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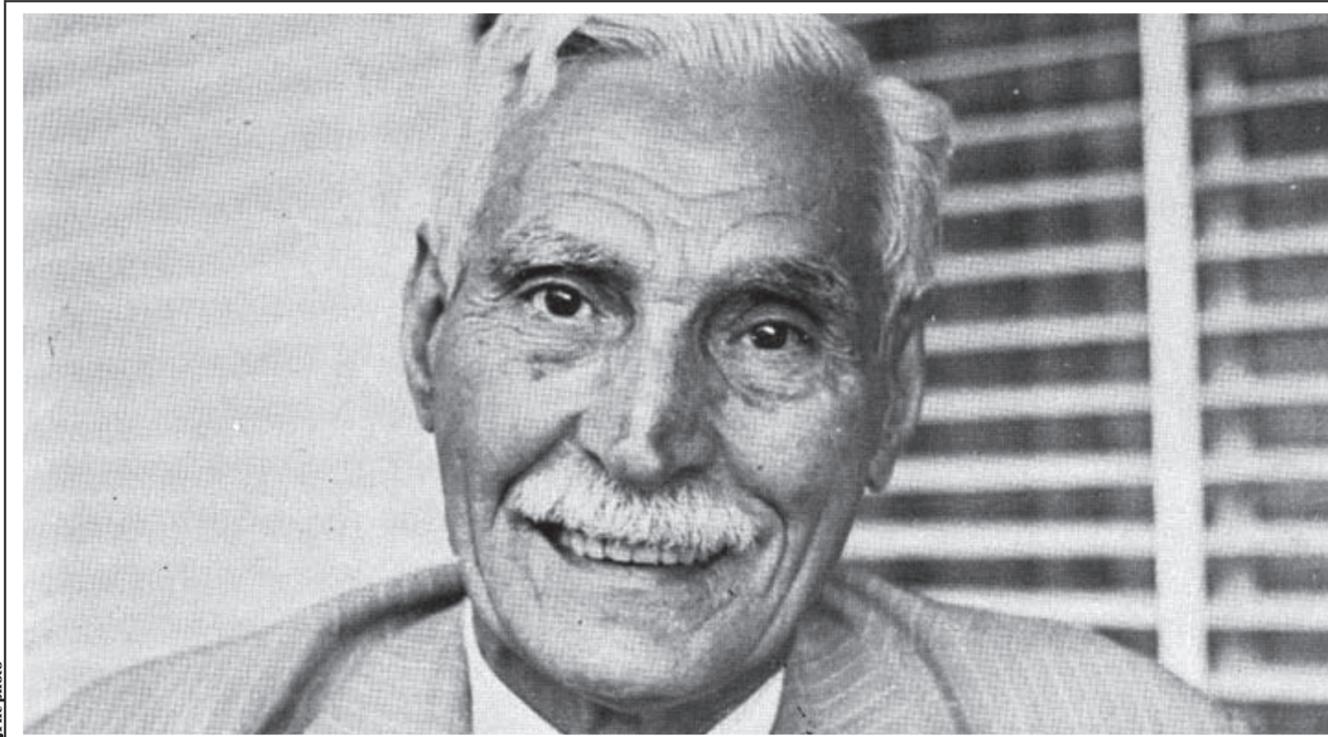
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Ayatollah Khamenei outlines strategy to nullify sanctions

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© File photo

Hamas advises Saudi Arabia not to stand at Israel's side

BY MOHAMMAD MAZHARI
TEHRAN – Hamas spokesman says that the normalization of ties with Israel harms the leadership in countries that support this process, calling on Saudi Arabia not to stand on enemies' side.
In an interview with the Tehran Times, Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem notes that the resistance movement wants to strengthen the Arab position

and not to undermine it.
He emphasizes that the establishment of relation with Israel "harms the leadership of countries that support this process."
"We call on Saudi Arabia not to submit to pressure and it must not stand on the enemies' side, and we hope that Saudis stand beside the Palestinian people and cause," Qassem suggests.
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Iran, Qatar ink co-op MOU in 7th joint economic committee meeting

