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**Car output up 21% in 5 months yr/yr 4**



**Hamid Sourian, gentleman of wrestling, turns 35 11**



**Iran's We Defeat Coronavirus Intl. Cartoon Contest announces finalists 12**

# Economy should not be linked to foreign developments

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By Salman Parviz  
Journalist

**Trump admin. isolating U.S. over Iran**

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres received U.S. Secretary of State Michael Pompeo at his residence in New York on Thursday. The reason for meeting at Guterres' residence is quoted because the UN chief is currently staying in a 14-day quarantine after his recent travel to Portugal. Pompeo was expected to begin the process of triggering snapback sanctions on Iran after failing last week to get the UNSC to pass a resolution to indefinitely extend the Islamic Republic's arms embargo.

Pompeo was also to meet with the Indonesian UN Ambassador Dian Triansyah Djan, who holds the rotating Security Council presidency in August. The Council's presidency is held by each of the members in turn for one month, following the English alphabetical order of the member states' name.

In a phone conversation on Thursday with Guterres, Iranian foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif denounced the illegal U.S. push to reinstate the UN sanctions on Tehran via triggering a snapback mechanism. Zarif pointed out that such a step would have dangerous consequences for international law and will damage international mechanisms and discredit the Security Council.

Meanwhile, Iran's newly appointed foreign ministry spokesman, Saeed Khatibzadeh, told reporters Friday about the status of the illegal U.S. move and rejected some foreign media reports that upon request by Washington, the UN sanctions have been reinstated.

In the August 14 UNSC vote, the U.S. managed to get only one vote besides its own. The Dominican Republic lent its support only to act as a polite gesture for Pompeo's August 16 visit to the Caribbean nation. Almost every other 11 Security Council members are mainly U.S. allies and abstained, while China and Russia voted no. Nine votes represent a qualified majority necessary to adopt the agenda.

The UK, France, and Germany have already said the U.S. did not have the legal right to trigger snapback sanctions because it exited the deal on May 8, 2018. ➔7

## Newly-found skeletons may address bloody conflict during Alexander the Great's invasion of Persia: expert

**TEHRAN** — A number of human skeletons, recently unearthed from ancient water ducts in Persepolis, may be related to a bloody conflict between Persians (Iranians) and invaders led by Alexander the Great in c. 330 BC, an Iranian cultural heritage expert said on Sunday.

"The position of skeletons indicate that those people may not have been buried, but that they were killed and left in the waterways during a clash that may have been related to Alexander the Great's invasion of Iran," Seyyed Mohammad Beheshti said on Sunday.

Earlier this month, the remains of 13 ancient skeletons, 11 of which human remains, were discovered at olden water ducts of Persepolis, shedding new light on the way of life in the ceremonial capital of Achaemenid Empire (c. 550 -330 BC).

Beheshti, who is a member of Iran's Supreme Council of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, also attached great importance to broadening international cooperation and to introduce the new findings in Persepolis on a wider global scale.

"[Widening] International cooperation lays the ground for [properly] introducing these scientific findings and research on Persepolis, which is a valuable achievement for the country's cultural heritage."

Tourism does not equal just having sightseeing in Persepolis and it's only a part of the main missions that Cultural Heritage [body] has for this World Heritage site, the expert noted, talking to IRNA.

He considered three main missions in that regard: "Protection, research, and introduction of relics." ➔8

## Incentive packages help energy ministry pass summer without blackouts

**TEHRAN** — Managing electricity consumption by various sectors including households, agriculture, and industry, and reducing the consumption of fossil fuels used by the power plants has become one of the major issues of the governments in many developing countries and Iran is no exception.

For many years, during summer when the rise in temperature leads to the increase in the utilization of air conditioning devices and consequently a jump in electricity con-

sumption, Energy Ministry was forced to impose some scheduled blackouts across the country to alleviate the pressure on the national grid and the transmission networks.

According to many experts and analysts in the field, the energy ministry's approach toward the issue was completely misguided, and imposing blackout not only was not the answer to the problem, but it was creating problems in many of the country's productive sectors and was disrupting people's livelihood. ➔4

## All foreign nationals in Iran receive free COVID-19 treatment

**TEHRAN** — All foreign nationals infected with coronavirus receive medical treatment free of charge in Iran, deputy director for infectious diseases management department of the Ministry of Health has stated.

So far, at least 4 trillion rials (nearly \$95 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) have been spent only for the treatment of registered foreign nationals, Shahnam Arshi stated.

He went on to say that all health care services for refugees in Iran are free of charge and are also covered by the UNHCR.

It should also be noted that over a period of time, about 20 percent of COVID-19 patients in Mashhad hospitals were Afghan nationals who were treated free of charge, he added.

No foreign national has been charged for coronavirus testing or treatment, he said, highlighting, ➔9

## Coronavirus domino effect: Resistance filmfest to go online

By Seyyed Mostafa Mousavi Sabet

**TEHRAN** — Coronavirus exerted its domino effect on the Resistance International Film Festival as the organizers announced on Sunday that the 16th edition of the event will go online due to a spike in the virus cases in the country.

The festival is scheduled to be organized in two stages, the first of which will

take place during the Sacred Defense Week from September 21 to 28.

The festival is organized every year to commemorate the anniversary of the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war, which is known as the "Sacred Defense" in Iran.

The second part of the festival will be held from November 21 to 27 to celebrate the anniversary of Basij Day, which falls on November 25. ➔12

## U.S. Protests: Riot cops face off with protesters in Louisiana after police shoot & kill black man

By staff & agencies

Riot police officers have arrested several Black Lives Matter protesters blocking roads in Lafayette, Louisiana following a vigil for a man shot and killed by cops while resisting arrest and trying to "walk away."

According to RT, crowds of activists gathered on Saturday evening at the Shell gas station along Evangeline Thruway, where Trayford Pellerin, 31, was shot and killed Friday night.

A group of protesters demanding justice soon spilled onto the road, blocking it with a human chain, and declaring that "nobody gets past this line!"

Police officers in Lafayette, Louisiana have shot and killed a man who resisted arrest and tried to walk into a gas station store "armed with a knife," triggering a new wave of outrage over police brutality and "systemic racism."

Lafayette Police Department officers respond-

ed to a disturbance call, involving a man with a knife at a Shell gas station around 8pm Friday. When they tried to apprehend the suspect, identified as 31-year-old Trayford Pellerin, he allegedly ignored repeated orders to surrender as well as several taser shots fired at him.

The disturbing incident was captured in several videos that showed a man walking away from a group of cops towards the entrance to a convenience store. Witnesses could be heard shouting "He's got a knife," "Get on the ground," and "They're gonna shoot him," before the gunfire erupts.

Around a dozen shots can be heard in the video, which immediately went viral, sparking accusations of excessive use of force. Authorities argued that tasers were "ineffective" and failed to stop the suspect, and that he was still armed when he tried to enter the store with people inside. ➔10

## UAE-Israel normalization agreement pours salt on Palestinians' wound: Emirati activist

By Mohammad Mazhari

**TEHRAN** — Abdullah al-Tawil, an Emirati political activist, is of the opinion that "Emirates-Israel normalization agreement pours salt on Palestinians' wound and it is a bridge over the rubble of the Palestinian cause."

Israel and the UAE reached an agreement on August 13 that will lead to the full normalization of diplomatic relations between the two sides.

The deal came after a phone call between United States President Donald Trump, Israeli

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the crown prince of Abu Dhabi.

Under the agreement, Israel has promised to suspend the annexation of parts of the occupied West Bank. However, just hours after the announcement Benjamin Netanyahu said he remained committed to the annexation plan.

In this regard, al-Tawil tells the Tehran Times that the agreement will not serve the Palestinians' interests and won't stop annexation of the West Bank.

"This agreement pours salt on Palestinian's wound, and it is a bridge over the rubble of the Palestinian cause," says Al-Tawil.

Following is the full text of the interview:

■ What are the causes or motives that prompted the UAE to normalize ties with Israel?

A: Firstly, I must record my personal position on normalization with Israel.

It was a stab in the back of the Arab nations. Israel denies clearly the rights of the Palestinians on their land and their just cause. ➔7

## Muharram rituals being held under health protocols

People across the country hold mourning rituals during the month of Muharram to commemorate the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (AS) and his loyal companions. The rituals are held observing healthcare protocols and social distancing rules due to the coronavirus pandemic.

President Hassan Rouhani has said that the rituals should be held in a way that it will not give a pretext to the enemies, but make Iran a role model for other countries and Shiites who hold mourning ceremony for Imam Hussein (AS).



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## Three Shia mourners killed, dozens wounded in Nigerian police attack

At least three people have been killed and dozens of others injured after Nigerian police attacked mourners marking the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (AS), the third Shia Imam and grandson of Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon Him), in the northern state of Kaduna.

The casualties took place on Saturday evening when police and security forces violently attacked an annual Ashura mourning ceremony that had been organized by the Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN) in Hayin Bello neighborhood of Kaduna.

The IMN, led by prominent Muslim cleric Sheikh Ibrahim Zakzaky, said on its Twitter account that police had also fired teargas at mourners in the ceremony and vandalized their vehicles.

The Nigerian government has been cracking down on Shia Muslim ceremonies for several years and has also banned the IMN, whose members regularly take to the streets of the capital Abuja to call for the release of their leader.

According to Press TV, Zakzaky, who is in his mid-60s, has been in detention since December 2015 after his residence in the city of Zaria was raided by Nigeria's forces, during which he was beaten and lost vision in his left eye.

During the brutal arrest, three of his sons were also killed, his wife sustained serious wounds, and more than 300 of his followers lost their lives.

Zakzaky was charged in April 2018 with murder, culpable homicide, unlawful assembly, the disruption of public peace, and other accusations. He has pleaded not guilty, vehemently rejecting all the accusations brought up against him.



## Iran's exit from JCPOA may only be a matter of time

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Iran is in the process of reviewing its options to respond to a possible restoration of all UN sanctions after the U.S. submitted a complaint to the UN Security Council pushing for the triggering of the snapback process.

As Washington presses ahead with its plan to reinstate the international sanctions on Tehran, Iranian lawmakers and experts call on the government of Hassan Rouhani to quit the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in case the Security Council failed to continue the lifting of the UN sanctions on Iran.

While all remaining parties to the JCPOA including U.S. European allies assert that the U.S. lost its legal authority to trigger the snapback process, after it withdrew from the deal on May 8, 2018, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo traveled to New York on August 20 to notify the Security Council of a "significant non-performance" by Iran of its obligations under the nuclear deal as stipulated in the UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

Pompeo's notification to the Council sparked a wave of protests against the U.S. at the UN, prompting thirteen of the 15-member Security Council to write to the president of the Council to question the legality of the U.S. measure. However, the U.S. still insists that the snapback process is triggered and that the UN sanctions on Iran will be restored within 30 days of receiving the notification.

In the face of renewed U.S. pressure, Iran appears to be contemplating response options if UN sanctions are reinstated. To this end, a group of 49 lawmakers devised a double-urgency motion to force an "automatic withdrawal" from the JCPOA if the UN sanctions are restored.

According to a Tasnim report, the motion calls for an automatic withdrawal from the JCPOA in the event that the snapback process leads to a reinstatement of the UN sanctions on Iran.

Analysts also call for cessation of the implementation of the JCPOA-related commitments if the UN sanctions are re-imposed.

"The best reaction for the Islamic Republic of Iran is to announce that it will stop implementing its commitments under the JCPOA if the [the provisions of the previous] resolutions are reapplied. In this case we will have the zero-versus-zero equation, which means that when our concessions are being zeroed out, the concessions of the other side should also be zeroed out," Mohsen Barati, a sanctions expert, told the Fars news agency on Saturday.

At the official level, the Rouhani government hasn't said how it would respond to a potential restoration of UN sanctions, nor has it commented on the calls for withdrawal from the JCPOA. But it's seems that any UN Security Council move to restore international sanctions on Iran would put an end to the nuclear deal even if the Rouhani government stops short of withdrawing from the deal, which has been on life support since the U.S. unilaterally walked away from it.

Some analysts believe that the triggering of the snapback process will bring about the death of the 2015 nuclear deal.

"[The triggering of] the snapback mechanism would spell the end of the JCPOA," Fowad Izadi, a professor of American studies at the University of Tehran, told the Mehr news agency on Saturday.

Over the past three years, the government of Hassan Rouhani has made tremendous efforts to preserve the nuclear deal in the hope that the U.S. changes tack on Iran or, the Europeans offset at least some of Iran's loss of economic benefits after Trump's withdrawal from the JCPOA. But it realized that the U.S. is hell-bent on dismantling the deal and the Europeans are unable – or maybe unwilling – to preserve the deal by securing Iran's economic benefits that were promised in the deal. Now, the deal is reaching a critical point and Rouhani may find it difficult to preserve it.

## Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi says U.S. demand for Iran sanctions is 'completely unreasonable'

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi lashed out at the U.S. on Friday for its "completely unreasonable" demand to reimpose sanctions on Iran.

On Thursday, the U.S. formally asked the UN to trigger the "snapback", a mechanism under the 2015 nuclear accord that allows a participant to restore pre-2015 sanctions on Iran, on the grounds that Tehran has significantly violated the agreement.

But Wang told a press conference after a meeting with Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi in southern China that the U.S. request was "absurd". He argued that it was totally unreasonable for the U.S. to withdraw from the agreement in 2018 and then try to initiate the mechanism now.

"It's not only ignoring international law, but asking others to ignore it too. And it's even threatening to sanction those law-abiding countries," he said, "where does this absurd logic come from?"

Britain, France and Germany also oppose Washington's actions and have argued that it has no legal right to do so. A joint statement on Friday said the three European countries hope to preserve the 2015 deal, which includes the lifting of all international sanctions against Iran.

Wang criticized the U.S. for failing to fulfil its international responsibilities when unilaterally withdrawing from the agreement in 2018.

He said the demand to trigger the snapback procedure is harming its credibility and that of international law.

"The U.S. only considers its own interest. It complies with an international agreement when it serves its interests and refuses to do so when it doesn't," he said.

He also repeated Beijing's suggestion that another multilateral platform for security in the Persian Gulf should be established on the basis of the 2015 accord, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Washington insists that as a permanent UN Security Council member, it has the right to seek to restore sanctions.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo issued the request on Thursday citing "significant non-performance" by Iran.

According to the International Atomic Energy Agency, the UN's nuclear watchdog, Iran has violated some of the terms of the deal, but Tehran said this was the result of the U.S. breaching the accord by withdrawing from it and reimposing unilateral sanctions.

The European participants to the agreement had tried to bring Iran back into compliance, but "despite extensive efforts and exhaustive diplomacy on the part of those member states, Iran's significant non-performance persists", Pompeo said.

The European members are concerned that the reimposition of sanctions may cause Iran to quit the deal.

"We call on all UNSC members to refrain from any action that would only deepen divisions in the Security Council or that would have serious adverse consequences on its work," France, Germany and the UK said in their joint statement on Friday.

(Source: South China Morning Post)

# Iranian, Russian defense ministers highlight importance of military ties

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Defense Minister Amir Hatami and Sergey Shoigu, the Russian defense minister, who met in Moscow on Sunday attached great importance to expansion of military cooperation.

Hatami said that strengthening Tehran-Moscow cooperation is essential.

"I am sure that the joint strategy adopted by Tehran and Moscow in solving the regional problems can bring peace, stability and security to the region regardless of the United States' unilateral policies," he said.

Shoigu also said that it is essential to expand regional cooperation in line with establishing peace and stability.

He noted that Iran and Russia share common objectives toward regional issues, saying that the defense cooperation between the two countries is growing.

Iran's ambassador to Russia said on Saturday that there will be a new chapter in military and technical cooperation between Iran and Russia.

Jalali also said that Iran will continue military consultation with Russia along with



talks on the 2015 nuclear deal and fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

■ **'U.S. failure at UNSC shows opposition to unilateralism'**

Hatami also said that the U.S. failure at

the UN Security Council to extend arms embargo on Iran showed the world's opposition to unilateralism.

"The response by [remaining] members of the JCPOA [the 2015 nuclear deal] to trig-

gering snapback mechanism and restoring sanctions was another blow to the United States' excessive demands," he remarked.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Thursday officially informed the UN Security Council it is demanding the restoration of all UN sanctions on Iran, insisting that the U.S. has the legal right to "snap back" UN sanctions.

President Donald Trump officially terminated the U.S. participation in the JCPOA in May 2018 and imposed sanctions against Iran.

Thirteen countries out of the 15-member UN Security Council have expressed their opposition to the U.S. bid to reimpose the UN sanctions on Iran, arguing that Washington's move is void given it is using a process under a nuclear deal that it quit more than two years ago.

According to Reuters, long-time U.S. allies Britain, France, Germany and Belgium as well as China, Russia, Vietnam, Niger, Saint Vincent, and the Grenadines, South Africa, Indonesia, Estonia, and Tunisia have written letters in opposition.

## Ayatollah Khamenei says economy should not be linked to foreign developments It is a 'strategic mistake' to tie economy to outside world, the Leader notes

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said on Sunday that the country's economy should not be linked to the foreign developments, because that would be a "strategic mistake".

"One should not wait for removal of sanctions or result of a country's elections to make planning for the economy," the Leader told the cabinet members through a videoconference.

He added that impediments to production should be removed and more efforts should be made to solve problems.

The administration should use its last year in office as an opportunity to serve the people, the Leader of the revolution pointed out.

Ayatollah Khamenei noted that production is the main key to solve problems such as "unemployment, inflation and decline of the national currency's value".

"You have to make the most effort in these areas," he added.

He noted, "Of course, certain impediments such as sanctions and not being able to receive the oil sale's revenue are not within the authority of the administration, however, many of the impediments are internal and must be removed seriously."

The Leader said that excessive importation is an obstacle to production and described it as "very dangerous".

He also noted that smuggling should be countered by armed forces, Judiciary and executive body.

The Leader suggested that coordination should also be strengthened in order to boost production.

■ **'U.S. is a failed role model'**

Ayatollah Khamenei also said that various schools of thought have failed to rule over the United States, noting that the country is a "failed role model".

"Human values such as health, justice and security are trampled on in the United States the most. They admitted in their electoral campaigns that 1 out of 5 children in the United States is hungry. Plus, the rate of insecurity and crimes is very high in the United States," he explained.

He added, "In addition to internal and management problems, murder, warmongering and creating insecurity are common actions being taken by the Americans in Syria, Palestine, and Yemen, and before that in Iraq, Afghanistan and regions such as Vietnam and Hiroshima."

He said that the rulers in the U.S. humiliate their country.

"The fact that the United States is being headed by people who are a source of humiliation for that country is another sign of the defeat of Western models and the decline of Western civilization in the world," the Leader noted.

## Kadhimi tells Trump that Iraq won't let U.S. take any action against Iran from Iraqi soil: source

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — An Iraqi source has said that Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi has candidly told U.S. President Donald Trump that his country will not let the United States take any actions against Iran or any other neighboring country from the Iraqi soil.

"The Iraqi prime minister was brave and candid in a meeting with Trump and told him that we will not let Iraq be turned into a platform to target Iran, Turkey or any other neighboring countries," ISNA quoted the



Iraqi source, who accompanied Kadhimi in his visit to Washington, as saying in an interview with an Iraqi media outlet.

In a visit to Tehran in July, Kadhimi said at a joint press conference with President Hassan Rouhani that Iraq would not allow any aggression against Iran coming from Iraqi territory.

