that is, as the square of AB to the square of BE. But the square of AB is to the square of BE as BE to EC.

Therefore, AB is to ED as BE to EC; and alternately AB is to BE as ED to EC. But AB is to BE as BE to ED. Therefore, BE is to ED as ED to EC; therefore the square of ED is equal to the product of BE and EC. Consequently the point D is on a circle whose diameter is BC.

Also since AB is to BE as BE to ED, the square of BE will be equal to the product of AB and ED. Therefore, the square of DG is equal to the product of AB and BG. Consequently the point D is also on a parabola whose vertex is B, whose axis is BG, and whose erect side is AB.

Thus the analysis has led to the determination of the intersection of a semicircle and a parabola. In the synthesis, Khayyam constructs the parabola HBD and the semicircle BDC, draws from the point of intersection D the line DE perpendicular to BC, and then proves that BE is the side of the cube looked for.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica

To be continued

# Tehran photo exhibit explores WWII Polish refugees’ odyssey from Soviet Union to Iran

TEHRAN – A photo exhibition opened at the Iranian Academy of Arts (IAA) on Tuesday depicting those Polish WWII refugees in their odyssey from the former Soviet Union to Iran.

The academy is organizing the exhibition with contributions from Poland to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the historical event.

Entitled "Toward Hope", the exhibition opened with a special ceremony attended by Poland's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Zbigniew Rau, Polish Ambassador Maciej Fatkowski, IAA director Bahman Namvar-Motlaq, and groups of foreign diplomats and cultural figures.

Several hundred thousand Polish people fled to the Soviet Union during World War II, but wound up being victimized in labor camps within that country.

A total of 116,000 the Polish people, 3,000 of whom were orphans, escaped from the Soviet Union to Iran, starting a new life in the central Iranian city of Isfahan.

In a short speech, Rau said that the historical event is familiar to both in Iran and Poland, and praised Iranians for their help that saved the lives of thousands of Polish people who were exhausted from the Soviet forced-labor camps.

He said that the fact that World War II began with the Soviet-Nazi joint invasion of Poland has been ignored in the historical records of the war.

He noted that it was the Soviet invaders that sent millions of Polish people to the forced-labor camps in Siberia and Central Asia where tens

A visitor photographs a work on view in the exhibition "Toward Hope" at the Iranian Academy of Arts in Tehran on May 10, 2022. (IRNA/Meisam Alaqemandan)

of thousands of them died of hunger and inhuman working conditions.

Rau said that it is significant to record the memories of past experiences, and added that the Russian invasion of Ukraine is clear evidence that history's lessons are still trustworthy as the world has united against violence and hatred.

The Iranian Academy of Arts presented Rau with a copy of "Masterpieces of Persian Art from Polish Collections".

The two-volume bilingual English-Persian edition of the book published by the academy in 2013 was edited by Professor Tadeusz Majda, a university teacher and curator of the Department of Oriental Art at the National Museum in Warsaw.

The exhibition will be running through May 16. An edition of the exhibition is also underway at the Art Bureau branch office in Isfahan.

The 75th anniversary of the arrival of the Polish refugees in Iran was also commemorated by two photo exhibitions organized at the White Gallery at Tehran's Sadabad Palace and the Isfahan Museum of Contemporary Art in 2017.

The photos were printed from the negatives discovered in the studio of Abolqasem Jala in Isfahan half a century after WWII by Parisa Damandan, a photographer and art historian who curated the exhibitions.

Andrew Sinclair’s book on history of political use of terror comes to Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN – British writer Andrew Sinclair’s 2004 book “An Anatomy of Terror” has been published in Persian.

The book, which is a disturbing and original history of the political use of terror from antiquity to the present day, has been rendered into Persian by Khosro Sabri. Now is the publisher of the Persian edition.

The political use of terror has always been with us, whether in the murderous seizing of power by the ancients, through the outlawed campaigns of guerrillas, or via the state-sanctioned terror of war.

From Homer to Al Qaeda, terrorism has flourished in one form or another, bloody shaping our history.

Andrew Sinclair’s unique book brilliantly explores the methods and thinking behind terrorism and shows how the nature of terror has not changed since the days of the Assassins and the Mongol hordes.