TEHRAN – Iran and Qatar signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for cooperation in a variety of areas at the end of the two countries' seventh Joint Economic Committee meeting which was held in Isfahan on Tuesday.
Based on this MOU, the two sides are going to cooperate in forming a joint trade working group between the two countries, establishing trade centers between the private sectors of the two sides, establishing commercial affiliates in the embassies of

the two countries in Tehran and Doha, and using the ports of the two countries to boost the export and import of goods.
As reported by IRNA, the event which was attended by Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian and Qatar's Minister of Commerce and Industry Ali bin Ahmed Al Kuwari as the chairs of the committee was the first meeting of the two countries' Joint Economic Committee held after the coronavirus pandemic in Iran.
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Teacher of 'silent flowers': in memory of Baghcheban

TEHRAN – November 25 is the anniversary of the death of Mirza Jabbar Asgarzadeh, a compassionate teacher who was the founder of the first school for deaf children.
Known as Baghcheban (literally meaning gardener in Persian), he was really the teacher of 'silent flowers'.
He is famed for establishing the first modern kindergarten in Iran and the

first school for deaf children in the city of Tabriz in 1924. He was also the inventor of the Persian language cued speech.
He was born in Urmia, northwest West Azarbaijan province, but in early childhood, he traveled to Yerevan, Armenia.
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National budget bill: how much oil income is forecast?

BY EBRAHIM FALLAHI
Iran's Planning and Budget Organization (PBO) has handed over the draft of the national budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year (starts on March 21, 2021) to the government for review.

Currently, President Hassan Rouhani's cabinet is holding meetings for reviewing the bill which is expected to be presented to the parliament (Majlis) by December 2.
Considering the recent efforts made by the Iranian government for distancing the economy from its long-lasting reliance on oil revenues for drafting the country's budget bill, and also considering the recent developments in the White House, a major question that comes to mind regarding the recently drafted budget bill is the amount of oil revenues provisioned and the places in which they are going to be spent.

Like the previous years, President Rouhani has said that the main goal of the national budget bill for the next year is also to downsize the government and cut the direct dependence on oil incomes.

"The 1400 budget bill is formulated in the framework of the general plan to reform the budget structure, general policies of the resistance economy, with long-term growth approaches by focusing on non-oil exports, actively countering the outbreak of coronavirus and reducing its negative economic effects, accelerate the completion of production assets acquisition plans, improving the business environment, paying attention to people's livelihoods with the priority of basic goods and developing a model of public-private partnership", the president said in a session of the Resistance Economy Headquarters earlier this month.

So clearly, the government is still following its major strategies for cutting off the reliance on oil incomes and moving toward the promotion and development of non-oil exports and domestic production, yet still, the questions regarding the amount and the application of the oil revenues beg some answer.

Oil revenues
In the released version of the national budget bill, the PBO did not clearly determine a figure for the country's oil incomes for the next Iranian calendar year and in drafting the budget bill the figures regarding the oil incomes were still left blank.

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3rd Sculpture Symposium of Iranian Luminaries kicks off

TEHRAN – The 3rd edition of the Sculpture Symposium of Iranian Luminaries opened during a ceremony streamed live online on Monday evening.

This year's symposium, which will run until December 15, has put its focus on contemporary Iranian scientists.

Sculptures of 21 scientists will be created by 21 sculptors during the event, which is being organized by the Tehran Municipality's Beautification Organization and the National Sculpture Symposium of Iranian Luminaries.

The director of the organization, Barzin Zarghami, a number of his colleagues and the participating sculptors attended the ceremony.

Speaking at the ceremony, Zarghami said that he is happy to have been able to hold the third edition of the symposium, however, he regretted the fact that when the busts created in the second edition of the symposium were situated in the

courtyard of the Iranian Artists Forum in Tehran, some began to complain that the busts are not similar to the luminaries, insulting the sculptors.

"We know when something is created, it could be very good, good or even weak, but some began to give non-professional comments, which were offensive," he said.

He added, "I ask the sculptors to be in contact with those personalities whose sculptures are being made if they are alive, of course while observing health protocols, and if not alive, there would be a chance to meet with their families in order to make their sculptures more similar to the individuals."

Member of the policymaking council of the symposium, Hossein Ali-Asgari next said that the sculptors were asked to present models of the busts they are going to make in advance to better select and judge the works.