Kadhimi alluded to Iraq's concern not to become a battlefield between Iran and the United States, Aljazeera reported.

Iraqi President Barham Salih said

in June 2019 that his country under no circumstances will allow the U.S. to use its bases in Iraq to launch an attack on neighboring Iran.

"We do not want our territory to be a staging post for any hostile action against any of our neighbors, including Iran," Salih said in an interview with CNN's Christiane Amanpour in London.

"This is definitely not part of the agreement between the Iraqi government and the United States."

## Unprecedented standoff in UN Security Council highly dangerous: ElBaradei The former IAEA chief says "the rule of law must be upheld"

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Mohamed ElBaradei, a former director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, has said that the unprecedented standoff between the United States and the rest of the world at the UN Security Council is "highly dangerous".

"The unprecedented standoff in the SC between the US & the rest of the world re it's rights or lack thereof under the #JCPOA is highly dangerous. Regardless of policy positions on Iran, the rule of law must be upheld & the tenuous credibility of the SC must be preserved," he tweeted on Sunday.

On Thursday, the U.S. sent a letter to the UN Security Council requesting to initiate the "snapback" mechanism, which allows a participant to the JCPOA to seek reimposition against Iran of UN sanctions lifted under the 2015 nuclear deal.

The U.S. took the move following its failure on August 13 at the UN Security Council to extend arms embargo on Iran which will expire in October in accordance with Resolution 2231.

Thirteen countries out of the 15-member UN Security Council have expressed their opposition to the U.S. bid to reimpose the UN sanctions on Iran, arguing that Washington's move is void given it is using a process under a nuclear deal that it quit more than two years ago.

On Wednesday, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo threatened to punish those countries that oppose its effort to re-impose sanctions on Iran.

In a joint statement on Thursday the foreign ministers of France, Germany and the United Kingdom, whose countries are signatory to the 2015 nuclear deal (JCPO), issued a joint statement saying they cannot support the United States' action in triggering the snapback mechanism because the U.S. is no longer a participant to the JCPOA.

The Chinese mission to the United Nations said in a tweet on Friday that the United States is not a participant to the nuclear deal and therefore it is "ineligible" to invoke the snapback mechanism to return all the UN sanctions on Iran.



## Lavrov: U.S. move to return UN sanctions on Iran 'will produce no result' U.S. attempt to restore sanctions on Iran will undermine authority of UNSC, Russia warns

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has said that the United States' attempt to trigger snapback mechanism and restore all sanctions on Iran might trigger a serious scandal at the UN Security Council and eventually undermine its authority.

"We are working with our U.S. partners and other Security Council members in New York and in capitals. We understand that the vast majority of nations realize the incorrectness and counter-productivity of this attempt. It will produce no result anyway, but it might eventually lead to a very serious scandal and a rift within the UN Security Council, and, in the final analysis, undermine its authority," TASS quoted him as saying on Sunday in an interview with the Rossiya-1 TV channel.

He noted that that Washington withdrew from the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

"The thing is that one of the states behind the consensus resolution on Iran's nuclear program announced that it would not comply with the obligations it had undertaken,



but at the same time demanded that others follow its recommendations," Lavrov said.

"[They] announced that no one can stop the United States when it would decide to punish Iran for allegedly violating the agreement from which the U.S. had withdrawn. Sounds paradoxical and quite clumsy, but this is how it is," Lavrov said.

"The U.S. declared that it would not comply with its obligations - not to impose new sanctions on Iran, to lift the existing restrictions and let the Islamic Republic of Iran to participate

fully in international trade and economic exchanges. The United States said they were not going to do this and, what is more, will prohibit everyone else from doing this in relations with Iran."

On August 20, U.S. Secretary of State Michael Pompeo notified the UN that Washington was initiating the process to reinstate all UN sanctions on Iran.

Washington's move came shortly after a U.S. draft resolution on extending the arms embargo on Iran failed to get the required number of votes to be adopted by the UN Security Council.

■ **Lavrov says extending arms embargo on Iran is not legal**

Lavrov also said that the U.S. attempt to extend arms embargo on Iran, which expires in October, has no legal, political or moral grounds.

"We explained it all clearly to our American partners. Nevertheless, they made the decision to submit a relevant resolution. Only one country - the Dominican Republic - voted to support it along with the United States.

Russia and China voted against. The remaining 11 members of the UN Security Council, including European countries, abstained from voting on this resolution. Therefore, there even was no need to use the veto, because it is necessary only when a resolution receives no less than nine votes. This time, there was only two," he said.

Elsewhere, he said that the U.S. attempt to restore sanctions against Iran is a clear example of how Western nations try to replace the notion of "international law" with "rule-based order."

"There have been many examples of this, and they are becoming more and more frequent. This is a very dangerous tendency," Lavrov added.

He also said that the U.S. will not be able to violate the UN Security Council resolution and distort the internationally sealed agreement, but "they can still deal damage to the UN Security Council."

"We will try our best to dissuade our U.S. partners from such reckless moves," Lavrov said.



# Zarif shows U.S. officials accidentally telling the truth on snapback mechanism

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has used U.S. officials' remarks to show in their own words why the United States has no right to resort to the UN Security Council Resolution 2231 to trigger the snapback sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

In a video posted via his Twitter account on Saturday, U.S. President Donald Trump's announcement that "the United States will withdraw from the Iran nuclear deal" is shown.

During the video, a presidential memorandum released by the White House on May 8, 2018, which states Washington is "ceasing" its participation in the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), that Iran signed with world powers.

Then comes U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who says Trump has "terminated the U.S. participation in the JCPOA".

John Bolton, then the U.S. national security advisor, is shown as saying that Washington is not using the "provisions of Resolution 2231 ... because we're out of the deal."

Brian Hook, the U.S. special envoy for Iran who quit earlier this month, says, "On snapback, we are no longer in the deal, and



so, the parties that are still in the deal will have to make their decisions."

"After officially and explicitly ceasing its participation in the JCPOA at the highest level, and having violated each and every one of its obligations under the JCPOA and Resolution 2231, the U.S. cannot arrogate

to itself any right under that Resolution," Zarif says in the video.

Zarif's revelations came after Pompeo's Thursday announcement that the U.S. has notified the world that his country has triggered a 30-day countdown to a return of the UN sanctions on Iran, including an

arms embargo.

Thirteen countries out of the 15-member UN Security Council then expressed their opposition to the U.S. bid to trigger the so-called snapback mechanism, arguing that Washington's move is void given it is using a process under the nuclear deal which it quit more than two years ago.

Washington has accused Tehran of violating the 2015 nuclear pact, which Trump unilaterally withdrew from in May 2018 while denouncing it as the "worst deal ever".

The U.S. move to trigger snapback mechanism came a week after its efforts to extend the UN arms embargo on Tehran failed miserably. Only the Dominican Republic joined Washington in voting yes.

The United States argues that it can trigger the sanctions snapback process because the 2015 Security Council resolution still names it as a nuclear deal participant.

However, in a joint letter to the Security Council on Thursday hours after the U.S. submitted its complaint, Britain, Germany and France said: "Any decisions and actions which would be taken based on this procedure or on its possible outcome would also be devoid of any legal effect."

## U.S. suffered 'unprecedented defeat' at UNSC over arms embargo: Vaezi

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Presidential chief of staff Mahmoud Vaezi has said the United States suffered a historic, unprecedented defeat at the UN Security Council when it tried to extend a UN arms embargo on Iran.

"The Americans and international commentators believe that the Trump administration, in trying to extend the Iran arms embargo, faced a humiliating defeat which is unprecedented in the history of the U.S.," Vaezi said in a televised interview on Saturday night.

"After that, they once again resorted to something which they are not even a member of," Vaezi said, pointing to Washington's bid to reimpose UN sanctions on Iran under the 2015 nuclear accord, which the U.S. withdrew from in May 2018.

He pointed out that China, Russian and the three European countries known as E3 have already rejected Washington's argument that it can trigger the "snapback" mechanism.

After that the members of the UN Security Council wrote



letters one by one to reject the move, the official added.

The remarks came after U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo officially informed the UN Security Council it is demanding the restoration of all UN sanctions on Iran, insisting that the U.S. has the legal right to "snap back" UN sanctions even

though Donald Trump pulled out of the UNSC-endorsed nuclear deal between Iran and six major powers.

According to Reuters, 13 countries out of the 15-member UN Security Council have expressed their opposition to the move, arguing that Washington's move is void given it is using a process under a nuclear deal that it quit more than two years ago.

Those countries include France, Britain and Germany, which are the strongest U.S. allies in Europe.

"Mr. Trump has made numerous mistakes in different spheres since he assumed office, one of which is the way he communicates with and treats his allies," Vaezi said.

He added that Trump's approval rating is very low because of his mismanagement of the United States' affairs.

According to Vaezi, Trump is lagging badly behind against his rival, Joe Biden, in polls and he is seeking to conduct populist measures.

## Elizabeth Warren: U.S. cannot invoke sanctions snapback on Iran

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Elizabeth Warren, a U.S. senator from Massachusetts, has said that the United States cannot impose the UN sanctions on Iran, calling on the U.S. government to rejoin the nuclear agreement.

"Reality check: Only participants in the #IranDeal can reimpose UN sanctions on Iran, but Trump withdrew from it," Warren wrote in a tweet on Sunday.

"The Trump Iran policy makes us less safe & more isolated from our allies. Let's rejoin the nuclear agreement & get Iran back into compliance," she added.

Other American political figures have also pointed out that the U.S. move to invoke the "snapback" sanctions has no standing.

Former U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton wrote in the Wall Street Journal on August 16 that Washington has no

standing to invoke the nuclear agreement's provisions.

"The agreement's backers argue that Washington, having withdrawn from the deal, has no standing to invoke its provisions," Bolton wrote, adding, "They're right."

"It's too cute by half to say we're in the nuclear deal for purposes we want but not for those we don't."

Bolton also argued in an August 17 tweet that Trump's threat to invoke the snapback sanctions from "Obama's 2015 nuclear deal", which the U.S. withdrew in 2018 under the Trump administration, risks long-term permanent damage to the United States' veto power in the UN Security Council.

The Joe Biden campaign's chief foreign policy adviser has also said the U.S. cannot push for the restoration of the UN sanctions because it is not a participant in the



JCPOA anymore.

"The remedies in the resolution are available to 'participant' countries," Tony Blinken wrote in a tweet on August 16. "In pulling out of the agreement the WH literally titled its statement 'Ending US Participation in the JCPOA.'"

"It would have been wise to stick with an

agreement that was working and has teeth," Blinken added.

He made the comment in response to a tweet by Richard Goldberg, an aide to the U.S. National Security Advisor in the Donald Trump administration, who said via Twitter that "a legally independent snapback is in the plain text of UNSCR 2231 as is the US' eligibility to trigger it (with no provision for ever changing that eligibility)."

Earlier, Wendy Sherman, the former undersecretary of state for political affairs who led the U.S. negotiating team that concluded the Iran nuclear agreement, had said the missile and arms embargo are part of the UN Security Council resolution 2231 but not the JCPOA.

"The JCPOA was endorsed by 2231 but the snap back provision is within the JCPOA itself," she tweeted on August 15.

## UAE made strategic mistake by normalizing ties with Israel, says advisor

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — The UAE made a strategic mistake by moving toward normalizing ties with the Zionist regime, says Hossein Amir Abdollahian, a senior foreign policy advisor to the Iranian Parliament speaker.

The UAE should accept responsibility for all the consequences of its move, Amir Abdollahian said in a meeting with Palestinian ambassador to Iran Salah Al-Zawawi on Sunday.

Expressing solidarity with the Palestinian people, the advisor said Iran's parliament speaker has officially asked parliament speakers of other Islamic countries to condemn the Emiratis' measure and defend the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, Mehr reported.

For his part, the Palestinian ambassador criticized the UAE's treacherous act, saying Palestine strongly condemns the UAE-Israel normalization of ties and calls on the UAE to back down from this historic mistake.

He also thanked Iran for its stance on the issue, calling

on all countries of the world to show their commitment to supporting the Palestinian issue.

Israel and the UAE reached a deal that will lead to full normalization of diplomatic relations between the two sides.

The deal was announced on August 13 after a phone call between U.S. President Donald Trump, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the crown prince of Abu Dhabi.

Last week, Parliament Speaker Mohammad-Bagher Ghalibaf condemned the move and called on the parliaments of Islamic countries to make use of their capacities to oppose and hamper the "disgraceful" agreement.

In a message to parliament speakers of all Islamic countries, Ghalibaf said the normalization plan would undermine all efforts by Islamic countries, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and the Islamic Inter-Parliamentary Union to realize the inalienable rights of the oppressed people of Palestine.



"Undoubtedly, it is merely the resolve of the Palestinian people and the Resistance that can lead to the liberation of the main and historical land of Palestine," he wrote.

According to Ghalibaf, the agreement will encourage the Zionist regime to occupy the remaining Palestinian lands and deny the rights of the Palestinian people.MH/PA

## Envoy: IAEA chief's visit to Iran not related to snapback mechanism

**TEHRAN** — Iranian Ambassador and Permanent Representative to Vienna-Based International Organizations Kazem Qaribabadi has said the Monday visit by Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Rafael Mariano Grossi to Tehran was not a U.S. request, dismissing speculations that the trip is related to the snapback mechanism.

"As said before, IAEA Director-General Rafael Mariano Gross will travel to Iran tomorrow and will hold meetings with the Iranian officials on Tuesday and Wednesday," Qaribabadi wrote on his Instagram page on Sunday.

"Iran's trust in the IAEA has been harmed in recent months. It is necessary that the director-general's visit to Iran will build trust," he added.

Qaribabadi said that the visit is not related to the snapback mechanism pursued

by Washington to return all UN sanctions against Iran, and added, "The visit has not been demanded by the U.S. either and will take place upon an invitation by the Iranian side."

"We do not allow others to manage relations between the Agency and Iran, specially in the current sensitive conditions," he underlined, calling on the IAEA to keep loyal to the three principles of impartiality, independence and professionalism and not to act beyond the standards and independent data in the safeguards issues in a bid to remove the misunderstandings and guarantee continued cooperation.

Qaribabadi had said on Saturday that Grossi is due to travel to Iran in coming days.

"In line with the current interactions and cooperation between Iran and the Agency and after receiving invitation from the Islamic Republic of Iran, IAEA Director-General

Rafael Grossi will travel to Iran in the current week (Iranian week which starts on Saturday)," Qaribabadi said.

"Iran is one of the main partners of the Agency and we hope that the meeting will lead to the implementation of mutual cooperation," he added.

Meantime, Grossi also said in a post on his twitter page that he is due to travel to Iran.

"I will travel to Tehran on Monday for meetings with Iranian authorities to address outstanding questions related to safeguards in Iran. I hope to establish a fruitful and co-operative channel of direct dialogue. It is necessary," he wrote.

In relevant remarks late last month, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said his country would continue its peaceful nuclear program in compliance with the IAEA rules, emphasizing that Tehran has

always removed ambiguities regarding its nuclear program.

Araghchi added that Iran is a member of Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and its nuclear program is carried out in coordination with IAEA regulations.

"Whenever our interests regarding the Nuclear Deal (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) are served we will be ready to return to all our JCPOA commitments," he went on to say.

As an accountable country, Iran has removed all ambiguities and misinformation regarding its nuclear program, the official added.

Pointing to the U.S. illegal withdrawal from the JCPOA, he reiterated that Iran has fully lived up to its commitment regarding the JCPOA, but, other parties [the U.S. and Europe] have reneged on their obligations.

## Imam Hussein (AS) is source of inspiration to overcome blockade and negotiation stunts

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — The U.S. dual campaign of blockade and negotiation stunts against Iran will get nowhere because the Islamic Republic of Iran is more of a cultural movement than a political one, a West Asia expert tells the Tehran Times.

The Iranian people began to commemorate this year's Muharram at a time when the U.S. embarked on a policy of doubling down on its economic and diplomatic pressure on Iran by triggering efforts to reinstate all UN sanctions on the country.



In a highly controversial move, the U.S. has submitted a "notification" to the UN Security Council calling for the restoration of all UN sanctions on Iran. The U.S. measure was met with sweeping opposition from the international community, with 13 of the 15-member Security Council opposing the U.S. push to initiate the snapback process, a mechanism built into the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to allow parties to the deal to restore the international sanctions on Iran in case it didn't comply with its commitments under the nuclear deal.

Most countries on the Security Council wrote to the president of the Council, saying the U.S. had no legal authority to trigger the snapback because it has withdrawn from the nuclear deal and thus it's no longer a "JCPOA participant state" as stipulated in the UN Security Council Resolution 2231 on which the U.S. based its complaint.

It seems that the triggering of the snapback is another step by the U.S. toward reaching what it calls a "better deal" with Iran, one that would amount to a surrender of Iran.

At the 2020 Council for National Policy meeting on August 21, which was held in Virginia, President Donald Trump said, "They don't have too much money now.... But Iran is different. It's having a hard time. Its GDP went down at a level that you wouldn't even believe — in the 20s — and they'll make a deal. I say they'll make a deal within a month, but I probably mean a week. But I just want to be right. Because they'll call me. They'll say, 'It took 10 days. He was wrong.' They just want to see — if I win, they'll be in making a deal."

However, analysts believe that Trump's view of the deal with Iran may be wishful thinking because Iran may never acquiesce to pressure.

The U.S. has launched a sanctions campaign against Iran to pressure it into signing a new, "better deal" in accordance with the White House demands, but it failed to achieve this goal, according to Ja'afar Ghanadabashi, a West Asia expert.

"Obviously, the U.S. imposed sanctions on Iran to create conditions under which Iran finds itself obliged to sign a deal under U.S. terms. Trump has overtly said that he was ripping up the nuclear deal to sign a better one. And now he is saying that 'if we don't sign a deal with Iran before the U.S. presidential election, we will do so after the election'," Ghanadabashi told the Tehran Times, adding that the main purpose of the so-called U.S. "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran is to reach such a deal.

According to the expert, the Trump administration intensified the pressure campaign on Iran in May 2018 but failed to destabilize Iran in the ensuing years, which disappointed them and raised concerns in Washington over the failure of the White House Iran policy.

Referring to the U.S. latest defeat at the UN Security Council, Ghanadabashi said, "Currently, the U.S. only wants to save face."

"Internally, Iran is in a very strong position despite some domestic problems. Iran has done a good job. The Americans didn't believe that Iran would be able to contain the unrest," pointed out the expert.

He said that Muharram once again pumped the Iranian people up and fueled the anti-U.S. sentiments among them, especially as Trump turned the public against the U.S. by assassinating IRGC's Quds Force commander General Qassem Soleimani.

"The Iranian people deeply love General Soleimani. The Americans made a mistake by assassinating him. While the U.S. accuses Iran of supporting terrorism, the people know that Soleimani was the man who fought against terrorism," Ghanadabashi stated.

He said the Iranian people have a deep affection for the Ashura uprising and that the Islamic Republic of Iran is more of a cultural movement that is inspired by Imam Hussein's (AS) martyrdom.

"No country can confront a cultural movement," Ghanadabashi asserted, adding that Trump's infamous threat to target Iran's cultural sites was a very big mistake that mobilized the people against him.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has always sought to follow in Imam Hussein's footsteps and introduce him to the world because it believes that the Imam rose up against corruption and oppression.