Meticulously researched and beautifully written, “An Anatomy of Terror” dissects the uses of atrocity from the Roman destruction of Carthage to the suicide attacks on the World Trade Center.

Bold, incisive and compelling, “An Anatomy of Terror” is an essential history for our times.

Sinclair is a leading novelist, historian and filmmaker as well as a lecturer on history, cinema and English literature.

He has written books about the CIA, Che Guevara and the Knight Templars.



Front cover of the Persian edition of Andrew Sinclair’s book “An Anatomy of Terror”.

## “Lady of the City” crowned best at Sydney World Film Festival

TEHRAN – Iranian drama “Lady of the City” was selected as the best narrative feature film at the 13th edition of the Sydney World Film Festival in Australia, the organizers announced on Monday.

Directed by Maryam Bahrololumi, the film, also known as “Shahrbano”, follows Shahrbano, a woman who has been sentenced to life in prison for being a drug mule. After eleven years in jail, she is released from prison for a few days to attend her son's wedding. The temporary freedom helps her see a new aspect of her life and that of her family before returning to prison.

The award for best narrative short went to “Mamma” by Norwegian director Aslak Danbolt.

The film is about Synnove, who is searching for her drug-addicted daughter Michelle in an almost desolated city on Christmas Eve. Mother and daughter in real life, Synnove and Michelle play versions of themselves in a story that is very close to their own lives.

“Everyone Wants to Be the Next Weismann” by Spanish filmmaker Alberto Triano was named the best documentary feature film.

Contemporary art collector and

Fereshteh Sadr-Orafai acts in a scene from “Lady of the City” by Maryam Bahrololumi.

first to discover the great Richard Weismann, Martin Solo takes on the challenge of introducing the world to his unique vision of art by opening his private museum to the public. For this, Martin prepares a retrospective of his latest discovery: Mu Pan, a Taiwanese, Brooklyn-based artist, whose fantastical works criticize and reflect the violence and brutality of

society. Martin feels he failed with Richard Weismann but this time he is prepared to lay all of his cards on the table.

Norwegian director Martin A. Walther's “The Psychlist” was selected as best documentary short film. The film is about Per who chooses the bicycle as the only escape after his 11-month-old daughter died under tragic events.

The award for best animated film was given to “Poise” by Luis Soares from Portugal, while Australian director Sofie McClure's “Phosphenes” won the best experimental film award.

“Dynamite” by French filmmaker Jim Vieille was named best music video and “Upsodown” by Nathan Ceddia was picked as best Australian film.

## There is no rhetoric in the book!



An interview with the author of the book “Hitler Mansion”

Davoud Khodaei's latest work, “Hitler's Mansion,” focuses on a period in Iranian history in the city of Tabriz before and after the Islamic Revolution. The story's narrator, a member of the Qajar family, unintentionally encounters an incident that forever changes his life. The story begins in 1941 with the arrival of Germans and Russians in Tabriz, followed

by the events of the Islamic Revolution, including the role of the narrator's parents in the revolution, and finally the events following the revolution.

**\* Where did the story's initial idea come from?**

A collector once held an exhibition of German accessories in 1941. After seeing the exhibition, the story's initial idea formed in my mind, and after the idea was approved with a little help, I began writing it and finished it in nine months.

**\* Please tell us a little bit about the story.**

The novel depicts the life of a Tabriz resident and member of a Qajar family. This character is in prison for some reason, and while there, he is attempting to explore his past. Through his exploration, you will learn a lot about things that have happened in Tabriz.

**\* So knowing history and politics were required for writing this story?**

Yes. That's why I had to do so many studies before I could write this book. Throughout the

story, I used a variety of historical books and photo collections about the Qajar family to demonstrate the architectural, cultural, and political context of Tabriz over time.

**\* What made you decide on this title for the book?**

One of the novel's central characters, who is involved in numerous events, lives in a mansion that has been symbolically compared to Hitler's mansion. Before the Germans vanished, this character was the last one who was in contact with them. He considers himself to be on an equal level with Hitler and believes that the Russians have a problem with him because they are at war with the Germans.

**\* What age range is the book appropriate for?**

Teenagers and adults. There are stories in this book that I believe are the book's main feature, and there is no rhetoric in the book; everything is told through the lens of documents and events.