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U.S. protests: Trump rally filled less than a third of Arena

Turnout for President Donald Trump's rally in Tulsa was just under 6,200 people, a spokesman for the city's fire department said. That's far fewer than the over 19,000-seat capacity at the BOK Center. The Trump campaign blamed "radical protesters" for blocking entrances and causing the cancellation of an earlier outdoor Trump speech, though there was little evidence the 100 or so protesters outside the arena had actually stopped anyone.

Trump at the rally ramped up his criticism of the protests that have broken out after the death of George Floyd on May 25, a day after warning against "protesters, anarchists, agitators, looters or lowlifes" who might plan to converge on Tulsa.

The president called Democrat Joe Biden a "puppet of the radical left." He referred to "very violent people," and near the end said: "When you see those lunatics all over the streets, it's

damn nice to have arms."
Tensions heated up after Trump ended his speech. Police fired projectiles near demonstrators who flooded Tulsa's streets before backing off.

Earlier, #CancelYale was trending on Twitter as people took to social media to protest against the university's name, traced back to merchant and slave trader Elihu Yale. Users also pointed out an incident in 2018 when a white student called the police to report a black graduate who was napping in her dorm's common room.

- Key Developments:**
- * Protests for Racial Justice Take Root in Suburbia
 - * Juneteenth Tests Corporate America's Pledges to Fight Racism
 - * NextDoor Cuts Police Communication Tool, Citing 'Anti-Racism'
 - * Quotas Can Help Fix the Glaring Whiteness of America's C-Suites

Does Biden have the wisdom to be better than Trump? ...

BY MARTIN LOVE
Biden will be better. Biden will be better, goes the mantra not just among most Democrats in the U.S., but among any person who manages to generate a reasonable thought and perspective about world and national U.S. affairs. To be a U.S. citizen these days with half a brain is like riding a dangerous roller coaster and gripping a safety bar with white knuckles, and the same can probably be said for decent souls anywhere in the world, including Iranians.

There has been nothing like Donald Trump's tenure in the White House these past four years for sheer stupidity. He is a man singularly unfit for any leadership role anywhere, much less as the "leader" of the United States, which has been plunged into a kind of chaotic Hell in some respects even worse than the Hell he has fomented on a number of countries with his military threats and sanctions.

In the U.S. now one witnesses Covid totally out of control like in no other country. Breadlines, or rather lines of cars with the hungry have stretched

for miles in some locations waiting to reach food banks. Poverty has exploded. The government is spending more dollars it does not have than ever to no good effect for average citizens, and further trillions may be spent soon to help alleviate the suffering caused by endless wars, inequality and injustice while just two American billionaires hoard more wealth than half the country's people and American "capitalism" has become the best argument ever for socialism.

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Director Kambuzia Partovi passes away of COVID-19

TEHRAN – Iranian screenwriter and filmmaker Kambuzia Partovi died of COVID-19 at Tehran's Day Hospital on Tuesday. He was 65.

He was admitted to the hospital for a heart disorder, however, he passed away when his lung was infected by coronavirus, Farabi Cinema Foundation director Alireza Tabesh told the Persian service of MNA.

His latest movie "Truck" that recounts the story of a Yazidi woman who becomes homeless after the Iraqi ethnic and religious minority is attacked by Daesh forces in the summer of 2014, premiered at the 36th Fajr Film Festival in Tehran in 2018.

He was also the director of the acclaimed drama "Border Café", which was Iran's submission to the Academy Awards in the Best Foreign Language Films category in 2007.

He made his debut feature film in 1987 with "The Fish", which was acclaimed in several international events, including the Giffoni Film Festival in Italy.

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Lack of budget halts maintenance of millennia-old site near Tehran

TEHRAN - The government must set a proper budget for the restoration and conservation of Tepe Ozbaki, a magnificent archaeological hill situated in Alborz province westward of the Iranian capital Tehran, a provincial official said on Monday.

"No funds have been allocated for the restoration of Tepe Ozbaki in the current [Iranian calendar] year (started March 2020)," Abbas Nouri said.

"None of the previously-proposed plans for the restoration of Tepe Ozbaki has been implemented this year due to financial constraints and credit problems the government faces."

The official also lamented that the total budget so far being allocated to the provincial department of cultural heritage is "insufficient".
Restoration of historical sites, buildings, and complexes are often very costly, and with limited financial resources, no significant change could be expected.