"The logic of Hussein ibn Ali (greetings be upon him) is the logic of defending the truth and resistance against oppression, transgression, deviation, and arrogance. This is the logic of Imam Hussein. Today, the world needs this logic. Today, the world is witness to the rule of kufr, arrogance, and corruption. The world is witness to the rule of oppression. The message of Imam Hussein is the salvation of the world. The great movement of Arbreen conveys this message to the whole world and by Allah's favor and grace, this movement should be strengthened on a daily basis," Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei said on September 21, 2019.

## Natanz nuclear facility explosion was 'sabotage': nuclear official

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Behrouz Kamalvandi, the spokesman for the Atomic Energy Agency Organization of Iran (AEOI) announced late on Sunday that the explosion that occurred at the Natanz nuclear facility on July 2 was an act of "sabotage".

"Security investigations confirm the sabotage [nature] of this action and what is certain is that the explosion took place in Natanz, but the security officials will announce the details of the explosion and how it took place and what materials were used in the explosion," Kamalvandi told the al-Alam news network. On July 2, Iran announced an incident that took place at the Natanz facility, but it didn't disclose the cause of the incident.



## TEDPIX falls 65,000 points on Sunday

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), which is Iran’s major stock exchange, dropped 65,000 points to 1.662 million on Sunday, IRIB reported.

The index had also fallen 30,000 points on Saturday, which is the first day of the Iranian calendar week.

It had dropped 11.3 percent to stand at 1.757 million points in the past week.

TEDPIX had also experienced a two-percent drop in the week ended on Friday, August 14.



It should be mentioned that the index had hit the record high of two million points on August 2, and while it had been experiencing an unprecedented trend of rising over the recent months, it witnessed several days of drop in the past two weeks.

Gaining 45,672 points on August 2, the TSE’s main index had stood at 2.007 million, notching up another outstanding record in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 20).

It had hit the record high of 1.5 million points on June 30, and then it climbed half a million points in just one month to hit the record high of two million.

## Iraq eager for joint investment with Iran in technical-engineering fields

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iranian economic attaché in Basra said that Iraq is eager for joint investment with Iran in the technical and engineering fields, IRNA reported.

Abdul-Amir Rabi’havi also mentioned agriculture as the other sector in which Iraq is willing to make joint investment with Iran.

He further called for changing Iran’s export strategy for more presence in the Iraqi market and to compete with the other exporters to Iraq.

The economic and political relations between Iran and Iraq have increased significantly in the past few years and the two neighbors are seeking ways to facilitate financial transactions and boost their trade ties.

The two countries have it on the agenda to increase the value of their bilateral trade to \$20 billion by 2021.

The two sides have recently decided on the ways of implementing an agreement for using Iran’s export revenues in Iraq for importing basic goods from the country.

According to the Governor of Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Abdolnaser Hemmati, under the framework of the mentioned agreement, Iran will use its gas and electricity export revenues which amount at several billion dollars a year in addition to CBI resources in Iraq, for importing its required goods from the country.

## Value of trades at IME rises 2% in a week

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — The value of trades at Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) increased two percent during the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

As reported by the IME Public Relations and International Affairs Department, over 693,030 tons of commodities worth over \$1.238 billion were traded at this exchange over the past week, and the volume of trade experienced a 12-percent weekly growth.

The report says that last week, on the domestic and export metal and mineral trading floor of IME, 244,689 tons of various products worth \$592 million were traded.

On this trading floor, 240,804 tons of steel, 2,000 tons of aluminum, 1,040 tons of copper, 250 tons of molybdenum concentrates, 15 tons of precious metal concentrates, 580 tons of zinc ingot as well as 20 kg of gold bullion were traded by the customers.

The report also declares that on domestic and export oil and petrochemical trading floors of IME, 444,911 tons of different commodities with the total value of \$779 million were traded.

On this trading floor, 127,000 tons of VB feed stock, 157,605 tons of bitumen, 72,825 tons of polymer products, 36,303 tons of chemical products, 38,043 tons of lube cut oil, 170 tons of argon, 1,160 tons of insulation, 1,717 tons of base oil as well as 5,130 tons of sulfur were traded.

Furthermore, 3,430 tons of commodities and a commercial unit were traded on the side market of the IME.

As previously reported, commercial property was offered at the IME for the first time on Wednesday.

The side market of the IME hosted the offering at the base price of 10.639 billion rials (about \$253.3 million).

Also as announced on Friday by the IME director of economic studies, the exchange will start preselling trades of residential units via standard parallel salaf bonds by the next month.

Javad Fallah said, “IME is seeking attraction of liquidity by the capital market to provide financing for the construction of houses; so, we are intending to offer slaf bonds to achieve this goal”.

The official said that the IME has received the salaf bonds from Housing Investment Company, which is affiliated to Bank Maskan (Housing Bank).

These bonds enable the people to pre-purchase the residential units based on the amount of their money.

A standard parallel salaf is an Islamic contract similar to futures, with the difference being that the contract’s total price must be paid in advance.

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

On April 21, IME Managing Director Hamed Soltani-Nejad unveiled the market’s new outlook plan, which depicts IME’s development roadmap until the Iranian calendar year of 1404 (March 20205-March 2026). Materializing the slogan of this Iranian year, which is “Surge in Production” is seriously considered in the mentioned plan and it is, in fact, the strategic approach of the outlook plan.

# Car output up 21% in 5 months yr/yr

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Car manufacturing in Iran rose 21 percent during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-August 21), compared to the same period of time in the past year, IRIB reported based on the data released by the Ministry of Industry, Mining, and Trade.

As reported, 360,599 vehicles have been manufactured during the five-month period of this year, while the figure was 298,307 in the same time span of the previous year.

Car manufacturing in Iran had also risen 20.3 percent during the first four months of the present year (March 20-July 21).

Iranian carmakers manufactured 323,663 vehicles during the four-month period of this year, while the figure was 268,966 in the same time span of the past year.

As previously reported, the carmakers have manufactured 203,146 vehicles during the first quarter of the current year (March



## Incentive packages help energy ministry pass summer without blackouts

**1 →** This year, however, the ministry seems to have found the final solution to this long-lasting issue and has finally managed to pass the summer peak period without any intentional blackouts.

The solution was simple: using the huge potentials of the masses through “positive reinforcement”, “motivation” and using “incentive packages”.

In this regard, the Tehran Times held a brief talk with the Energy Ministry’s Spokesman for the Electricity Industry Mostafa Rajabi Mashhadi to learn more about the details of this new program.

What comes below is the gist of the interview:

### ■ Various packages for various sectors

Asked about the details of the Energy Ministry’s incentive program, Rajabi Mashhadi said that the ministry’s specialists and experts defined different packages for different sectors so that the packages were prepared considering the impact of certain sectors on the country’s total electricity consumption.

“For the agriculture sector, since there are many agricultural wells across the country which are using electrical pumps that consume a great amount of power on a daily basis, we defined a plan based on which for every four hours of rest and shutting off the pumps, the farmer would receive 20 hours of

free electricity during the periods when the demand is low.”

As for the industry sector, the plan was to encourage the manufactories and industrial units to waste less power without the reduction in their performance and hurting their production levels, he said.

“So, for the industrial units we defined a plan based on which in return for every 15 hours of less consumption, the subscriber would be awarded a 50-percent discounted tariff on the electricity supplied to them equal to their reduction in consumption,” he explained.

Asked about the households, Rajabi Mashhadi said that since the households account for the majority of the electricity consumption, the main part of the Energy Ministry’s program was focused on encouraging the households in metropolitan areas like Tehran to reduce their consumption in peak hours.

According to the official, a stepped system for consumption has been defined for the households, based on which for each level of consumption a different rate has been allocated; the lower the consumption, the less the price they pay and if a consumer stays below an optimal level for whole summer period or if they consume less electricity compared to the previous year’s same period they will be awarded special incentive packages.

## 65,000 worn-out trucks to be renovated in 3 years

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister has said that his ministry plans to renovate 65,000 worn-out trucks from the country’s suburban cargo transport fleet within three years, IRIB reported.

Mohammad Eslami made the remarks on Saturday in a signing ceremony for a tri-lateral deal among Road Maintenance and Transportation Organization (RMTO), Iran Khodro Diesel, and Tose’e Ta’avon Bank for the renovation of 1,000 worn-out trucks.

As reported, the ceremony was attended by senior officials, including the new Acting Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Jafar Sarqeeni, RMTO Head Abdolhashem Hassan-Nia, Managing Director of Iran Khodro

Company Farshad Moqimi, and the Managing Director of Tose’e Ta’avon Bank Hojatollah Mahdian.

Referring to a deal concluded between Bank Saderat Iran (BSI) and the RMTO with the private sector two weeks ago, Eslami said: “That contract covered the renovation of 5,000 trucks based on the fleet modernization plan and the contractor company is committed to deliver more than 2,000 vehicles this year.”

The minister further pointed to the deal signed among the RMTO, IKCO and Tose’e Ta’avon Bank and noted that this agreement has the capacity to be expanded to over 5,000 vehicles.

According to Eslami, at this stage, trucks with an age between 40-60 years are the pri-

ority for this scheme.

Earlier this month, RMTO signed a tri-par-tite deal with BSI and some private companies for the renovation of 5,000 worn-out trucks, tow trucks, and refrigerated containers.

Based on the Transport Ministry data, the private sector has invested about 140 trillion rials (about \$3.33 billion) in this project, while BSI is going to provide the owners with low-interest facilities equivalent to the 80 percent of the new trucks’ price.

According to RMTO, the country’s suburban freight transportation fleet is currently comprised of 387,000 trucks of which about 52,000 are older than 40 years.

Back in May, Transport Ministry unveiled a portal for registering in a program for the

20-June 20).

Three major Iranian carmakers, namely Iran Khodro Company (IKCO), SAIPA Group, and Pars Khodro, manufactured 863,263 vehicles during the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19).

During the previous year, IKCO manufactured 393,812 vehicles, of which 35,953 were produced in the last month Esfand (February 20-March 19).

Production by SAIPA stood at 363,379, of which 23,696 vehicles were manufactured during the last month.

Pars Khodro manufactured 106,072 cars during the past year. Production in Esfand reached 9,300 vehicles.

Iran has been following a program for supporting domestic manufacturing of auto parts since due to the U.S. sanctions the country’s automakers have been facing some problems in supplying their needed parts and equipment.

### ■ Allocation in the previous year

Rajabi Mashhadi further noted that the energy ministry paid 3.5 trillion rials (about \$83.3 million) to the industry sector and about 1.06 trillion rials (about \$25.23 million) to the households in the big cities in the form of discounted rates and incentive packages during the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19).

This year, however, we had to extend these packages and allocate more for motivating various sectors to collaborate in the ministry’s management plan and it paid off.

Asked about the amount of allocations for the current calendar year the official said the data is not finalized yet.

### ■ Plans for the cold season

He also mentioned the management of electricity consumption during the cold season and said: “The ministry is going to continue this program during the cold season and the packages will be extended during the winter in case of necessity.”

In case of increasing the country’s gas consumption which would create limitations for the supply of gas to the power plants and consequently will reduce the electricity generation, the energy ministry will have to extend its consumption management programs in the cold season as well, Rajabi Mashhadi explained.

## Production sector accounts for over 40% of employment in free zones

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Production sector accounts for over 40 percent of the employment in the country’s free trade zones (FTZs), Secretary of Iranian Free Zones High Council Morteza Bank announced.

Speaking in a live radio program on Sunday morning, the official also announced that the services sector account for over 30 percent of the employment in the FTZs, IRIB reported.

Bank further said that the figure for the production sector employment is 95 percent in the special economic zones.

He said that the whole investment in the special economic zones is made in the production sector and by the private sector.

The official has previously announced that the value of exports from Iran’s free trade zones and special economic zones stood at \$17 billion during the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19).

He said that commodities worth \$5 billion produced in these zones have been sent to different areas in the country during the previous year.

Bank put the value of products imported to the free trade zones and special economic zones at \$5 billion in the past year.

Emphasizing that the value of imports to these zones is very low compared to the worth of exports from them, the official said, “We are planning to reach the same level of exports in the current year as well.”

The secretary of Free Zones High Council further mentioned the implementation of delayed projects as one of the major programs of this council and said. “We hope that we can put many production and service companies into operation by

commodities are currently transported via Milak and Dogharoon borders without any problem.”

He explained that there was a problem with fueling trucks at Milak border, but this problem has been resolved and the transfer of goods is now underway at this border.

About the decrease in the exports of Iranian products to Afghanistan in the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-May 22) due to the coronavirus pandemic, the chairman of Iran-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce said, “Trend of Iranian products export to Afghanistan has been accelerated in a way that the country is compensating

its export decline to this country.”

The Milak border crossing between Iran and Afghanistan in Iran’s southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan was reopened on August 14 following the signing of a border agreement between the two neighbors, the spokesman of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) said.

The mentioned border crossing was closed and reopened several times in the past few weeks due to a strike by Afghan truckers and their blockade of the return route of Iranian trucks and the Iranian retaliation.

According to Ruhollah Latifi, the signing

ceremony was attended by officials from both sides including the Acting Deputy Governor of Sistan-Baluchestan Province for Economic Affairs Madana Zanganeh, and the head of Milak Customs.

Milak border terminal was first reopened earlier this month after a week of closure and over 70 Iranian truckers returned to the country, however, Afghan truck drivers once again closed the crossing in Afghanistan’s Nimruz Province and Iran’s Sistan-Baluchestan Province, only a couple of days after it was reopened.

Milak is a village in Jahanabad Rural District, in the central district of Hirmand County, Sistan-Baluchestan Province.



the yearend.”

Referring to the 310 development projects, which are planned to be implemented in the free zones in the current year, the official expressed hope that these projects will be put into operation by the yearend, creating jobs for 40,000 to 45,000 persons.

Considering the important role that the free zones play in promoting the country’s export and employment, Iran is seriously pursuing development of its existing free zones and establishment of new zones as well.

More development measures in this field have been taking since the U.S. re-imposition of sanctions on the Iranian economy in November 2018, as Iran is reducing its dependence on the oil income while elevating its domestic production and

## Iran’s annual export to Afghanistan predicted to hit \$3b by next March

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — The value of Iran’s exports to Afghanistan is anticipated to reach \$3 billion in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021), according to the chairman of Iran-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce.

Referring to Iran’s rising trend of exports to its neighbor Afghanistan in recent months, Hossein Salimi said that based on the studies, the country’s expected value of exports to Afghanistan will be materialized this year, Mehr news agency reported.

He further pointed to the problem of transferring goods via Milak border and said, “This problem has been removed and



# Iran to become region's top petchem supplier by 2025: NPC head

**E N E R G Y** TEHRAN — Head desk of Iran's National Petrochemical Company (NPC) Behzad Mohammadi has said Iran is going to become the top petrochemical producer in the region after the realization of the industry's third leap in the Iranian calendar year 1404 (begins in March 2025), IRIB reported.

In addition to the projects in the second and third leaps of the petrochemical industry, 34 new projects with an investment volume of \$17 billion and a total capacity of 19 million tons have been defined, with their implementation, Iran's position will be more privileged, Mohammadi said.

He pointed to the Iranian petrochemical industry's pioneering projects, saying such projects are the key to the development of the petrochemical industry.

"Along with other pioneering plans, defining new petrochemical projects based on mixed feedstock is a process based on thinking, effort, engineering, and accurate market calculations," Mohammadi stressed.

He emphasized that the development of the petrochemical industry should be



qualitative and sustainable, adding: "The smart development of Iran's petrochemical industry has been pre-planned so that while realizing 100 million tons of capacity

based on the Sixth Five-year National Development Plan (2016-2021), we would have a stable and resilient industry against external problems [like sanctions]."

Referring to Iran's first place among the world's countries in terms of the total oil and gas reserves, the NPC head underlined the development of the petrochemical industry as a necessity considering the amount of feedstock available in the country.

"In this regard, four large projects based on mixed feedstock have been defined with a total investment of about \$11 billion that will increase the capacity of the country's petrochemical industry by 11 million tons," Mohammadi added.

According to the official, the NPC's pioneering projects have been classified into four major categories, namely methanol, propylene, ethylene, and benzene, according to which 20 smart projects have been defined for meeting the domestic demand and diversifying the export basket.

The petrochemical industry is playing a crucial role in Iran's non-oil economy, so that based on official data, petrochemical exports constitute the second-largest hard currency earner in Iran after crude oil. Petrochemical exports already make up nearly 33 percent of the country's non-oil exports.

## Is exploring for oil still profitable?

By Haley Zaremba

This year has brought the uncertain future of the energy industry to a head. The novel coronavirus has catalyzed and brought to the surface discussions that have been percolating for years about the global clean energy transition and the end of an era for oil. And the discussion is not just philosophical—it's fiscal. As Oilprice reported last week, "Big Oil's Most Profitable Business Is No Longer Oil." Supermajor oil companies, especially in Europe, are moving away from oil extraction toward more lucrative pursuits like energy trading and renewable energy production. "Companies like Shell aren't going to stop producing oil, but it will become less important as the world increasingly embraces less carbon-intensive forms of energy," oil strategist Julian Lee recently wrote in a column for Bloomberg Opinion earlier this month. "As they become more focused on natural gas, electricity, and, very likely, hydrogen, their ability to offset any weaknesses in their core activities through trading profits are likely to be severely curtailed."

Just this week, Bloomberg continued this line of reporting, writing that oil companies are now wondering if looking for oil is even worth it. At this point, any new acquisitions could easily end up being more of a liability than an asset. In fact, there is already a growing list of what are known in the biz as "stranded assets," which are already purchased, yet untapped oil reserves that no longer make sense to exploit.

One soon-to-be example of this is the Falkland Islands, which were "once at the forefront of a new era for the oil industry as companies scoured the

planet for resources." Bloomberg reports that the estimated 1.7 billion barrels of crude in the waters surrounding the islands in the Southern Atlantic will likely remain right where it is, as the cost-benefit analyses favor letting the purchases remain an untapped sunk cost. Unfortunately, these stranded assets could also cost the oil companies that own them "huge sums to mothball."

"As the coronavirus ravages economies and cripples demand, European oil majors have made some uncomfortable admissions in recent months: oil and gas worth billions of dollars might never be pumped out of the ground," says the report. There are a number of reasons for this, not the least of which is the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Low oil demand and a catalyzed clean energy transition will more than likely leave fossil fuel prices too low to incentivize production at the same time that levies on carbon emissions are set to increase. "These two simple assumptions mean that tapping some fields no longer makes economic sense."

Supermajors are already changing their strategy. Business does not favor nostalgia, and the savvy Big Oil companies are moving headlong into the energy transition and leaving oil behind without a second look. Just this month BP publicly announced that it will no longer do any oil exploration in new countries. Evidently, the era of Big Oil manifest destiny is drawing to a close.

Under the looming shadow of peak oil demand, exploration is fast becoming old-fashioned. A Rystad Energy AS consultant, as paraphrased by Bloomberg, "expects about 10% of the world's recoverable oil resources—some 125 billion barrels—to become obsolete."



The list of projects most at risk of becoming stranded assets "includes deepwater discoveries off Brazil, Angola, and in the Gulf of Mexico," according to Rystad research VP Parul Chopra. "Canadian oil-sands projects such as the expansion of the Sunrise development in Alberta are also in doubt."

Some supermajors have been slower than others to accept peak oil as an inevitability in the near future. European companies are already pivoting toward green energy and trading as the core of their business model, transitioning from Big Oil to Big Energy. In the U.S. it's a different story, where the current administration has not followed the global trend of building a green post-corona stimulus package. But even on this side of the Atlantic, the tide is beginning to turn in the private sector, where the data clearly shows that green energy holds great promise for lowering the staggering unemployment rate and even McDonald's is begging Congress for clean energy.