Also called Ozbaki or Uzbaki Teppeh, the site is situated near Nazarabad, some 80 km west of Tehran. The site has yielded cultural relics dating from the first half of the 7th millennium to the first half of the first millennium BC, i.e. the Medes period.

The discovery of objects such as tablets, statuettes, and 'jagged' earthenware in Ozbaki hill indicate some kind of commercial link between Susa in Khuzestan and this in Tehran province, according to senior Iranian archaeologist Yousef Majidzadeh who led the excavations at Ozbaki, Qabrstan, and Jiroft hills.
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Obama: World to question U.S. reliability regarding Iran deal

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Former U.S. President Barack Obama has criticized his successor Donald Trump for damaging the United States' image in the world, saying the world will still question the reliability of the U.S. during the Biden era with issues such as the Iran nuclear deal.

"The world will still question how reliable and steady would be the United States during the Biden era, for example, regarding the Paris Agreement and the Iran nuclear agreement," Obama said in an interview with the Washington Post on Monday.

Pointing out that Biden intends to join the Paris Climate Agreement and the Iran nuclear deal, soon after taking office, Obama added that "the return of trust to the United States will not be rebuilt overnight."



"In any case, there is some damage and it will take some time for us to get out of it," he said, adding that he hopes President-elect Joe Biden's cabinet and those elected would be able to do so, but that could not happen immediately.

In May 2018, Trump unilaterally pulled his country out of the nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and unleashed the "toughest ever" sanctions against Iran.

Observers say Trump's motivation for exiting the JCPOA was prompted by his hatred of any achievement by his predecessor Obama.

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said Iran has suffered billions of dollars in damages because Trump did not like Obama.

"Billions upon billions of dollars of damage they have inflicted upon Iran just because somebody didn't like the previous president of the United States," Zarif told Fareed Zakaria at a virtual event sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations in September.

"It's not my business that this president or the next president like their predecessor or don't like their predecessor. It is the United States that has to act responsibly in the international community, which unfortunately it hasn't," he added.

Zarif further pointed to the damage caused by the U.S. sanctions on Iran, saying Iran is currently not able to buy vaccines for influenza because the United States does not allow us to transfer the money.

Colin S. Cavell, a full professor of political science at Bluefield State College in West Virginia, has also told the Tehran Times that Trump pulled the U.S. out of the nuclear deal "to negate an international agreement negotiated by his African American predecessor, Barack Obama."

Speculations about a possible thaw in Iran-U.S. relations have gained momentum after Biden was named the winner of the November presidential election. Biden himself had said that he would rejoin the JCPOA if he won the election.

"I will offer Tehran a credible path back to diplomacy. If Iran returns to strict compliance with the nuclear deal, the United States would rejoin the agreement as a starting point for follow-on negotiations. With our allies, we will work to strengthen and extend the nuclear deal's provisions, while also addressing other issues of concern," Biden said in a September op-ed for CNN.

E3 foreign ministers meet on JCPOA

Meanwhile, foreign ministers from the three European parties to the deal, namely France, the UK and Germany, have met to discuss a joint approach with the incoming Biden administration on reviving the nuclear pact.

The three countries, whose ministers met in Berlin on Monday, are hopeful about the revival of the JCPOA and the return of Tehran to the deal under the Biden administration.

The foreign ministers Heiko Maas of Germany, Jean-Yves Le Drian of France and Dominic Raab of the UK met to discuss "what a further approach involving all signatories to the JCPOA, and perhaps also with a new U.S. administration, could look like", the Guardian quoted German officials as saying.

Foreign Minister Zarif suggested last week that Iran might need guarantees before letting the U.S. rejoin the old JCPOA.

The former EU chief negotiator Federica Mogherini advised the U.S. not to try to negotiate an updated JCPOA too quickly.

"I don't see the possibility of moving on to new elements unless and until JCPOA is fully implemented by both sides. I think this is the starting point and I think we would be mistaken and under a very serious illusion if we were thinking of doing this the other way around," she said at a European Leadership Network event.

Zarif, Lavrov discuss Syria, Karabakh, JCPOA

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has discussed the situations in Syria and Nagorno-Karabakh in a phone call with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov.



Zarif and Lavrov also discussed Tehran and Moscow's commitment to ensuring the prompt return of all participants to fully observing obligations laid out in the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, formally called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Reuters reported on Tuesday, citing Russia's Foreign Ministry.