## Black Sea at 'just the beginning' of new gas finds, Turkey says

Turkey says its natural gas find in the Black Sea will likely be followed by further discoveries, altering the geopolitics of energy trade in its region, Bloomberg reported.

"It's just the beginning," President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's spokesman Ibrahim Kalin said of Friday's announcement that Turkey struck gas deep under its territorial waters. "The work will continue for exploration as well as drilling at the same time. We're very hopeful that it will lead to other fields in the same area."

Ankara's state-oil arm TPAO will continue offshore exploration near the 320 billion cubic meter Sakarya field where officials see "much greater potential" for hydrocarbons, Kalin said in an interview at the presidential office in Istanbul on Saturday.

The discovery announced by Erdogan is already the largest of its kind in the Black Sea and proved the existence of sizable deposits deep under the seabed. Kalin said it also gave fresh impetus to



Turkey's search for more energy resources to be able to function as more than just a massive consumer and a conduit for cross-border gas trade.

Another prospective area nearby is the eastern Mediterranean Sea, where Turkey is conducting exploratory work with a seismic research ship.

Kalin said the Oruc Reis vessel will continue its survey in waters disputed by Greece and Cyprus, a conflict that's fueling the tensions with Athens.

"Whatever we find in the eastern Mediterranean, we'd like it to be shared by all. We'd like it to benefit all neighboring countries which have a shore," Kalin said. "We do not want to see this as a zero sum game."

Turkey is mired in territorial disputes with Greece and Cyprus in the Mediterranean Sea as it searches for oil and gas. France has temporarily increased its military presence to ward off Turkish steps, and German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Wednesday said the European Union was concerned over the increased tensions.

Turkey and Cyprus are at loggerheads over offshore gas reserves around the Mediterranean island of Cyprus, where the Republic of Cyprus is an EU member state and officially has sovereignty over the entire island.

But the island has been effectively

divided into two since Turkey's military captured the northern third in 1974, following a coup attempt in which a military junta in Athens sought to unite Cyprus with Greece. The Turkish minority's self-proclaimed state in the north, recognized only by Ankara, also claims rights to any energy resources discovered off its coast.

Just a month ago, Turkey and Greece were set to begin exploratory talks to ease tensions. But that came to an abrupt end after Greece signed a deal with Egypt to draw maritime borders and Turkey accused Athens of acting in bad faith.

Still, Turkey says cooperation around energy resources is possible and would benefit all littoral countries.

"We can turn the natural resources in the eastern Mediterranean into opportunities," he said. "That doesn't mean that we just turn a blind eye to the issues, challenges out there. We address them. We try to find some creative ways to overcome them."

## Companies shut in 13% of oil production, 4.4% of gas as storms hit U.S. Gulf of Mexico

In advance of two tropical storms headed toward the U.S. Gulf of Mexico, upstream operators have shut in 13 percent of the region's total oil production and more than 4 percent of its natural gas, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) said Aug. 22.

Total shut-in crude amounts to about of 240,785 bpd of oil, along with 19,000 Mcf/d of natural gas, or 4.39 percent of total U.S. Gulf gas production, Platts cited BSEE.

Six producing platforms, or just under 1 percent of all those in the U.S. Gulf, have been evacuated, along with four rigs, which are 40 percent of all rigs in the Gulf, the agency said.

In the past 24 hours, BP, Shell and Chevron — three of the U.S. Gulf's biggest producers — said they have shut down production on assorted platforms in the



projected paths of the storms.

Some independents are also evacuating crews from

platforms ahead of the storms, which should strike the U.S. Gulf Coast by mid-week.

The U.S. Gulf produces currently about 1.85 million bpd of oil and about 2.7 Bcf/d of natural gas.

At 2 p.m. ET, Laura was projected to have mostly crossed over Puerto Rico and headed northwest towards the Louisiana coast, while at about 1 p.m., Marco was forecast to be near the tip of the Yucatan Peninsula and headed northwest for the southeast Texas coast, according to maps by the U.S. National Hurricane Center.

Both storms are predicted to become hurricanes as they near the coast, but currently only Laura is projected to remain at that wind speed (minimum 74 mph) as it is about to make landfall, NHC maps showed.

Laura is targeted to make landfall around Aug. 26. Marco if forecast to be downgraded to a tropical storm prior to striking shore late Aug. 25 or early Aug. 26.

## NIDC unveils domestically-built items

TEHRAN (Shana) — The National Iranian Drilling Company (NIDC) has unveiled two domestically-manufactured items which are widely used in drilling operations of oil and gas wells.

According to NIDC, Mehran Mofreshi, director of the Kish gas field drilling project, told the unveiling ceremony of the equipment that a joint effort was made between the experts of the National Iranian Drilling Company and a local knowledge-based company to build the items domestically.

Casing scrapper brush and string magnet are the two items that are designed and manufactured domestically, he said.

The official stated that the equipment is used for field tests after technical inspections, adding the costs of importing the items was 60 to 70% higher than their domestic models.

## Completing petchem production chain, key to circumventing sanctions: MP

TEHRAN (Shana) — A member of the Industries and Mines Committee of the parliament (Majlis) said, "In the current situation where economic sanctions have created problems for oil sales, completing the production chain in the petrochemical industry is tantamount to circumventing the embargoes."

Speaking to Shana, Allahverdi Dehghani said the petrochemical industry is the driver of the country's development, adding that during a recent visit to petrochemical hub if Khuzestan province he learned about the massive potentialities of the industry which can lead to generation of wealth for the country.

Pointing out that today Iran has massive oil and gas riches, he added: "When it comes to preventing the sale of crude, one of the ways to achieve such a goal is the development and progress of the petrochemical industry, this industry is a great source of income for the country and has the largest non-oil exports and can be the economic backbone of the country."

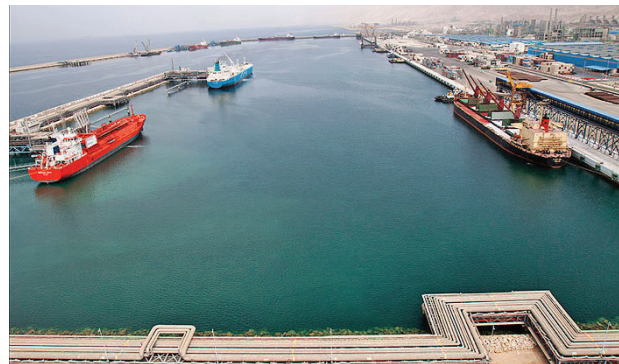
A member of the Industries and Mines Committee of the Islamic Consultative Assembly stated: "Industrial petrochemicals are profitable, so the substitution of non-oil exports in order to increase the country's revenues should be considered as a principle, the MP went on to add.

## Is a wave of bankruptcies heading for the offshore oil industry?

By Irina Slav

Offshore drilling major Valaris became the latest victim of the crisis this week as it filed for bankruptcy in the U.S., proposing a swap of some \$6.5 billion in debt that will see creditors become its owners. But it is just the latest headache for offshore drillers. There is more than \$20 billion in offshore drillers' debt still out there—and there are not many new drilling contracts.

This considerable debt pile is bad news. Expectations that offshore drilling orders will not begin to return until 2021 is even worse news. Nevertheless, this is what IHS Markit analysts have forecast.



In a recent report, IHS Markit said that demand for drilling rigs would start to recover next year and gather speed in 2022. But this will only happen in some parts of the world, namely South America and Western Africa. Demand for offshore rigs in the Gulf of Mexico will remain subdued, IHS Markit's analysts said.

Meanwhile, some of the largest offshore drillers are folding. Diamond Offshore Drilling was first, filing for Chapter 11 protection in April after collapsing under the weight of \$20 oil. With a debt pile of \$2.6 billion, according to the Financial Times, Diamond Drilling said the move was motivated by the unprecedented oil price crash, saying in its filing that conditions in the oil industry had "worsened precipitously in recent months."

Then Noble Corp filed for bankruptcy protection earlier this month. The filing followed the company's inability to make an interest payment on a loan. The interest payment was for \$15 million. Noble's total debt burden was \$4 billion.

There is some \$30 billion of debt in the offshore drilling industry at risk of default, Bloomberg reported this week. And while some players in the field such as global leader Transocean are looking for restructuring options to avoid bankruptcy, others will follow Noble Corp, Valaris, and Diamond Offshore. Some analysts believe this will be good for the industry.

"Offshore drilling is structurally damaged, and recovery is not imminent," Nicholas Green from Bernstein wrote in a note cited by Bloomberg. "The March oil price crash may, ironically, help to drive an eventual turnaround, if it forces sector restructuring and clear out of the weakest names."

Perhaps it is high time for such a clearance in offshore drilling. The sector was among the hardest hit by the previous crisis, along with oilfield services providers, and it never managed to recover before the Saudi-Russian price war and the pandemic struck it down again.

Now, as E&Ps struggle to survive and cut all costs that they can, expensive offshore drilling plans are front and center in their cost-cutting plans. No wonder then that offshore drillers are going under at the fastest pace since 2017, Bloomberg's David Wethe said in a separate report.

More bad news may be on the way. Although some expect a reversal of fortunes for offshore drillers soon, it remains to be seen just how full this reversal will be. The previous crisis made the industry wary of lavish spending on new projects; this may strengthen the attitude as it remains uncertain that oil demand will ever return to pre-pandemic levels. So most exploration and production companies are keeping the strings on their purses tightened, spending only on essentials.

All in all, the majority of offshore drillers may need to visit bankruptcy court at some point in the not-too-distant future, according to analysts cited by Bloomberg's Allison McNeely in her analysis of the industry's situation. They will need to restructure, consolidate, and adjust themselves to the new price environment. A return to the good old days of \$100 oil is not on the foreseeable horizon.



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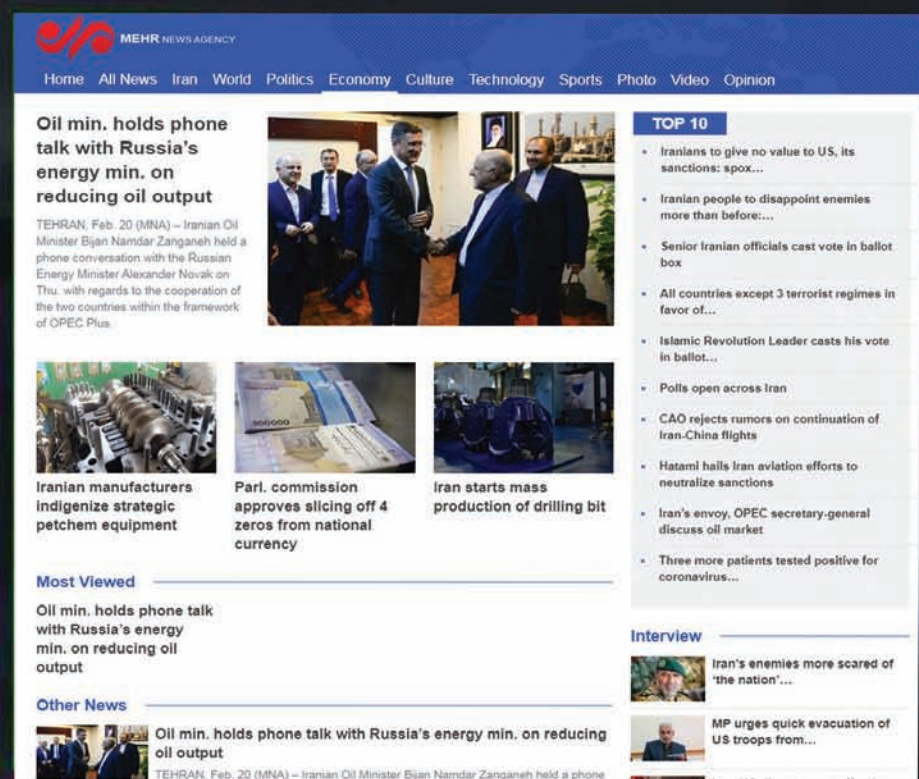
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# UAE-Israel normalization agreement pours salt on Palestinians' wound: Emirati activist

“It was a stab in the back of the Arab nations”

➔ Regarding the UAE's reasons for overt normalization of ties with the Israeli regime, it must be pointed out that normalization was not a result of the moment, but rather it was passing quietly under the table.

Secret meetings were held in Abu Dhabi and Tel Aviv, as well as secret talks at a high level.

Besides the governmental level, there were plans to prepare Emirati people to accept the normalization by the public media and official statements on social media.

The Emirati regime pursues a policy of intimidating the Emirati citizens and restricting them with laws that criminalize the ruler's criticism accordingly.

The ultimate goal of normalization is to guarantee Mohammed bin Zayed's chance to reach power in a comfortable way after became notorious for hatching conspiracies and now looking for peace.

Given Turkey's growing political and military power in the Middle East (West Asia) and the failure of Qatar's blockade and undermining its mediatory role in the Palestinian cause, the Emirates feels need new allies to protect its interests.

Therefore, it believes in such a normalization agreement, which will form a strong ally for it to protect itself. This is in the level of politics, but economically the Corona crisis greatly affected the UAE's markets and trades, especially in the real estate field.

Thus, they resorted to Jewish investors and finally tried to satisfy the U.S. administration, whether Trump remains or not because Trump is a lifeline for the Emirati rulers, but if he loses the upcoming election, then they will find a return line to the American Democrats.

■ How do you assess the reaction of the people in the Arab world, including those on the southern shores of the Persian Gulf, to the UAE's decision to normalize relations with Israel?

A: Arab people as a whole still love Palestine, and their hearts beat with hatred of the Zionist regime which has killed Palestinians and demolished their houses.

But we are talking about a policy of “destroying the awareness” practiced on the (Persian) Gulf peoples, especially the Emirati people when the Ministry of Tolerance was established.

The ministry tries to teach citizens the arts



of tolerance with Hindu religions and Judaism in particular

So, temples were opened for Hindus and synagogues for Jews. We cannot say that reactions inside the UAE are non-existent, but we can confirm that there are many people who refuse normalization but fear to openly object or reject it, given that what awaits them is an unfair judiciary, secret prisons, and inevitably a large financial fine due to laws that criminalize freedom of opinion.

By the way, there are Emiratis who have created a “resist normalization” association which its aim is to educate the citizens and refuse to sign treacherous agreements and support the Palestinian cause.

As for the (Persian) Gulf states, there are a very large number of those who expressed their objection to normalization. In many countries, the activists have launched tags with their names to refuse normalizing ties with Israel, a very important matter. Awareness at this phase has a critical role, and we wish it will continue.

■ Do you think that the Emirates' decision would serve the Palestinian people and the Palestinian cause?

A: Of course, this agreement pours salt on

Palestinians' wound, and it is a bridge over the rubble of the Palestinian cause.

This agreement will not stop annexation of the West Bank as explicitly declared by Netanyahu, nor will it restrain the regime which commits crimes against the Palestinians, nor will it ever restore al-Quds (Jerusalem), nor will it give them an independent state. Rather, it is an explicit recognition of Israel over the Palestinian lands and legitimizing the occupier of Jerusalem and the Al Aqsa Mosque.

In short, it is an Emirati-Israeli agreement, and Palestine in this agreement was just a bridge to cross.

■ Who actually rules the UAE? What are the main groups that govern the Emirates?

A: After the death of Sheikh Zayed, announcing his death was delayed for many reasons, including disputes among his sons.

I assure you that the phase that preceded the announcement of Sheikh Zayed's death was that Mohammed bin Zayed managed to rig the process of electing his successor, in which Sheikh Sultan was more entitled.

And according to Sheikh Zayed's will, Sheikh Khalifa became ruler of Abu Dhabi, and since then, Mohammed bin Zayed has messed with

**“The Emirati-Saudi alliance, in my view, is based on Mohammed bin Zayed's plan to push Saudi Arabia towards Yemen's swamp, and the ultimate goal was to weaken it politically and exhaust its economy.”**

## UAE-Israel deal: The new hegemon of West Asia

By David Hearst

The three men who hatched the first recognition by an Arab state of Israel in 26 years are all in trouble domestically.

U.S. President Donald Trump is finding any way he can to stop his fellow Americans from voting in an orderly fashion in November because if enough of them did, on current poll ratings, he would lose. Benjamin Netanyahu has been overwhelmed by the protests outside his home at his handling of COVID-19, and Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed has seen one pet project after another crash in flames into the sea - first the coup attempt in Turkey, then the siege of Qatar, and latterly the failure of his surrogate forces to seize Tripoli.

Each man needed a diplomatic coup, something their media could call historic. Each knows what would happen to them if they lost power. For Netanyahu and Trump, it could mean prison. For MBZ it would mean exile or death. His love affair with Israel is his life insurance. Their personal fates are, to an extraordinary sense, intertwined.

MBZ needed to find an alternative regional backer, acutely aware as he was of the falling value of his investment in Trump. He has made enough enemies in the CIA and the Pentagon to know that the moment Trump leaves the U.S. deep state will return with a vengeance.

Netanyahu needed to find an exit strategy from protests and a fraying coalition to find a policy that he alone controlled. While he has once again betrayed his right-wing by freezing, although not abandoning, annexation, the Houdini of political escapes has just wriggled out of his handcuffs once again.

Trump needed a signature foreign policy stunt, something he could call a return on all the political capital he has spent on his son-in-law, Jared Kushner. The “Deal of the Century” was always going to be dead on arrival. Trump needed a tangible.

■ End of the affair

But this deal, to be buttressed by Morocco, Bahrain, Oman, and Saudi Arabia, differs fundamentally from Egypt's or Jordan's peace deals with Israel. Each, in their turn, was the start of an affair. Each heralded wider negotiation, which, for a time, brought the hope of a just settlement to the Palestinian conflict.

This is the End of an affair. No negotiations, outside the palaces of the players involved, have taken place over this. There will be no elections to seek a popular mandate. Not one of the many querulous Palestinian factions or parties has gone anywhere near this, as to do so would mean the abandonment of East Jerusalem as the capital of a Palestinian State, negotiations on the basis of 1967 borders, and the right of the return.

This deal is not about peace. Arab leaders have met Israeli leaders regularly. King Abdullah 1 of Jordan met Zionist leaders before 1948, and his grandson King Hussein carried on the tradition. His biographer Avi Shlaim counted 42 meetings with his Israeli counterparts. King Hassan of Morocco used Mossad to get rid of his opponents.

None of this regular contact between avowed enemies changed the rejection of Israel by the Arab masses.

The UAE's recognition of Israel has nothing to do with the search for an end to the conflict. It is about establishing a new regional order between dictators and occupiers - Arab dictators and Israeli occupiers. As America withdraws as the regional hegemon, new ones are needed. Step forward, Israel and the UAE.

Trade, unimpeded telecoms, travel, and recognition between Israel and its richest Gulf neighbors will become new “facts on the ground,” its architects imagine, as immutable as the roads that bypass Palestinian villages and the settlements themselves. No negotiation is required—just the white flag of defeat.

I am fairly confident that Palestinians won't wave the white



flag of surrender today, any more than they would have done in the past seven decades. They will not abandon their political rights and take the money. But nothing less is required for this plan to succeed.

If this moral collapse was going to happen anywhere, it would have happened in an enclave Israel has starved for the last 14 years - Gaza. But there is no sign of popular resistance to Israel waning. Nor will this happen in the relatively freer West Bank. The Palestinian Authority called the decision “despicable” and “treason” to the Palestinian people, Jerusalem, and the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

The wave of anger and resentment coursing through Palestinian veins is reflected in the Arab population at large. Every honest attempt to monitor popular opinion on this issue comes up with answers Trump, Netanyahu, and MBZ would rather not hear.

The percentage of Arabs opposing diplomatic recognition of Israel has gone up, not down, in the last decade. The Arab Opinion Index quantified this trend. In 2011, 84 percent opposed diplomatic recognition. By 2018, the figure was 87 percent.

■ Just watch the reaction.

There will be a reaction to this both among Palestinians and on the Arab street in general. It is already possible to discern two trends.

Among Palestinians, this deal will force Fatah and Hamas, bitter rivals since the civil war in Gaza in 2007, into each other's arms. That is already happening at the youth level, but such is the degree of anger and betrayal felt in the top echelons of the Palestine Liberation Organization that it is also happening at the leadership level as well.

If Netanyahu and bin Zayed are on the phone to each other, so too now are Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian president, and Ismail Haniyeh, the political leader of Hamas. The Palestinian Authority's strong reaction to the Emirati accord was welcomed by Hamas. A Hamas source told Arabi21 that he saw the PA's position as an “opportunity for joint political and field action in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.”

If this new sense of common purpose between the two main rival Palestinian factions is sustainable - and Abbas in the past has been unwilling to accept any partners in the governance of Palestine - this is the beginning of the End of arrests of Hamas activists in the West Bank by the Palestinian Preventive Security.

This was once headed by Jibril Rajoub, who is now general secretary of Fatah. But today Rajoub holds press conferences with Hamas's second in command, Saleh Arouri - a further sign that the rapprochement between the two parties is gathering momentum.

Rajoub, who was speaking during a joint teleconference press interview with Arouri, said: “We will lead our battle together under the flag of Palestine to achieve an independent and sovereign Palestinian state on the 1967 border and solve the issue of the

the country's policies.

In 2011, when the Arab Spring started, Mohammed bin Zayed exploited it to suppress freedoms and restrict society with strict laws.

Moreover, Mohammed bin Zayed ordered mass arrests of 94 Emirati citizens affiliated to the intellectual and academic classes, and that was to pave his way to fully control the reins of power in the country, especially after Sheikh Khalifa's illness and absence of him in the media and political scene.

So, the actual ruler in the United Arab Emirates is Mohammed bin Zayed, who controls the country and exerts his influence on all other emirates, whose rulers are unfortunately coward and fearful of his authority.

■ What is the secret of the UAE-Saudi alliance? Would you expect Saudi Arabia and Bahrain to follow the example of the Emirates?

A: The Emirati-Saudi alliance, in my view, is based on Mohammed bin Zayed's plan to push Saudi Arabia towards Yemen's swamp, and the ultimate goal was to weaken it politically and exhaust its economy to undermine its influence after it was the most important state of the (Persian) Gulf.

Mohammed bin Zayed seeks greatness and fame. Unfortunately, he has succeeded in weakening Saudi Arabia by influencing Mohammed bin Salman, who transferred the Emirati experience to Saudi Arabia in the cultural and security level. Actually, he controls Mohammed bin Salman's childish impulses.

As for his involvement in the normalization, Mohammed bin Zayed challenged Saudi Arabia for his superiority over the Arab peace initiative that Saudis had signed it, as if he is saying, “Come with me for the peace agreement, Saudi agreement is out of date.”

If Mohammed bin Salman remains in power, sooner or later, Saudi Arabia will, unfortunately, engage in the normalization process.

Bahrain is a dependent state and will inevitably be the first to sign the normalization agreement after the UAE.

We wish the other (Persian) Gulf states to be steadfast in facing pressures and to take a position that immortalizes in history, and when the grandchildren read it, they say that there are Arab countries who have betrayed and there are others that kept the covenant.

refugees on the basis of international resolutions.”

■ The Dahlan plan

This reaction would have been foreseen by the Arab hegemon and Israel. Their answer is to promote the exiled Palestinian leader Mohammed Dahlan or his surrogates as the next Palestinian president.

I revealed this plan four years ago. It was written down in black and white in a document summarising the discussions between the UAE, Jordan, and Egypt.

In it, Dahlan's homecoming was specifically linked to “a peace agreement with Israel with the backing of Arab states.”

Dahlan himself, who is in exile in Abu Dhabi, has said nothing about the agreement. But his faction within Fatah, which calls itself the “Democratic Reform Movement,” issued a statement saying it “followed with great interest the joint American-Emirati-Israeli statement, which announced the start of a path to normalization of relations, which includes a freeze on the decision to annex Israel to parts of the occupied West Bank”.

His supporters over the weekend called him “the leader”.

The result? His picture was burned in Ramallah yesterday, along with pictures of bin Zayed.

In the past, Dahlan has played the divisions between Hamas and Fatah shrewdly. For a brief spell, there was talk of a rapprochement between Dahlan and Hamas, in a revived relationship with Yahya Sinwar, the Hamas leader of Gaza. Sinwar and Dahlan were former schoolmates. The two met in secret talks in Cairo.

All his previous work, including the payment of weddings in Gaza and the cultivation of supporters and militias in Balata Camp, the West Bank's largest refugee camp, has been thrown into the wind. Dahlan has crossed a Rubicon by supporting this deal, although this fact has yet to sink in.

Across the Arab world in general, the second immediate effect of this announcement is the recognition that the demands of the Arab Spring for democracy in the Arab world and the demands of Palestinians for sovereignty are one and the same thing.

They have common enemies: Arab despots whose suppression of democracy is crueler and more medieval than ever. They have a common cause - popular resistance to oligarchs who wield all the power - both military and economic.

Netanyahu was not exaggerating when he said on Thursday night when the deal was announced that the UAE's recognition would enrich Israel. “This is very important for our economy, the regional economy, and our future,” the prime minister said.

He said the UAE would make investments that would boost the Israeli economy. Well, quiet. Instead of investing its money in Jordan or Egypt, which desperately needs its cash, the wealthiest sovereign wealth fund in the (Persian) Gulf will start investing in Israel, which is in comparison already a substantial high-tech economy.

Not only is bin Zayed contemptuous of Arab democracy (hence his suppression of popular democratic movements). Above all, he is contemptuous of his own people, whom he consigns to the gutters of the new post-oil economy.

This bleak vision will fail much faster than the Jordanian and Egyptian treaties with Israel, which were also built on sand. It can only lead to more conflict.

Whereas before, Israeli leaders could pretend to be bystanders to the turmoil of dictatorship in the Arab world, this now ties the Jewish state to maintain the autocracy and repression around it. They cannot pretend to be the victims of a “tough neighborhood.” They are its main pillar.

This accord is virtual reality. It will be blown away by a new popular revolt not just in Palestine but across the Arab world. This revolt may already have started.

(Source: Middle East EYE)

## Trump admin. isolating U.S. over Iran

Undeterred by earlier UNSC humiliating failure, Pompeo triggers' snapback sanctions'

➔ The snapback procedure is outlined in UN Resolution 2231, which endorsed the 2015 nuclear agreement (JCPOA) which stipulates that if one of the signatories finds another to be insignificant non-performance of commitments, the UNSC would have to vote on whether to continue with the suspension of the economic sanctions against Tehran.



U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo during his trip to UN headquarters in New York on Thursday. He said he will submit a complaint to the UNSEC and has accused European allies of “siding” with Iran after they said the U.S. could not reimpose sanctions on Iran.

(Photo: Mike Segar)

Other JCPOA participants and former Obama administration officials say the U.S. no longer has the right to initiate the snapback provision because it unilaterally withdrew from the nuclear agreement.

Another major obstacle along the way for Pompeo would be objections and a possible veto from China and Russia on the provision.

In a letter to the UN in June, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi wrote, “The United States, no longer a participant to the CPOA after walking away from it, has no right to demand the Security Council to invoke a snapback.” His Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov, took a similar line in a letter of his own last May saying the U.S. stance recalls the expression about “having one's cake and eating it.”

The U.S. administration disputes that reasoning, arguing despite exiting the deal, it remains an original JCPOA participant and is also a permanent member of the UNSC, whose resolution 2231 endorsed the deal.

The main reason why the U.S. so hell-bent on provoking such aggressive measures against the Islamic Republic is that the Trump administration wants to kill the JCPOA before the November 3 U.S. elections. Such an outcome will not help Trump get re-elected, but at least he will do all the possible damage before his departure.

What Trump is stubbornly refusing to understand is that the same overwhelming majority of the Security Council members who oppose the arms ban extension, also oppose snapbacks. In the end, the U.S. will find itself yet isolated again.

## Analyzable data retrieved from downed Ukraine plane

(Press TV) — Head of the Civil Aviation Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran has announced the retrieval of some “analyzable” data from the black box of a Ukrainian passenger plane that was accidentally downed near Tehran in early January and left more than 170 people dead.

Touraj Dehqani Zanganeh said in an interview with Iran's Fars News Agency on Sunday that following the incident, the plane's black box was analyzed at the Civil Aviation Investigation Bureau in France and representatives from the U.S., Ukraine, France, Canada, Britain and Sweden — the countries whose citizens lost their lives in the crash — were present during the process.

Stressing that a representative from International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) was also present to facilitate cooperation between the countries, Dehqani Zanganeh said, “The data was retrieved and turned into analyzable information.”

Elaborating on the data, the Iranian aviation official underlined that the Ukrainian passenger plane's black boxes have only 19 seconds of conversation following the first explosion, though the second missile reached the plane 25 seconds later.

Dehqani Zanganeh argued that the first missile explosion had sent shrapnel into the plane, likely disrupting the plane's recorders.

Pointing to the situation in the cockpit, the official said there were three crew members and one instructor there, all of whom were piloting the plane until the last minute due to unusual conditions.

“Given the fact that the cockpit was cut off 19 seconds after the explosion and the second missile was fired 25 seconds later and reached the aircraft, no analysis of the performance and effects of the second missile can be obtained from the aircraft's black boxes because parts of the first missile and its impact on the plane caused the simultaneous disconnection of the CVR and FDR boxes within 19 seconds,” Dehqani Zanganeh noted.

The official said the retrieved information has been provided to the representatives of the relevant countries to submit their safety and technical analyses to the Iranian Civil Aviation Organization within the framework of ICAO standards.

Dehqani Zanganeh underlined that such measures are aimed at preventing similar incidents, and any political use of this process which could overshadow the investigation process.

With 167 passengers and nine crewmembers on board, Ukraine International Airlines flight PS752 crashed outside Tehran's Imam Khomeini International Airport on January 8, moments after take-off.

Iranian authorities acknowledged that the plane had been downed due to human error at a time when Iran's air defenses were on high alert due to increased hostile American aerial activity in the aftermath of the U.S. assassination of Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani, the former commander of the Quds Force of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps.



## A glimpse of Muharram mourning rituals across Iran: Oblation of lambs

(Part 5/8)

One of the other rituals during Muharram is oblation of lambs at Great Hussainiya of Zanjan, which is a famed ritual countrywide when it comes to Muharram mourning ceremonies in Iran.



Every year, several Iranians who are in love with Prophet Muhammad (S) family, travel Zanjan to attend their mourning ceremonies from Muharram first to thirteen.

Over a thousand sheep, some cows, lambs, and camels are amongst oblations during these days. Mourners perform chest-thumping and self-flagellation in order and the eulogists narrate the story of Ashura.

### ■ Origin of oblation

The act of oblation is a reminder of Prophet Ibrahim (AS) and his son Ismail. They also commemorate Hazrat Abulfazl Abbas (AS) who lost his two hands during the Ashura event on the day named after him in the Iranian calendar. Not only Iranians but also foreign tourists are eager to attend this ritual.

## Persian Gulf littoral states buying Kashmar handicrafts

**HERITAGE d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Many handicrafts made in Kashmar, northeastern Khorasan Razavi province, are being sold in the Persian Gulf littoral states, a provincial tourism chief has said.

Several courses of branding and packaging of handicrafts have been held to help crafters reach global markets and promote their handmade products more properly, Reza Yusefi said on Sunday, CHTN reported.



Some 157 fields of handicrafts are currently practiced by 1200 artisans in the city, the official added.

Iran exported \$523 million worth of handicrafts during the past calendar year 1398 (ended March 19). Of the figure, some \$273 million worth of handicrafts were exported officially through customs, and about \$250 million was earned via suitcase trade (allowed for customs-free and tax-free transfer) through various provinces.

Back in May, deputy tourism minister Pouya Mahmoudian noted that due to the outbreak of coronavirus, suitcase exports of handicrafts has been completely stopped since the month of Esfand (the last month of the Iranian calendar year, started February 19), and official exports of handicrafts experienced a steep decline.”

“Some 295 fields of handicrafts are currently practiced across Iran with more than two million people engaging, majority of whom are women... Handicrafts also play an important role in the economy in our rural villages,” she said.

## National Museum puts ancient medical equipment collection online

**HERITAGE d e s k** **TEHRAN** – The National Museum of Iran has put tens of centuries-old medical equipment online in a bid to pay tribute to huge sacrifices Iranian healthcare workers have made during the coronavirus era.

The virtual exhibit started on the first day of the month Shahrivar (this year falling on August 22), which marks National Doctor’s Day commemorating the birthday of Avicenna, the distinguished Iranian physician, and writer of ‘The Book of Healing’, who is regarded as the father of early modern medicine.



Amid the COVID-19 outbreak, physicians and doctors have been recognized for their selfless devotion and efforts this year. Working around the clock, fighting at the frontline against the pandemic, putting their lives in danger made us salute and admire these exceptional caregivers.

The practice and study of medicine in Persia (Iran) has a long and prolific history. The ancient Iranian medicine was combined by different medical traditions from Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, China, and Greece for millennia and merged to form what became the nucleus and foundation of medical practice in the European countries in the 13th century.

The Iranian academic centers like Jundishapur University (3rd century CE) were a breeding ground for the union among great scientists from different civilizations. These centers successfully followed their predecessors’ theories and greatly extended their scientific research through history. Iranian physicians also had a tremendous share in the progress of medical sciences during the Islamic Golden Age.

# Newly-found skeletons may address bloody conflict during Alexander the Great’s invasion of Persia: expert

→ 1 “What has just been found in Persepolis has happened in the course of research on the World Heritage. Everything that is [now] presented to tourists is the fruit of [previous] researches, survey.... therefore, such findings should be presented in proper formats, including exhibits in the Persepolis Museum, and being combined with brochures, and [necessary] descriptions.”

### ■ Collaboration with the world completes our findings

Elsewhere in his remarks, Beheshti hailed Iranian researchers for having a great deal of expertise in the field of cultural heritage. He, however, said this expertise would be completed through vast international co-operation.

“Basically, the science in the field of cultural heritage is not very wide and for this reason, different countries and different research centers [should] cooperate with each other; because each one has its own strength and [special] abilities.”

“In archaeological research, new sciences are also been contributing to, and in terms of dating and accurate scientific specs, we have some facilities in the country and do not have some others...., therefore being satisfied with our own abilities is not enough when it comes to a comprehensive look.”

### ■ Impatience turns new findings to daily routine

“It should not be overlooked that such research that led to the recent discovery of skeletal remains is new, and it will take time to be matured and weighed against other researches, and finally [would] be able to speak definitively about them; Therefore,



Seyyed Mohammad Beheshti, a member of Iran’s Supreme Council of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, speaks in an undated photo.

we must be careful not to look at them as a daily routine.”

Beheshti emphasized that the existing theories which are based on studies should be presented and hammered in scientific discussions, situations, and research circles, adding “After turning these findings into a scientific source, we can almost enter the field of [scientifically] present our achievements.”

“The recent discovery in Persepolis, which was announced on Mordad 26th (August 16), included human and animal skeletons

found in the waterways of this World Heritage complex, has drawn [our] attention to the history and narrative behind these findings.”

It was first reported that 11 human skeletons and two dog skeletons were found during a dredging work on ancient water ducts near an uncompleted gate that leads to the courtyard of the Hall of 100 Columns. And later two more human skeletons were found, which increased the number of these finds.

The position of the bones indicates that these people may not have been buried, but

## Tourism, handicraft sectors create 6,600 jobs in western Iran

**TOURISM d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Some 6,600 job opportunities in tourism and handicraft sectors were created in western Kermanshah province over the previous Iranian calendar year 1398 (ended on March 19), which shows a 200 percent increase year on year.

Some seven trillion rials (over \$166 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) was also invested in these sectors across the province over the past year, CHTN quoted provincial tourism chief Omid Qaderi as saying on Sunday.

He also noted that a total of 55 tourism-related projects are scheduled to come on stream in different cities of the province on the occasion of the Government Week (August 23-30).

Kermanshah embraces a variety of awe-inspiring historical sites, of which Bisotun and Taq-e Bostan are both on the UNESCO World Heritage list and the Temple of Anahita is also one of the top tourist destinations in the region.

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

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

Bisotun is a patchwork of immense yet impressive life-size carvings depicting the king Darius I and several other figures. UNESCO has it that Bisotun bears outstanding testimony to the important interchange of human values on the development of monumental art and writing, reflecting ancient traditions in monumental bas-reliefs.

Temple of Anahita in the city of Kangavar is believed to have been built circa 200 BC. Several column bases and ruins of a wall remain from the magnificent Greek-style temple.

The temple was used during the Parthian era (248 BC-224) as well as the Sassanid era (224-651).

The monument was damaged as it was used for various purposes by the Seljuk, Ilkhanid, Safavid, and Qajar dynasties, which ruled in Iran over the past centuries.

The Temple of Anahita was seriously damaged by



an earthquake in 1957. Afterward, people invaded the perimeter of the site, using stones from the temple to rebuild their homes at that location.

## Rural capacities has diversified tourism in Sarein: MP

**TOURISM d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Paying attention to the rural tourism and directing tourists to the surrounding villages by creating the necessary infrastructure in these areas has taken Sarein tourism out of a one-dimensional state, a member of parliament has said.

Sarein or Sareyn is a small city in the northwestern Ardebil province. The city is famous for its numerous spa springs and one of the tourist areas.

Sarein attracts more than five million tourists annually who travel to this region



from different parts of Iran and the world because of climate and hot springs. It has

nine hot springs which are very different in terms of composition and properties.

The tourism sector plays an important role in the province’s development, and appropriate measures in this regard are being done, which are expected to continue and increase, Ali Nikzad, who represents Ardebil, Nir, Namin, and Sarein in the parliament said on Saturday, CHTN reported.

He also noted that the mentioned measures have led to a balanced distribution of tourists as well as the increase of the competitiveness in the region.

## Tourists warned not to approach glaciers in Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari

**TOURISM d e s k** **TEHRAN** – A Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari tourism official has warned tourists and travelers not to approach the province’s glaciers to avoid potential dangers.

Due to the reduction in the thickness of the glaciers and the possibility of their collapse, tourists need to refrain from entering them to have a safe trip in nature, ILNA quoted Farjam Samiei as saying on Sunday.

He also asked nature travelers to extinguish fires, avoid unauthorized access to water resources including rivers, dams, and lakes, use the services of valid tour guides, re-

frain from driving in bad weather, and avoid lighting gas appliances in closed spaces and tents.

One of the top destinations for nature travelers in the region is Chama Ice Cave, which despite its natural beauty, is very dangerous.

Located in the central part of Koohrang city, the ice cave is a popular spot for people wanting to get away from the heat.