U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew from the JCPOA in May 2018 and imposed the "toughest ever" economic sanctions on Iran. Trump's Iran policy has been described by observers as an abject failure.

Zarif urges responsible exit of foreign troops from Afghanistan

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said Iran has always supported intra-Afghan dialogue owned and led by Afghans themselves, which should include the Taliban, and which preserves the post-2001 achievements.

Speaking at the virtual 2020 Afghanistan Conference in Geneva, Zarif named the post-2001 achievements as the democratic Constitution, the right of the people to self-determination through elections, the rights of religious and ethnic minorities, the rights of women and combating terrorism.

"The UN should be central in facilitating intra-Afghan dialogue, and Iran stands ready to cooperate," he said, the Foreign Ministry website reported.

He said it is a tragedy of epic proportions that twenty years after the conference in Bonn, the world still talking about war in Afghanistan.

For over 40 years, Afghans have endured bloodshed, perpetrated primarily from the outside, Zarif lamented.

"The military approach to building peace has failed, and the presence of



"We all know that poverty and unemployment are fertile grounds for extremism, terrorism, and drug trafficking. Peace will not be sustainable if Afghans have to struggle to simply survive."

foreign troops has been a lingering problem," the foreign minister noted. "A responsible exit of foreign troops from Afghanistan—with a smooth and effective assumption of their duties by the Afghan security forces—will be a positive step toward a sustainable peace."

He added, "We all know that poverty and unemployment are fertile grounds for extremism, terrorism, and drug trafficking. Peace will not be sustainable if Afghans have to struggle to simply survive."

The chief Iranian diplomat also said Iran hosts over 3 million Afghans, using our subsidized food, transport and health services, in spite of the savage U.S. economic war against the Iranian people.

"470,000 Afghan students attend our schools, 22,000 Afghans are being trained by our universities," he said.

However, Zarif continued, instead of facilitating, the U.S.—through its economic terrorism targeting Iranians and Afghans alike—impedes such cooperation.

Concluding his remarks, Zarif said the world must put the people of Afghanistan before other considerations.

U.S. sanctions hinder fight against coronavirus: ambassador

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iran's ambassador and permanent representative to the Vienna-based international organizations has criticized the United States' unilateral sanctions on Iran and some other countries, saying the sanctions have negatively impacted the Islamic Republic's ability to fight the coronavirus outbreak.

"We still witness the use of unilateral sanctions against countries in clear violation of the goals and principles of the UN Charter, international law and human rights as well as the principles of multilateralism and the norms of diplomacy and international relations," Press TV quoted Kazem Gharibabadi as saying.

He made the remarks in an address to the 48th Session of the UNIDO Industrial Development Board, which was held virtually on Monday.

Gharibabadi said the fight against the coronavirus requires a comprehensive and coordinated multilateral approach that supports the vulnerable countries.

"We express our deep concern about the serious consequences of the coronavirus for many developing countries, including those that are vulnerable and face serious challenges beyond their control," he added.

The ambassador said Iran strongly believes that now is the critical time for cooperation and communication not only on the basis of shared responsibility, but also through a decisive joint action as an international community.

Gharibabadi also urged UNIDO to increase its cooper-

ation with other agencies of the world body to ensure the affected countries' continued access to medical equipment as well as fair production and distribution of vaccines.

UN experts have confirmed that U.S. sanctions impeding on many countries' abilities to combat the Covid-19 pandemic.

"People in countries under sanctions cannot protect themselves against COVID-19 or get life-saving treatment if they fall ill because humanitarian exemptions to the sanctions are not working," UN human rights experts said in a report on August 7, 2020.

"Sanctions are bringing suffering and death in countries like Cuba, Iran, Sudan, Syria, Venezuela and Yemen," said Alena Douhan, special rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights.

"Sanctions should be lifted — or at a minimum eased — so people can get basics like soap and disinfectants to stay healthy, and so that hospitals can get ventilators and other equipment to keep people alive."

Washington has claimed on many occasions that its sanctions on Iran do not include the humanitarian trade. And in fact, the U.S. even sought to portray itself as the facilitator of this trade by launching a humanitarian trade channel in collaboration with Switzerland.