The icy layers of this cave are slightly thick in hot seasons and it is necessary to avoid passing over them and inside the cave. Chama Ice Cave is one of the most amaz-

ing caves in the province. Its location in deep valleys and the accumulation of snow for many years in this cave has caused the ice caps and huge masses of snow to remain permanently in all seasons.

However, almost every year, ice collapse in this cave causes unfortunate incidents.

Last year, one tourist lost his life when tons of ice and rock collapsed in the cave. A year earlier, the cave collapsed leaving one dead.

In 2017 two tourists from Shiraz, Fars province, were also killed in a similar incident.

## Muharram rituals: flagpole-carrying in Shahroud

By Seyed Hossein Hosseiniseddiq

(Part 2/2)

A group of mourners, including those who recite Mohtasham’s poems, or those who regularly beat their chests, or those who carry the flagpoles, walk along Mazar Street and reach the Shahidan e Mehrab Park, passing through a narrow passage to the Tekiyeh of the bazaar and due to the narrowness of this space, the flagpoles are placed lying on the shoulders of the mourners.

Inside the Tekiyeh, women and children are seated in the royal residence section, waiting for the mourners to arrive. Around sunset, a group of old servants and then a group of those who hit their chests enter the courtyard. At this time, mourning culminates with the remembrance of O Abbas O Abbas with a slap on the head and chest. This excitement continues until the last flag enters the courtyard and then the atmosphere of



the ceremony changes with the recitation of Salawat (Mohammad, peace be upon him).

At this time, an eloquent eulogy is recited in the description of the self-sacrifice and bravery of Hazrat Abol-Fazl Al-Abbas (AS) and the audience beats rhythmically on their chests. This mourning lasts until the Sunset prayer, after which the flagpoles of each neighborhood are transferred to their Tekiyehs and mosques.

In the belief of the people of the city, the Tekiyeh of Bazaar has been highly regard-

ed by Hazrat Abol-Fazl Al-Abbas (AS), who can accommodate all the mourners on this day. According to the informants of the city, the ritual of the flagpole has been popular in the city of Shahroud for more than one hundred years ago, and since then, the glory and grandeur of its performance have been added every year.

Tekiyehs Bazaar (another name for Bazaar Tekiyeh is Zanjiri) and Bidabad are among the founders of this religious ceremony. According to this ritual, the flagpoles of all the mosques and neighborhoods of the city are transferred to the Bazaar on this day. If the blade suddenly falls to the ground while carrying the flagpole, a sheep is immediately sacrificed in the same place.

Otherwise, they believe that something bad will happen to the person carrying the flagpole. On this day, all the sheep that are sacrificed during the ceremony in front of the flagpoles belong to the Tekiyeh of Ba-

that they were killed and left in the waterways during a clash that may have been related to Alexander the Great’s invasion of Iran.

The finding of these human skeletons lays a serious responsibility on those involved in the field of cultural heritage and can open a new window to having a narrative and creative tourism and even open up new opportunities for literary tourism to this ancient site, he concluded.

Persepolis, also known as Takht-e Jamshid, whose magnificent ruins rest at the foot of Kuh-e Rahmat (Mountain of Mercy), was the ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid Empire. It is situated 60 kilometers northeast of the city of Shiraz in Fars Province.

The city’s immense terrace was begun about 518 BC by Darius the Great, the Achaemenid Empire’s king. On this terrace, successive kings erected a series of architecturally stunning palatial buildings, among them the massive Apadana palace and the Throne Hall (“Hundred-Column Hall”).

This 13-ha ensemble of majestic approaches, monumental stairways, throne rooms (Apadana), reception rooms, and dependencies is classified among the world’s greatest archaeological sites. Persepolis was the seat of the government of the Achaemenid Empire, though it was designed primarily to be a showplace and spectacular center for the receptions and festivals of the kings and their empire.

The city was occupied and burnt by Alexander the Great in 330 BC apparently as a revenge to the Persians because it seems the Persian King Xerxes had burnt the Greek City of Athens around 150 years earlier.

Some of the most notable tourist attractions surrounding Sarein are as follows: ‘Kanzag’ is a historic village which has historic caves related to the Parthian period which have been registered on Iran’s National Heritage list.

‘Alvares’ is a ski resort which absorbs many tourists to enjoy winter sports every year.

The ancient ‘Anahita Hill’, ‘Gulistan Valley’ – a habitat of partridge, goat, and mouflon -, and ‘Vargehsaran waterfall’ are among the most spectacular tourism spots of the region.



# Medicinal plants hold potential for realizing surge in production

By Faranak Bakhtiari

**TEHRAN** — Medicinal plants are creating a new and fast-growing economy, so that many countries are rapidly investing in this field. Iran's high potential in the production of medicinal herbs provides an opportunity for realizing the national goal of 'Surge in Production.'

The use of medicinal and aromatic plants extends beyond the pharmaceutical industry to other industries such as coloring, flavoring, cosmetics, health, insecticides and herbicides, perfumery, fragrances, and food industries.

Herbal plants use has grown exponentially due to man's re-orientation to nature and natural products, the side effects of synthetic materials, and the discovery of new drugs from natural compounds that have complex chemical structures that are difficult to synthesize or sometimes impossible, have led to the establishment of a large market for these plants.

Before the advent of modern pharmaceutical science, humans relied solely on herbal and natural remedies to treat their diseases. The use of herbal remedies to treat many common ailments is still practiced in many parts of the world, especially in developing countries.

The World Health Organization believes that in the third millennium, in addition to developing countries, the use of medicinal plants and traditional medicines in developed countries is also increasing significantly.

In Iran, as in other parts of the world, the demand for domestic consumption and export of medicinal plants is growing.

## ■ 8,000 herbal species grow in Iran

So far, about 30,000 plant species are identified in the world, with Iran's share of about 8,000 species that its plant diversity is more than the whole of Europe.

Currently, about 2,300 species of medicinal plants have been identified in the country; while medicinal plants account for one-third of the medicines used in human



societies, the share of world trade in these products is about \$124 billion and Iran's share is \$570 million, which is only 0.5 percent of the total.

The Sixth Development Plan envisages the rehabilitation of 9.6 million hectares of rangeland and medicinal plant habitats and cultivation of medicinal plants in 100,000 hectares.

The per capita consumption of medicinal plants in Iran is about one kilogram of dried plants, in other words, 83,000 tons of medicinal plants worth 1.2 trillion rials (around \$29 million at an official rate of 42,000 rials) are consumed in the country, while in Europe this amount is 900 grams and in the United States is 2.5 kilograms.

## ■ 224,000 ha under cultivation of medicinal herbs

Hossein Zeynali, director of medicinal plants project of Ministry of Agriculture, announced the increase of 25,000 hectares

of medicinal plants cultivation, adding that currently, 224,000 hectares of area is under cultivation of medicinal herbs.

During the last 2 years, we focused mainly on the development of a number of medicinal plants such as saffron, rosemary, and Persian cumin, that their cultivation is high in the country and brought an export revenue of \$400 million annually, he said.

There are also a number of medicinal plants that used to be harvested from forests and pastures, which have always had a very good export market; herbs like Persian shallot and Zataria have a good market in the world but have not been working on, he explained.

Zeynali went on to note that we highly support these products' harvest, because they are highly demanded by other countries, and we are looking to expand production.

On the other hand, we had a shortage of some products in the country, such as black

caraway, which was imported 3-4 thousand tons per year, however, 1000 to 1,500 hectares are now growing the plant, he emphasized.

Also, in the next two years, by increasing the quality or mechanization of these products, the comparative advantage of these products will increase compared to other countries, and we will certainly be the main exporters in the coming years, he also said.

## ■ Iran to be a leading herb exporter

Due to the increase in the exchange rate, many of the industries start using Iranian products and essential oils, before this, many factories used synthetic products and are now using these traditional and natural products.

Statistics show that the consumption of medicinal plants in the country has become processed, and decreased imports by \$50-60 million, on the other hand, increased the exports, he noted.

He went on to say that we also focus on plants that countries need, so we move in two directions, one is to increase exports and the other is to reduce imports.

So, we cultivated non-native plants such as ginger, turmeric, and cinnamon, and we hope to harvest these products in greenhouses in the coming years and meet the needs of the country, Zeynali stated.

He further explained that we have polarized the country and now, for example, in Sistan-Baluchestan and Kerman, we have grown plants such as henna tree and Hibiscus tea, and in provinces of Fars, Isfahan, and Kerman, Damask rose is being planted, while Kermanshah and Hamedan, black caraway and coriander.

Next year, we plan to completely cultivate Persian shallot in the Zagros forests, in addition to celery, so that increase exports and exchange rates while meeting the country's needs, he said, highlighting, for the development of medicinal plants, between 10 to 20 trillion rials (nearly \$238 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) are allocated annually.

## Iranian company produces COVID-19 test cabin

**SOCIETY TEHRAN** — An Iranian knowledge-based company has managed to develop a dual-purpose test cabin both for coronavirus and tuberculosis that provides testing without the need for additional protective suit.

A laboratory sample has been produced which is undergoing clinical tests to obtain a license from the Ministry of Health,



according to the science ministry's public relations department.

This system minimizes the inconvenience for the medical staff due to the lack of need to wear a personal protective suit, having an H14 high-efficiency particulate absorbing (HEPA) filter, fast sampling, and a sterile cabin using a UV lamp after each use.

The device has very valuable features for medical centers and hospitals in the country.

The operation of this device is based on positive and negative pressure and is like a telephone booth in a portable way. It can be fixed in one place and can be used outdoors or in any other place.

In one case, the patient is placed inside the cabin and by adjusting the negative pressure, special gloves resistant to chemicals are inserted into the cabin and the doctor takes a sample outside the cabin. Conversely, in the second case, the doctor is inside the cabin and the patient is outside, the gloves are adjusted and sampling is performed.

Due to the prevalence of coronavirus and the dangers of infectious disease, as well as the lack of personal protective gowns, this device will have a high demand among medical staff.

This company at Alborz Science and Technology Park is active in the field of production of laboratory, hospital, research, and agricultural equipment and has been able to create jobs for 60 people in the field of technology and knowledge.

Mehdi Kashmiri, director for technology and planning at the science ministry, said in July that about 450 knowledge-based companies were active in the country for manufacturing protective equipment and treatment products to fight the coronavirus.

Production of more than one million face masks per day, production of more than 1.5 liters of disinfectants per day, diagnostic kits, non-contact thermometers, protective clothing, ventilator are among the produces manufactured by these companies, he added.

Iranian-made innovative products in the field of diagnosis, screening, and fighting coronavirus were also unveiled to combat the disease, namely, ozone generator, nanotechnology face shields, disinfection gate, and molecular COVID-19 diagnostic kits.

The number of people diagnosed with coronavirus in Iran reached 343,203 on Sunday, of whom 19,639 have died and 297,486 recovered so far. Over the past 24 hours, 2,133 new cases of people having the virus have been identified, and 147 died, Sima Sadat Lari ministry of health's spokesman said.

Currently, 3,881 patients with coronavirus are in critical condition, she added.

## RENOWNED TEHRAN'S HAY'ATS

## Arg mosque: a mosque known for special mourning ceremonies

Arg mosque is one of the most renowned mosques in Iran because of its oldness and activities during the Islamic Revolution of 1979. The mosque hosted several speeches by famous figures.

The Iranian cleric and philosopher Morteza Motahhari (1919-1979), who had an important influence on the ideologies of the Islamic Republic, had several speeches at this mosque. The mosque was also the gathering place for several political and religious characters in Iran for years. Numerous speakers and eulogists had programs during Muharram mourning season in this mosque and because of it, many Tehrani citizens spend the nights of Muharram at this place.

The name of Haj Mansour Arazi is woven with Arg Mosque and Muharram nights in Iran. Haj Hossein Sazour, Saied Haddadian, and Mahmoud Karimi are other eulogists that hold programs during mourning ceremonies at the mosque.

The mourning ceremonies at this place have several addressees in all parts of Tehran.

*\*The reason for being special: the ancient mosque and renowned guests and eulogists during years*

## LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 8)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

Letter /tā/ has the sound /t/, like t in time.



Persian /t/ is dental:

line /satr/ سَطَر ← س + ط + ر

Letter /zā/ has the sound /z/, like z in zoo:



noon /zohr/ ظَهْر ← ظ + ه + ر

● Exercise 5. Write the words in Persian letters:

1. dar \_\_\_\_\_
2. dars\* \_\_\_\_\_
3. dā'ram \_\_\_\_\_
4. šo'mā\* \_\_\_\_\_
5. dā'riā\* \_\_\_\_\_
6. dānešju \_\_\_\_\_

Letter /eyn/ has the sound /ʔ/, like a slight cough, عَجْ

as in Cockney bottle. /eyn/ is written in four ways.

Initial:	number	/?a'dad/	عَدَد
Medial:	Friday	/jom'/?e/	جُمِعه
Final joined:	a quarter	/rob'/?/	رُبُع
Final disjoined:	start	/šo'ru'/?/	شُرُوع

## Temperature in Iran 1.5 degrees above long-term average

**SOCIETY TEHRAN** — Iran averaged about 1-1.5 degrees on Celsius scale warmer than the long run during the Iranian calendar month of Mordad (July 22-August 21), according to the national center for drought and crisis management affiliated to the Meteorological Organization.

The maximum temperature in the country during the aforementioned period was recorded at 37.4 degrees Celsius, which is 1.3 degrees Celsius higher than the long-term average.

The long-term average minimum temperature in the country is 21.8, which during the past month, was reported 23.4 degrees Celsius showing about 1.6 degrees Celsius above the normal average.

In general, the average daily temperature in the country during last month was 30.4 degrees Celsius, which increased by 1.4 compared to the long-term average. Therefore, the temperature in the country was about one to 1.5 degrees above normal, Ahad Vazifeh, head of the national center for drought and crisis management said.

The minimum temperature was reported to be above the long-term average in a number of provinces, he said, adding, Yazd province experienced the most abnormalities in the minimum temperature record and the temperature

was about 3.2 degrees Celsius warmer than ever.

Also, in Kohgiluyeh-Boyerahmad provinces, the temperature was 2.5 degrees higher than the long-term average, he further stated.

In Isfahan and Kermanshah provinces, the temperature was about 2.4 and 1 degrees Celsius above normal, respectively, he said.

Temperatures in Sistan-Baluchestan during this period were also reported to be 1.6 times higher than the long-term average, he noted, highlighting, the highest temperature change occurred in Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari with the maximum temperature of 2.4 higher than normal.

## ■ Rainfall 29% higher than long-term average

Referring to the rainfall rate in the country during the month of Mordad, he stated that the whole country received rainfall 29 percent above the long-term average.

Increased rainfall in summer does not have much effect on the rainfall rate because the precipitation is low and occurs in limited areas such as the coastal provinces of the Caspian Sea and Sistan-Baluchestan, so it does not change the rate, he concluded.

Since the beginning of the current water year (September 23, 2019), the whole country received 294.5 mm of rain-

fall, which is 6.7 percent lower compared to the past year, according to the data released on Tuesday by the National Drought Warning and Monitoring Center.

Gilan, Mazandaran, and Lorestan provinces surpassed other provinces in terms of high rainfall rates over the aforesaid period, as the rainiest provinces, Gilan, Mazandaran, and Lorestan provinces got 932.1, 758.5 and 583.2 mm of rain, respectively.

However, compared to the previous water year, Gilan province faced a 4.6 percent decline in rainfall, and Mazandaran and Lorestan provinces also experienced a 6.4 and 40.9 percent drop in precipitation, while all received more rainfall compared to the long term means.

Almost all the provinces experienced increased rainfall compared to the long term average, except for Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari, Kohgiluyeh-Boyerahmad, Kordestan, and Kermanshah.

Yazd, South Khorasan, and Isfahan provinces recorded the lowest rainfall among the whole provinces.

During the aforementioned period, 371 mm of rain doused Tehran, which shows a 43.7 and 9.6 percent increase compared to both the long run and last year, respectively.

## All foreign nationals in Iran receive free COVID-19 treatment

➔ this is a service that is not done for free in many countries but has been done in the last 6 months for the treatment of foreign nationals in Iran.

There is no difference between documented and undocumented foreign nationals in the treatment of infectious diseases because if undocumented foreign nationals who are in Iran are not treated, they can easily spread the disease among others, so all foreign nationals residing in the country are covered by COVID-19 health services and other infectious and

contagious diseases, he explained.

Iran is host to one of the largest and most protracted urban refugee situations in the world and has provided asylum to refugees for four decades.

The latest official government statistics in 2014, there are 951,142 Afghan refugees and 28,268 Iraqi refugees living in Iran. Many of the refugees living in Iran are the second and third generation, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

About 97 percent of refugees live in urban

and semi-urban areas, while 3 percent are residing in 20 refugee resorts run by the UNHCR's main government counterpart.

In addition to Afghan refugees, there are about 2.5 million Afghans living in Iran, including those having a passport and undocumented Afghans. 450,000 Afghan who did not have identity cards or birth certificates have received Iranian visas that allow them to live, work or study in the country.

Iran ramped up its production of essential medical equipment, and independent entrepreneurs – refugees included – have

redirected their efforts towards contributing to the national COVID-19 response.

Undocumented Afghans who have access to free primary health services and similarly free COVID-19 related testing, treatment, and hospitalization, just like nationals.

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).

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ج

## Marine species population increased in protected areas

According to the annual census, the population of marine species in habitats under the Department of Environment (DOE) supervision has increased, Ahmad Lahijanzadeh, head of marine environment affairs at the DOE has said.

Protecting marine habitats and listing them as protected areas are among the most important priorities of the DOE, he said, adding, all of the areas have been identified through environmental assessment and field surveys.

## افزایش گونه‌های دریایی مناطق تحت حفاظت سازمان محیط زیست

لاهیجان زاده گفت: براساس سرشماری سالانه تعداد گونه‌های موجود در زیستگاه‌های دریایی تحت حفاظت رو به افزایش است.

احمد لاهیجان زاده معاون محیط زیست دریایی سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست در گفت‌وگو با خبرنگار باشگاه خبرنگاران جوان، در رابطه با اهمیت حفاظت از زیستگاه‌های دریایی اظهار کرد: حفاظت از زیستگاه‌های دریایی و شناسایی این مناطق در اولویت سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست قرار دارد و تمام این زیستگاه‌ها در قالب مطالعات جامع و تعقیب میدانی شناسایی شده‌اند.



## Protests against Israeli PM continue with momentum

Thousands of Israelis protested outside the prime minister's official residence Saturday as summer-long demonstrations against Benjamin Netanyahu maintained their momentum.

The protesters want the embattled Netanyahu to give up his post while he is on trial for corruption charges. The government's mishaps in handling the coronavirus crisis after relative success in its early stages has also fueled the demonstrations, AP reported.

Saturday's protest comes ahead of Tuesday's deadline in which the coalition government must agree on a budget plan or trigger new elections that would be the fourth in just over a year.

Ignoring police suggestions for alternative routes, the protesters marched from several parts of Occupied Jerusalem through key roads trying to reach Netanyahu's residence on Balfour Street.

Outside the residence, they hoisted giant balloons depicting smeared heads of Netanyahu and his rival-turned-coalition partner Benny Gantz of the centrist Blue and White party, waved Israeli flags and the black flag of one of the grassroots protest movements.

A sign read "Balfour is in our hands," referring to the residence address. Other signs called on Netanyahu to quit and a placard described him as "Crime Minister."