In reality, however, firms and individuals involved in humanitarian trade have chosen to avoid dealing with Iran out of fear of running afoul of U.S. secondary sanctions.



Besides, the U.S. has set up a cumbersome process for the issuance of licenses for delivery of humanitarian goods.

Iran's Foreign Ministry said in a tweet last month that coronavirus has been a deadly disease everywhere but it is worse in Iran due to U.S. sanctions.

"Corona's proven deadly, vicious & brutal everywhere, but it's worse in Iran as it has a cruel collaborator: U.S. regime," tweeted the Foreign Ministry.

"U.S. has elevated maximum pressure to Health Terrorism & targeted Iranian people with inhuman sanctions while they're fighting the pandemic. We'll overcome but NEVER forget," it added.

Ex-defense minister announces presidential bid

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Former Defense Minister Hossein Dehghan has announced that he's running for the 2021 presidential election.

"I consider myself a completely patriotic, revolutionary element and a person who has striven so far to offer my own intellectual, executive and mental capacity to advance the goals and interests of the system and the Revolution," Dehghan said, ISNA reported on Tuesday.

He also said he is not aligned to any political faction, including the reformist and principlist camps.

Dehghan is a former Islamic Revolution



Guards Corps (IRGC) officer who served in the IRGC Air Force. He served as defense minister from 2013–2017 in the Hassan Rouhani administration.

The presidential election is scheduled to be held in Iran on June 18, 2021. It will be the thirteenth presidential election in Iran since the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

In remarks in August, Jamal Orf, the deputy interior minister in charge of election headquarters, said with the Guardian Council's approval June 18 was set for holding presidential, council and midterm parliamentary and Assembly of Experts elections.

Candidates hoping to run in the next elections are to apply in early April for approval. The final list is to be announced by the Guardian Council in early June.

Under Iran's law, an incumbent president cannot run for a third term if he has already served for two consecutive terms. Rouhani was first elected in 2013 and re-elected four years later.

So far, Foreign Minister Zarif has categorically rejected presidential candidacy, saying he is not the right person for the job. Recently, it was also reported that Jahangiri, who currently serves as first vice president, has refused to accept candidacy.

Does Biden have the wisdom to be better than Trump? ...

➔ Trump supporters, maybe 40 percent of U.S. voters are meanwhile attempting to upend democratic elections they lost, and the brightest among Americans like consumer advocate Ralph Nader are insisting other Americans should rally around demands for Trump's resignation or for a second impeachment before Biden becomes President on January 20th. That is certainly a pleasing but fanciful notion at least but it won't happen. Trump is aiming to make Biden's ascension into the Oval Office as difficult as possible. Revenge for his loss dominates Trump's mentality while much for Biden depends on whether two run-off elections in the state of Georgia in early January for the Senate create victories for two well-spoken Democrats. If they manage to win the run-off elections, the Senate will tilt to Democratic Party control and maybe, maybe the Biden Administration can then enact legislation that might begin to redress the horrors of Trump's tenure in the White House.

In fact, if one looks back on the past four years, Trump's support for Israel and the far-right Zionists has been the signature foreign policy of his entire administration given the fact that much of the major support, monetary and otherwise, he has garnered has come from Jewish/Zionist billionaires like Sheldon Adelson, the casino magnate. And this, of course, has led to Trump's signature foreign policy initiative, which has been the attempted overthrow and reduction of Iran's Islamic Republic which has shown remarkable restraint and resolve (akin



to boxer Muhammad 'Ali's "rope-a-dope" strategies in the ring where the great pugilist often successfully wore down his opponents). Pompeo's and Trump's hostility to Iran has been an abject failure.

And now? Trump conferred with the Pentagon this month asking whether it might be possible to attack Iran's nuclear sites such as Natanz before he leaves office. Reports at least have claimed that the generals said this was an unwise move, which of course it is, and one must never forget Adelson suggested that the U.S. drop a nuclear bomb on Iran a couple of years ago.

At any rate, Biden has claimed he will re-engage with Iran and may even re-join the JCPOA, albeit with

"It is no secret that the Zionists whether in the U.S. or Israel will attempt to scuttle ANY move by Biden to improve relations and reduce tensions with Iran."