Israeli police said they arrested seven protesters "on suspicion of violating public order and assaulting police officers."

Last week, Netanyahu announced a U.S.-brokered deal to normalize ties with the United Arab Emirates, making it the third Arab country to establish full relations with Israel. The historic breakthrough has not helped calm the demonstrations against him.

Netanyahu has rejected calls to step down while he is on trial and claimed the protests are the work of leftists and the media.

Israel appeared to contain the pandemic in its first phase last spring, but the quick reopening of the economy led to a spike in cases. Over 100,000 Israelis have tested positive for the virus. The pandemic has caused unemployment numbers to hover over 20 percent.

Netanyahu was charged last year with bribery, fraud and breach of trust in three long-running corruption investigations. In January, the trial will move to a witness phase with three sessions a week.

## In recordings, Trump's sister says president is 'phony, cruel'

U.S. President Donald Trump's older sister, a former federal judge, has been heard sharply criticizing her brother in a series of recordings, at one point saying the president "has no principles".

Maryanne Trump Barry was secretly recorded by her niece, Mary Trump, who recently released a book denouncing the president, Too Much and Never Enough: How My Family Created the World's Most Dangerous Man, al Jazeera reported.

Mary Trump said on Saturday she made the recordings in 2018 and 2019.

In one recording, Barry, 83, says she had heard a 2018 interview with her brother on Fox News in which he suggested that he would put her on the border to oversee cases of immigrant children separated from their parents.

"His base, I mean my God, if you were a religious person, you want to help people. Not do this," Barry says.

■ **Trump says: 'Who cares?'**

The recordings were first reported by The Washington Post. The Associated Press then obtained the recordings and published them on Saturday.

The recordings came to light just a day after the late Robert Trump, brother to Maryanne and the president, was memorialized in a service at the White House. Later, the president was dismissive of the recordings.

"Every day it's something else, who cares. I miss my brother, and I'll continue to work hard for the American people," Trump said in a statement. "Not everyone agrees, but the results are obvious. Our country will soon be stronger than ever before."

In the weeks since the release of Mary Trump's tell-all book, she has been questioned about the source of some of its information. Nowhere in the book does she say that she recorded conversations with her aunt. On Saturday, Mary Trump revealed that she had covertly taped 15 hours of face-to-face conversations with Barry.

"Mary realized members of her family had lied in prior depositions," said Chris Bastardi, a spokesman for Mary Trump.

He added: "Anticipating litigation, she felt it prudent to tape conversations in order to protect herself."

## Resistance News

### 4 Palestinians on hunger strike over their administrative detention

**INTERNATIONAL** **TEHRAN**— Four Palestinian prisoners have been on open-ended hunger strike for different periods in Israeli jails in protest at their administrative detention.

The detainees Maher al-Akhras, Mohammed Wahdan, Mousa Zahran, and Abed al-Rahman Sh'eibat have been on hunger strike in different Israeli jails for 27, 18, 16, and 3 days, respectively.

The four detainees, according to the Palestinian Prisoner Society, are protesting their detention administratively without charge or trial, but their calls have not been answered by the Israel Prison Service yet.

## Erdogan: Turkey will always support Palestinian cause

**INTERNATIONAL** **TEHRAN**— Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan in a phone call with the Palestinian Authority president Mahmoud Abbas on Saturday said that Turkey will always support the Palestinian people and their just cause.

According to statements by the Turkish president's office, Erdogan and Abbas discussed the bilateral relations and the latest developments in the Palestinian political arena during the phone call.

For his part, Abbas congratulated Erdogan and Turkey on the discovery of major natural gas reserves in the Black Sea and hailed Turkey's success as Palestine's success.

Later in the day Erdogan met with a Palestinian delegation from Hamas led by the head of the movement's political bureau Ismail Haneyya in Istanbul City.

The meeting was attended by senior Hamas and Turkish officials and addressed recent issues.

# Hezbollah downs Israeli drone over Lebanon

## Hezbollah ready to make sacrifices to defend Lebanon: Nasrallah

*By staff & agencies*

Lebanon's Hezbollah movement said it downed and seized an Israeli drone on Saturday that flew over the Blue Line that demarcates Israel's 2000 withdrawal from the country.

Hezbollah said its fighters downed the drone near the town of Aita al-Shaab.

The Israeli army said one of its drones «fell in Lebanese territory» during «operational activity along the Blue Line».

■ **Hezbollah ready to make sacrifices to defend Lebanon**

Hezbollah's secretary general has expressed the resistance movement's readiness to make sacrifices in order to defend Lebanon and protect its national interests, blasting the United States for warmongering against countries across the world.

Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah made the remarks during a televised speech late Saturday on the third night of the mourning month of Muharram.

He said that Hezbollah considers it a duty to defend Lebanon and the nation if they are attacked.

According to Islamic values, he added, it is obligatory to help all human beings regardless of their affiliations while geographical and political borders must never be a barrier in



this regard.

The Hezbollah chief also noted that supporting the Palestinian people and fighting Syria terrorist groups serve Lebanon's interests.

"It was Hezbollah's duty to fight Daesh

in Syria and Iraq in order to prevent it from achieving any victory and expanding [the so-called] caliphate into other regional countries," he said.

Nasrallah further emphasized that Hezbollah will never abandon delivering on its

## Omar al-Bashir a step closer to facing war crimes charges

Sudan's Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok has announced that the country is ready to cooperate with the International Criminal Court (ICC) so those accused of war crimes in Darfur appear before the tribunal, a list that includes deposed President Omar al-Bashir.

Al-Bashir, who has been in jail in Khartoum since he was toppled after mass protests last year, is wanted by the ICC for alleged war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity in Darfur in a conflict that killed an estimated 300,000 people beginning in 2003.

According to al Jazeera, the government reached a deal with rebel groups in February that all five Sudanese ICC suspects should appear before the court, but Hamdok had not previously publicly affirmed Sudan's position.



"I reiterate that the government is fully prepared to cooperate with the ICC to facilitate access to those accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity," Hamdok said in a televised address on the anniversary of his ascent to office on Saturday.

Al-Bashir has denied the allegations against him, and had escaped previous attempts to send him to The Hague tribunal.

## U.S. hands over base to Iraqi troops amid calls for withdrawal

U.S. troops and their allies have withdrawn from the Taji base north of Iraq's capital Baghdad and handed it over to Iraqi security forces.

The pullout took place on Sunday following several rocket attacks targeting the military base.

"The movement of coalition military personnel is part of a long-range plan coordinated with the government of Iraq," the U.S. military said in a statement, adding that the Taji base held up to 2,000 forces, most of whom departed this summer.

The remaining U.S. troops, it said, will depart in the coming days after finalizing the handing over of equipment to Iraqi security forces.

The U.S. military further said that Sunday's withdrawal was the eighth transfer of a foreign portion of an Iraqi base back to local forces.

Major General Tahseen al-Khafaji, the spokesperson for Iraq's joint operations, confirmed that the Taji base "was being used to train, prepare, and rehabilitate the Iraqis by Australian, New Zealand, and American forces."

"It will now be dedicated for the usage of the Iraqi security forces," he told the Iraqi News Agency.

Meanwhile, al-Dijlah TV reported that Taji's training sites had been handed over to the Iraqis and the remaining sites will follow as scheduled.

Anti-U.S. sentiment has been running high in Iraq since Washington assassinated top Iranian commander Qassem Soleimani and the second-in-command of the Iraqi popular mobilization units, Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, in January.



Following the attack, Iraqi lawmakers unanimously approved a bill on January 5, demanding the withdrawal of all foreign troops.

More than 17 years after the U.S. invasion of Iraq, President Donald Trump said Thursday the United States would eventually withdraw all American troops from the conflict-ridden nation, though he did not provide a timetable.

"At some point, we obviously will be gone," Trump said in his meeting with Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi. "We look forward to the day when we don't have to be there," he added before the two men met privately.

There are currently about 5,000 troops in Iraq. Their assignments include alleged counter-terrorism operations and training Iraqi security forces.

Throughout their battle with foreign-backed terrorists,

several Iraqi officials and military commanders came forth to reveal that U.S. troops were in fact assisting the terrorists.

Trump told reporters before his meeting with the Iraqi leader that the U.S. military had very few troops left in Iraq, but was there to help the country if neighboring Iran should do anything.

He said U.S. companies were involved in many prospects in Iraq's oil business, as al-Kadhimi declared his country open for American businesses and investment.

Al-Kadhimi took office in May amid growing tensions between the United States and Iraq.

According to Press TV, Iraq's government objected to the Trump-authorized drone strike in January while Gen. Soleimani was visiting Baghdad.

The assassination inflamed anti-American sentiment in Iraq and prompted calls for the withdrawal of U.S. troops.

Trump threatened Iraq with sanctions if the country's leaders followed through on threats to expel U.S. forces over the drone strike.

Armed Iraqi factions on Thursday threatened to target U.S. interests in the country after Trump declined to give a timetable for U.S. withdrawal from Iraq during an Oval Office meeting with al-Kadhimi.

A statement issued by armed groups calling themselves the "Resistance Factions" criticized the agenda of al-Kadhimi's meetings which did not include the immediate implementation of the decision to remove U.S. troops from the country.

"Al-Kadhimi must make the implementation of the decision of the Iraqi people his top priority," the statement said.



and deputy head of the Taliban.

Many Taliban leaders, including those heading the much-feared Haqqani network, have lived in Pakistan since the 1980s. In those years they were part of the Afghan mujahedeen and allies of the US to end the 10-year invasion by the former Soviet Union. It ended in February, 1989.

## Yemen warns Saudi-led coalition of 'great pain' amid escalation in bombardments

Yemen has warned the Saudi-led coalition waging war on the country of "great [im-pending] pain," as the aggressor countries ramp up their strikes.

Yemeni Defense Minister Major General Mohammad Nasser al-Atifi said Yemen's allied defense forces were prepared to take their counterstrikes to the "stage of great pain" for the aggressor countries, Yemen's al-Masirah television network reported on Saturday.

"The countries of the aggression are the ones who started this war on our country, and if it continues, we will control the end of this war," Atifi said.

The Saudi-led coalition invaded Yemen in March 2015 to subdue a popular uprising that had toppled a Riyadh-friendly regime. The major aggressor countries are Saudi Arabia itself and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The United States provides intelligence and logistical assistance, including with the provision of advanced weaponry.

The Yemeni minister said, "We are in an advanced stage of readiness, capable of confronting the technology of aggression" and negating its effects.

■ **Saudi-led escalation**

Al-Masirah also reported on Saturday that the Saudi-led coalition had carried out as many as 42 new air raids in Yemen's northern al-Jawf and Ma'rib Provinces over the previous 24 hours.

The invaders also struck Sa'ada Province — which is situated to the west of al-Jawf — twice during that same period.

Yemen's Liaison and Coordination Officers' Operations Room also said that the aggressor countries had committed 79 violations of a ceasefire for the vital port city of al-Huday-

dah in the west within the same time span.

The operation room monitors an agreement reached in Stockholm in 2018 that obliges the Saudi-led coalition to stop its attacks against Yemen and respect a ceasefire for Hudaydah.

■ **Yemen fights back**

Amid the escalation, the Yemeni defense forces successfully thwarted an attempted advance by the coalition in the southwestern al-Dhale Province, fighting off the invaders for seven straight hours and killing and injuring dozens of them.

A spokesman for the Saudi-led forces, Turki al-Maliki, said the Yemeni forces had launched drone and missile counterstrikes against Saudi Arabia, and he claimed one explosives-laden aerial vehicle traveling toward Saudi Arabia's southwestern Jizan region had been downed on Sunday.

■ **Daesh ringleader in Yemen killed**

Separately, the Yemeni military said it had delivered a heavy blow to Saudi-backed terrorists during a recent operation in the southwestern al-Bayda Province, Press TV reported.

The operation killed Daesh's ringleader in Yemen, Abu Walid al-Adani, alongside four other ranking members of the terrorist group, al-Masirah said.

The network identified the others as Adani's administrative officer, the outfit's "security chief," and "head of finance," as well as one of the founders of the terrorist outfit in the country.

Spokesman for the Yemeni Armed Forces Brigadier General Yahya Saree had on Friday said the al-Bayda operation targeted "al-Qa-eda and Daesh [terrorists], who enjoyed the support of the Saudi-led coalition."

## U.S. Protests: Riot cops face off with protesters in Louisiana after police shoot & kill black man

➔ **1** The officers involved in the shooting were placed on administrative leave as the Louisiana State Police conducts an investigation, in coordination with local community leaders,

while interim Police Chief Scott Morgan promised to "do whatever we can as far as transparency goes."

In the meantime, activists organized a vigil and protest

at the scene of the shooting on Saturday, while the American Civil Liberties Union of Louisiana called the incident a "murder" and "brutal killing."



# Hamid Sourian, gentleman of wrestling, turns 35

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — To win a gold medal is a great - maybe the greatest - achievement for an athlete in his sporting career but just some of them manage to do it. Hamid Sourian is one of them.

Sourian had won five gold medals at the World Championships, before winning a gold medal at the 2012 Olympic Games. Two years later, he added one more gold to his five previous gold at the World Championships.

The 55 kg Greco-Roman wrestler defeated Azerbaijani Rovshan Bayramov in the final to win his first ever gold at the Olympics.

Sourian, nicknamed "The Genius", was a member of Iran Greco-Roman team who claimed three gold medals in London.

Sourian will become 35 today. Iran wrestling will be proud of the Greco-Roman wrestler.

He also is a candidate for the 2020 United World Wrestling Bureau elections.

There are seven positions up for re-election in 2020, including six seats on the



Bureau and the position of UWW President. Five incumbents have submitted their candidacy for re-election while nine new candidacies have been received for

Bureau positions. Successful candidates serve a six-year term on the Bureau.

Elections were scheduled to be held on 6 September 2020 during the Or-

dinary Congress planned on the eve of the 2020 Junior World Wrestling Championships in Belgrade.

On May 5, Aleksandr Karelin posted a photo of Sourian on his Instagram page, wishing him success by writing: "You are the best and I wish you the best in the last 2016 Olympic Qualification Tournament. Believe you can and you will."

On May 7, Sourian finished first in the tournament and secured his ticket for Rio.

On the 14th of August, he was defeated by Shinobu Ota from Japan in the round of 32. Although leading by 4-0 in the first half of the bout, his energy quickly depleted in the second half and he was defeated by 5-6 in the end. His next match was against Almat Kebispayev from Kazakhstan in the repechage round. Again, he was comfortably in the lead by 7-0 in the first half and then only needed one point for victory in the second, but his energy levels dropped towards the end and he lost the bout. This was his last appearance in Rio and his tournament was brought to a surprising end.

## Payam Heydari to referee Hazfi Cup semis

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — The Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) announced that Payam Heydari will referee the 2020 Hazfi Cup semi-final between Esteghlal and Persepolis.

The match will be played at the Azadi Stadium in Tehran on Wednesday at 19:00 local time.

The 34-year-old referee has been an international referee since 2015 and an elite referee since 2016.

The football federation had already announced that Mohammad Hossein Zahedifar would officiate the match but changed the decision.

Further, in the other match of the Hazfi



Cup semis, Tractor will host Naft Masjed Soleyman in Tabriz on Tuesday.

For the match in Tabriz, Koopal Nazemi will be the referee and his assistants will be Mohamadreza Mansouri and Arman Asadi.

## Luka Bonacic parts company with Zob Ahan

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Luca Bonacic left Iranian football club Zob Ahan after eight matches in charge.

Bonacic was named as Isfahan-based team head coach in late June until the end of Iran Professional League (IPL) season.

Under stewardship of the Croat, Zob Ahan earned two wins and two draws and suffered four losses.

Bonacic's main task was to avoid Zob Ahan from relegation and managed to do the big task.

He had replaced Miodrag Radulovic in Zob Ahan after the Montenegrin coach didn't return to Iran due to coronavirus fears.

Bonacic had already worked in Zob Ahan in 2012-13 season.



Naft Masjed Soleyman coach Mehdi Tartar is a candidate to replace Bonacic in Zob Ahan.

Bonacic has worked in many Iranian teams including Sepahan, Foolad, Mes and Gostaresh.

## Murray makes winning return at eerie Western and Southern Open

Andy Murray claimed a hardfought 7-6(6) 3-6 6-1 first-round win over American Frances Tiafoe at the Western and Southern Open on Saturday, as the ATP Tour made a jarring return from a five-month COVID-19 hiatus.

From a tournament normally played in Cincinnati but moved to New York because of the coronavirus pandemic to masked ball boys and girls, there was very little normal about the return of professional men's tennis.

With no spectators allowed into the sprawling Billie Jean King National Tennis Center, matches were played in eerie silence under the shadow of the massive Arthur Ashe Stadium that will be centerstage when the U.S. Open starts on Aug. 31.

Working his way back to match fitness after undergoing a second hip surgery in January, Murray got his first tournament of 2020 off to a positive start by surviving a near two-hour, 30-minute challenge from Tiafoe to reach the second round where a sterner test awaits in fifth seed Alexander Zverev.

"My goal is to come in and my hip to be feeling good," said three-times Grand Slam champion Murray.

"That's what I wanted so I don't mind how much tennis I get to play, I know that will come the practice, the more matches I get but the concern for me is my hip



going to be well enough," the 33-year-old Briton added.

If Murray's game showed rust, his battling instincts remained sharp, particularly in the first set tiebreak when he trailed 5-2 before fighting back to take control.

Tiafoe secured his only break to go up 5-4 in the second on the way to leveling the match but Murray, twice Western and Southern champion, broke the young American at

the first opportunity in the third and closed out victory.

Canadian 12th seed Denis Shapovalov showed little rust in his first tournament since February as he reeled off nine aces to dispose of 2016 champion Marin Cilic 6-3 6-3.

With the win, Shapovalov, who faced just one break point over the course of the contest, improved his head-to-head record against the Croatian to 3-1.

Big-serving Canadian Milos Raonic fired 19 aces to topple Sam Querrey 6-4 6-4 and set up a second-round clash with either Dan Evans or Russian 10th seed Andre Rublev.

Women's play began with a rematch of the Shenzhen final in January and another upset as Russia's Ekaterina Alexandrova topped ninth seed Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan 7-5 7-6(6).

Croatian 15th seed Donna Vekic was also a first-round casualty, falling 6-2 6-3 to twice Australian Open champion Victoria Azarenka of Belarus.

The tournament also lost one of its marquee names when 13th-seeded Greek Maria Sakkari dispatched Coco Gauff 6-1 6-3 to spoil the 16-year-old American's Western and Southern debut.

(Source: Reuters)

## West Asia Wrap: Al Duhail crowned in Qatar, Al Hilal go down in Saudi Arabia

Al Duhail secured the 2019-20 Qatar Stars League title on Friday, edging Al Rayyan to the crown by just one point.

In Saudi Arabia, the winning streak of 2019 AFC Champions League winners Al Hilal came to an end, allowing Al Nassr to narrow the gap at the top of the Saudi Pro League standings.

Al Kuwait SC maintained their position at the top of the Kuwait Premier League while matches in Jordan and Bahrain were suspended after several players contracted COVID-19.

■ **Qatar: Al Duhail crowned on exciting final day**

Al Duhail claimed their seventh Qatar Stars League title on Friday after defeating Al Ahli 1-0 in the last round of matches, finishing on 52 points in a season ravaged by COVID-19.

Brazilian forward Edmilson Junior scored in the 24th minute to give Al Duhail their

16th victory of the season.

Al Rayyan, who were hoping for Al Duhail to stumble against Al Ahli, defeated Al Wakra 2-0 thanks to goals from Algerian forward Yacine Brahimi and Argentinean defender Gabriel Mercado.

Last year's champions Al Sadd finished third as they shared a 1-1 draw with Al Gharafa, who finished fourth.

■ **Saudi Arabia: Al Hilal SFC suffer defeat**

Saudi Pro League pacesetters Al Hilal SFC were shocked 2-1 by Al Ahli, a result which narrowed their lead to six points with four matches remaining.

Syrian forward Omar Al Soma gave Al Ahli the lead after five minutes but Ali Al Bulaihi leveled the tie in the 62nd minute but Abdulfattah Asiri ensured Al Ahli had the final say with his winner 16 minutes from time.

Al Nassr defeated Al Taawoun 4-1 thanks



to a hat-trick from Moroccan forward Abderrazak Hamdallah who took his season-tally to 23 goals.

■ **Kuwait: Al Kuwait SC remain top despite draw**

Leaders Al Kuwait SC needed a penalty to secure a point in their entertaining 2-2 draw with Al Arabi in the top match of this week's Kuwait Premier League.

Al Qadsia reduced the gap at the top to one point after defeating Al Salmiya 3-2, with Palestinian forward Odai Dabbagh scoring a brace and Bader Al Mutawa striking the

winning goal with 11 minutes left on the clock.

Elsewhere, Al Nasr registered a surprise 1-0 win against fourth placed Kazma, Al Shabab got a point from their 2-2 draw with Al Tadhamon while Al Yarmouk and Al Sahel settled for a 1-1 result.

■ **Jordan: League suspended due to COVID-19 outbreak**

Jordan Football Association announced on Thursday the suspension of the Jordan Premier League matches for 14 days after several players from defending champions Al Faisaly tested positive for COVID-19.

Earlier on Thursday, Al Hussein reduced the gap with league pacesetters Al Wahdat to only one point as they edged Al Salt 2-1 thanks to a brace from Senegalese forward Mickel Toure.

In other matches, Shabab Al Ordon shared a 1-1 draw with Ma'an while Al Ahli had a goalless stalemate with Sahab.

(Source: AFC)

## Ramin Rezaeian joins Al Duhail

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iranian international winger Ramin Rezaeian joined Qatari giants Al Duhail.

The 30-year-old player has penned a two-year contract with Al Duhail for an undisclosed fee.



Al Duhail claimed their seventh QNB Stars League (QSL) on Friday.

Rezaeian scored 13 goals for Al Shahania in the 2019-20 QSL campaign.

The ex-Persepolis player will meet his former team in the AFC Champions League group stage.

Rezaeian was a member of Iran national football team in the 2018 FIFA World Cup.

He also represented Iran at the 2019 AFC Asian Cup.

## Aris Thessaloniki move a step closer to Hajsafi deal

Aris Thessaloniki football club have moved a significant step closer to signing of Iran international midfielder Ehsan Hajsafi.

Local media have reported that the 30-year-old player and the Greek team have reached a final agreement for the upcoming season.

He will accompany Tractor in Hazfi Cup semifinal against Naft Masjed Soleyman scheduled for Tuesday. Haj Safi will be eligible to join Aris at the end of Hazfi Cup's competitions.

He joined Tractor in 2018 and has scored eight goals in 45 matches for the Iranian top-flight football team.

Hajsafi has already played at Panionios and Olympiacos.

He represented Iran at the 2014 and 2018 FIFA World Cups and also 2011, 2015 and 2019 AFC Asian Cup tournaments, in addition to Sepahan at the 2007 FIFA Club World Cup.

(Source: SDI.gr)

## Charleroi, Younes Delfi to part way

Iranian forward Younes Delfi will leave Belgian football team Charleroi.

The Iranian rising star Delfi joined the Belgian First Division A in January 2019 from Esteghlal Khuzestan but was not in the starting lineup for most of the season.

Delfi wished the Zebras good luck on his instagram account.

"I wish the team and the players all the best. I can't stay here this year, I have to change (club) and I wanted to say good luck to you," Younes Delfi said on his Instagram account.

The 19-year-old Iranian played six matches for Charleroi and scored only one goal.

He represented Iran at the 2017 FIFA U-17 World Cup in India. Delfi burst onto the scene by recording two goals and one assist in the group stages of the competition.

He also showed phenomenal technical ability by also getting two penalties for the Iran U-17 national team in the three group matches.

His Iranian countrymen Ali Gholizadeh and Kaveh Rezaei will play in the Belgian team.

(Source: dhnet.be reported)

## Kaveh Rezaei scores as Charleroi beat Leuven

**Tasnim** — Iranian forward Kaveh Rezaei scored for Charleroi in the match against Leuven on Saturday.

Charleroi defeated their hosts 3-1 and went top of the Belgian Pro League with nine points from three matches. Dorian Dessoile gave the visiting team a lead after just six minutes but Xavier Mercier levelled the score in the 34th minute.

Mamadou Fall scored Charleroi's second goal in the 49th minute but was sent off just after the hour mark.

With 10 minutes remaining, Rezaei made it 3-1 after receiving a pass from his fellow countryman Ali Gholizadeh.

## Zenit striker Azmoun scores against Tambov

**Tasnim** — Iranian international forward Sardar Azmoun scored against Tambov in a match Zenit won 4-1.

In the match, held in Saint Petersburg's Krestovsky Stadium, Douglas Santos opened the scoring for the host in the 41st minute and Malcom made it 2-0 two minutes after the break.

Aleksandr Yerokhin scored Zenit's third goal in the 68th minute and Azmoun was on target in the 74th minute.

With five minutes remaining, Kirill Panchenko scored a consolation goal for the visiting team.

Title holders Zenit sit top of the Russian Premier League (RPL) table with four wins out of four matches.

## Ineos withdraw from Italian Nationals after positive COVID-19 test

Team Ineos withdrew its squad from the Italian National Championship as a precaution after one of its riders tested positive for the new coronavirus, the British cycling team said on Saturday.

Ineos said in a statement that Leonardo Basso, 26, had tested positive on Saturday and showed no symptoms of COVID-19.

Filippo Ganna, Salvatore Puccio and Gianni Moscon,

who went on training rides with Basso, will also self-isolate for two weeks, as will four staff members who are considered secondary contacts, Ineos said.

"Although they have been in contact with the riders wearing masks, observing social distancing and other protocols, the Team believes this to be a prudent precaution," Ineos said.

"We will also support Leo with any contact tracing with

any friends and family as appropriate over the coming period."

None of the four are part of Ineos's squad for the Tour de France, which begins on Aug. 29 in Nice. Four-time Tour de France champion Chris Froome and 2018 winner Geraint Thomas were also omitted from the team's squad for the 2020 edition.

(Source: Reuters)



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■ Managing Director: Mohammad Shojaeian  
■ Editor-in-Chief: Ali A.Jenabzadeh

» Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895  
editor@tehrantimes.com

» Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000

» Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051430

» Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807

» Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603

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Zip Code: 1599814713

GUIDE TO  
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Be steadfast and firm in the way toward what is right, even if your journey is full of pain and challenges.

Imam Hussein (AS)

## Coronavirus domino effect: Resistance filmfest to go online

→1 “Organizing a successful online festival will provide us with a valuable experience to pursue such a method in upcoming editions of the festival in the post-coronavirus world, given that organizing an online festival is more economical,” Ahad Mikailzadeh, the director the Media Department of the festival, said.

“Fully exploiting the potential of the virtual and media environment in the online version will help the organizers improve the quality of the festival,” he added.

In appreciation of the medical workers’ efforts on the front lines of the campaign against COVID-19, the festival has initiated a category titled “Health Defenders” in collaboration with the Health Ministry.

Films focusing on the endeavors health workers have made during the pandemic will be competing in this section.

Over 370 movies from around the world have so far been submitted to this section.

This year for the first time, the organizers plan to honor an innovative filmmaker with an award named after the Iranian war film director, Rasul Mollaqaolipur.

“The Rasul Award has been launched in memory of Rasul Mollaqaolipur in order to encourage directors to introduce innovations in their films on the Islamic Revolution and the Sacred Defense,” they have said.

Earlier in July, they said that the festival has been warmly welcomed internationally as they have received 1260 submissions from filmmakers in Central America, South America, Europe, Asia and Africa.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected several major film events.

The Fajr International Film Festival, Iran’s major film event that is organized every year in April, was first postponed and then canceled amid the growing concern over the new virus.

The organizers of the 33rd Isfahan International Film Festival for Children and Youth, and the 14th edition of the Cinema VÉRITÉ, Iran’s major international festival for documentary films, has recently announced that the events will be organized entirely online due to a rise in coronavirus cases in the country over the past month.

In addition, Cinema Organization of Iran director Hossein Entezami has recently announced that the organization is searching for a safe platform to organize the Fajr Film Festival online if the pandemic continues until February 2021.

## Persian translation of “All Quiet on the Western Front” republished

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** — The eighth Persian edition of **d e s k** “All Quiet on the Western Front”, written by German veteran of World War I Erich Maria Remarque, has recently been published by Elmi Farhangji in Tehran.

The publisher had released the first edition of the book translated into Persian by Sirus Tajbakhsh in 1967.

The book describes the German soldiers’ extreme physical and mental stress during the war, and the detachment from civilian life felt by many of these soldiers upon returning home from the front.

The novel was first published in November and December 1928 in the German newspaper Vossische Zeitung and in book form in late January 1929.

The book and its sequel, “The Road Back” (1930), were among the books banned and burned in Nazi Germany. “All Quiet on the Western Front” sold 2.5 million copies in 22 languages in its first 18 months in print.

In 1930, the book was adapted as an Academy-Award-winning film of the same name, directed by Lewis Milestone.

It was adapted again in 1979 by Delbert Mann, this time as a television film starring Richard Thomas and Ernest Borgnine.

The story of the book is set in 1914 in a room full of German schoolboys, fresh-faced and idealistic, who are goaded by their schoolmaster to troop off to the “glorious war.” With the fire and patriotism of youth they sign up. What follows is the moving story of a young “unknown soldier” experiencing the horror and disillusionment of life in the trenches.

Another Persian translation of the novel by Reza Julai was published by Juya Publication in Tehran in 2019.



# Nine Iranian movies to compete in 60th Zlin Film Festival

By Manijeh Rezapoor

**TEHRAN** — A lineup of nine Iranian movies will be competing in the 60th Zlin Film Festival running in the Czech city from September 4 to 14.

The festival will bring 300 films from 50 countries including 158 premieres, as well as 37 film workshops, and a supporting program.

Three films “Son-Mother”, “Blue Girl” and “The Ocean behind the Window” will be screened in the Panorama section, while “The Eleventh Step”, “Jebeer” and “Coward Ghost” will be competing in the International Competition of Short Animated Films for Children section.

In addition, “Gando”, “Howling” and “Raya” will be competing in the International Competition of Student Films section.

“Son-Mother” by director Mahnaz Mohammadi is about Leila, a widow who works tirelessly at a factory that is failing due to the U.S.-imposed sanctions. She receives a marriage proposal that could mean financial security, but could also tear apart her family.

Starring Maryam Bubani, Raha Khodayari and Shiva Ordui, the film is a co-production between Iran and Czech.

“Blue Girl” by Keivan Majidi centers on a



A scene from “Blue Girl” by Keivan Majidi.

remote village between the rocky mountains in Kurdistan, where everyone is in love with football, but there is no level field upon which to play the game. The children decide to climb up the mountain in order to find somewhere to play the game.

“The Ocean behind the Window” by Babak

Nabizadeh is about the teenage Borhan who lives on a little-known, remote island.

Borhan wants to relieve the hardship by promoting the island to tourists. He gathers a group of islanders and holds a carnival of traditional music and theater. Life on the island starts to improve as more and more

tourists come to visit. However, an unexpected problem is on its way.

“The Eleventh Step” by Maryam Kashkulinia is about a little lion cub who was born in a zoo, and lives in a cage that is only ten steps long. But one day the zookeeper leaves the cage door open.

“Jebeer” by Reyhaneh Mirhashemi shows a park ranger who patrols a national park, and his soul is intertwined with nature and all the creatures he protects.

“Coward Ghost” by Reyhaneh Kavosh focuses on a ghost who walks sad and alone in a forest until he meets a little girl who is surprisingly not afraid of him.

“Gando” by Teymour Qaderi is about Hawa who lost her right hand while going for water. Gando the crocodile is to blame. But the locals believe that where Gando is, there’s water.

“Howling” by Parsa Bozorgani shows when the Internet exploded with a video of a man cruelly killing a dog, no one was charged for it. Now it is an interview with the killer himself.

“Raya” by Sepide Berenji is about Raya who doesn’t want to move with her parents. She tries to find a solution. This is a sensitive look into the life and mind of a 9-year-old girl.

## Iran’s We Defeat Coronavirus Intl. Cartoon Contest announces finalists



A cartoon by Agenor Bottene Neto from Brazil.

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — The organizers of Iran’s **d e s k** We Defeat Coronavirus International Cartoon Contest has released the list of the 47 finalists, 15 of whom are Iranians.

The finalists included Abdullah Ibnu Thalbah and Armen Hamonangan from Indonesia, Agenor Bottene Neto, Bruno Luup, Cau Gomez and Dalcio Machado from Brazil, Ares from Cuba, Costel Patrascan from Romania, Darko Drljevic from Montenegro and Dmytro Skazheny from Ukraine.

The Iranian cartoonists include Ali Radmand, Ali Rastoo, Alireza Pakdel, Mehdi Akbari, Mahmud Azadnia, Mahnaz Yazdani, Majid Amini, Mansureh Dehqani and Mehdi Azizi.

Turkish cartoonist Eray Ozbek has presided over the international jury, which is composed of cartoonists Spiro Radulovic from Serbia, Nikola Vorontsov from Russia, Liuyi

Wang from China and Marcio Leite from Brazil.

The jury for the national section consists of Mohammad-Hossein Nirumand, Bahram Azimi, Masud Shojaei-Tabatabai and Salman Mohazzabieh.

The contest is being organized by Iran’s Art Bureau in collaboration with the Health Ministry.

Masud Shojaei-Tabatabai, the director of the Art Bureau’s Visual Arts Office, has said that out of all the submissions, about 2000 cartoons were showcased for 28 days on irancartoon.ir, which was visited by 1,340,000 people.

Iran participated in the contest with 436 cartoonists standing on top. Turkey came in next with 82 artists, and then India with 75, Indonesia with 70, Brazil with 48 and Russia with 30.

The organizers have not yet released an exact date for the closing day and awards ceremony.

## Movies from Iran line up for Tirana festival

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Six movies **d e s k** by Iranian filmmakers will be screened at the 18th Tirana International Film Festival, which will take place in the Albanian capital from September 19 to 25.

Short films “Exam” by Sonia Haddad, “Subjection” by Alireza Mirzai, “The Lock” by Ali Javan and “Witness” by Ali Asgari have been selected to be screened in the Live Action category.

“Exam” is about a teenage girl who gets involved in the process of delivering a pack of cocaine to a client, and gets stuck in a weird cycle of occurrences.

In “Subjection”, armed men take a prisoner into the desert. One of them traces the lines of a cell around the prisoner on the sand. The armed men go away. The prisoner is



A poster for “Subjection” by Alireza Mirzai.

alone and unrestrained: what will he do?

“Talker” by Mehrshad Ranjbar is scheduled to compete in the Student film section. The movie is about an old woman who has kept her sick husband for many years until one day this habit ends.

“White Winged Horse” by Mahyar Mandegar will be screened in the New World, a non-competitive section,

It tells the story of a man who returns to his Iranian hometown, which was destroyed in the war 20 years ago. He is searching for his childhood sweetheart who had promised him eternal love.

Farnush Samadi, director of the acclaimed Iranian short “Gaze”, has been selected for the jury of the short film competition.

The U.S.-based Iranian filmmaker Taqi

Amirani’s “Coups 53” will be screened in the Documentary competition.

While making a documentary about the Anglo-American coup in Iran in 1953, Amirani and editor Walter Murch (“Apocalypse Now”, “The Godfather”, “The English Patient”) discover never-seen-before archive material hidden for decades. The 16mm footage and documents not only allow the filmmakers to tell the story of the overthrow of the Iranian government in unprecedented detail, but also lead to explosive revelations about dark British secrets buried for 66 years.

What begins as a history documentary about 4 days in August 1953 turns into a live investigation, taking the filmmakers into uncharted cinematic waters. “Coups 53” is Amirani’s debut feature.

## Badrozzaman Qarib Museum opens at Academy of Persian Language and Literature

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** — A museum and library **d e s k** has been established named after Persian language and literature scholar, writer and linguist Badrozzaman Qarib at the Academy of Persian Language and Literature.

The museum is actually Qarib’s office in the academy where she was a permanent member and includes a number of her awards, family photos, letters and memorabilia.

Her personal library, which is home to a collection of rare books on ancient languages as well as her documents and personal writings, has also been situated at the central library of the academy next to other scholars’ collections.

The museum was due to open on the birthday anniversary of Qarib in her presence on August 22, but unfortunately, the scholar died last month on July 28.

Badrozzaman Qarib died at the age of 91 apparently of COVID19. Qarib was famous for her research work on a dictionary of the Sogdian language.

Born in 1929, Qarib got her Ph.D. in ancient languages from the University of Pennsylvania. She was a graduate of Persian literature from the University of Tehran.



Badrozzaman Qarib cuts her birthday cake in a celebration held at the Academy of Persian Language and Literature in an undated photo. The director of the academy, Gholam-Ali Haddad-Adel (L) is also seen in the photo.

She had studied Persian and history with great scholars such as Mohammad Moin, Ehsan Yarshater and Ebrahim

## “Harry Potter: A History of Magic” comes to Iranian bookstores

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** — A new **d e s k** Persian translation of “Harry Potter: A History of Magic” published by the British Library has been published by Tands Publishing House in Tehran.

The book has been translated into Persian by Vida Eslemieh.

“Harry Potter: A History of Magic” is the official book of the exhibition, a once-in-a-lifetime collaboration between Bloomsbury, J.K. Rowling and the brilliant curators of the British Library.

It promises to take readers on a fascinating journey through the subjects studied at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry

— from Alchemy and Potions classes through to Herbology and Care of Magical Creatures.

Each chapter showcases a treasure trove of artifacts from the British Library and other collections around the world, beside exclusive manuscripts, sketches and illustrations from the Harry Potter archive.

There’s also a specially commissioned essay for each subject area by an expert, writer or cultural commentator, inspired by the contents of the exhibition — absorbing, insightful and unexpected contributions from Steve Backshall, the Reverend Richard Coles, Owen Davies, Julia Eccleshare, Roger Highfield, Steve Kloves, Lucy Mangan, Anna

Pavord and Tim Peake, who offer a personal perspective on their magical theme.

Readers will be able to pore over ancient spell books, amazing illuminated scrolls that reveal the secret of the Elixir of Life, vials of dragon’s blood, mandrake roots, painted centaurs and a genuine witch’s broomstick, in a book that shows J.K. Rowling’s magical inventions alongside their cultural and historical forebears.

This is the ultimate gift for Harry Potter fans, curious minds, big imaginations, bibliophiles and readers around the world who missed out on the chance to see the exhibition in person.



Front cover of the Persian translation of “Harry Potter: A History of Magic” published by Tands Publishing House in Tehran.