"Pompeo's and Trump's hostility to Iran has been an abject failure."

demands for modifications, which may or may not be possible. But one can rest assured the U.S. will have to re-join the JCPOA first as it has stood since inception in 2015, and as some have insisted, with further U.S. moves to try to broaden the U.S. diplomacy with Iran and create a climate where mutual trust might for once begin to manifest. Sanctions? They must be dropped, but it is likely the Biden Administration will find itself in a situation in which sanctions, especially those on Iranian oil exports, might be maintained to try to pressure Iran to yield to U.S. demands to modify the JCPOA. This could well be seen as the sole choice available to Biden, but if this is the case, it's also likely that Iranian leaders justifiably reject overtures from the U.S. and the tragedy of U.S.-Iranian relations spawned by Trump would continue.

It is no secret that the Zionists whether in the U.S. or Israel will attempt to scuttle ANY move by Biden to improve relations and reduce tensions with Iran, and one sure litmus test of sanity in foreign policy by Biden will be the degree to which he advocates, explains and pushes for the kind of changes that the world sorely wants. Does Biden have the sense to do the right thing with regard to Iran? If he wants any kind of positive legacy as President leading U.S. foreign policy he must back off from total support of Israel's craven demands and begin, at last, to carve out an independent policy posture for the U.S. and the world.

Ayatollah Khamenei outlines strategy to nullify sanctions through internal capabilities

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, Leader of the Islamic Revolution, on Tuesday suggested plans to counteract the United States sanctions on Iran through boosting internal economic capabilities while also ruling out any prospect of broader negotiations with the West.

The Leader addressed in detail the economic sanctions of the U.S. on Iran and their impact, calling these sanctions "a crime against the Iranian people that has been intensified in the past three years." He said the economy is the main issue of the country right now and the livelihood of people has been really under pressure.

Ayatollah Khamenei called the sanctions "a bitter reality and a crime by America and its European partners against the Iranian nation."

In an effort to introduce a strategy to mitigate the economic impact of the sanctions, the Leader said there are two ways to deal with sanctions: removing sanctions and nullifying or overcoming them.

The Leader pointed out that Iran has used the first way — i.e. lifting sanctions — but to no avail.

"There are two ways to tackle sanctions: 1) removing sanctions 2) nullifying and overcoming them. We tried the first option, removing sanctions, by negotiating for a few years, but to no use. The second option may have difficulties in the beginning but will have a favorable end," the Leader pointed out. "If succeed, through hard work and innovation, in overcoming the sanctions and the other side witnesses how sanctions were nullified, it will abandon sanctions gradually."

He added that Iran has a lot of capacities and capabilities to nullify sanctions.

The Leader made the remarks during a meeting of the Supreme Council of Economic Coordination, a high-level state body comprised of senior officials, including the



heads of the three branches of government.

The remarks came against a backdrop of a renewed wave of speculations over whether Iran and the U.S. would resume talks following Joe Biden's projected win in the U.S. presidential election. The cabinet of Hassan Rouhani implied that it's ready to resume talks with the new U.S. administration in order to get the sanctions lifted within the framework of the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and World powers, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The Leader made it crystal clear that Iran is capable of overcoming sanctions and it does not pin hope on any negotiations with the West to improve the economy. Instead, Ayatollah Khamenei put a special emphasis on the need to rely on Iran's internal capacities and capabilities, which, if used properly, would ensure that Iran is capable

of weathering the storm.

In fact, the Leader believes that Iran has enough resources to overcome all economic challenges and become impervious to sanctions. To move in this direction, the Leader said, the country's officials should make serious efforts and be courageous.

"The country's economic problem is not about not having or not knowing what approach to take. Rather, that which is required is diligence, courage, serious effort, and follow-up," he noted.

In line with this strategy, the Leader underlined that the government should act on the premise that there would be no opening in foreign relations.

Ayatollah Khamenei also took a swipe at the U.S. Democrats, saying they are pursuing hostile policies toward Iran and their internal situation is not clear at all. These troubles, the Leader added, have

prevented the Democrats from taking stances on international issues. Therefore, Ayatollah Khamenei said, Iran cannot count on them or draw up plans in accordance with their positions.

"Foreigners cannot be relied upon, and one cannot pin hope on the opening of them," the Leader asserted.

Ayatollah Khamenei also took a jab at the European countries that are party to the 2015 nuclear deal — France, Germany, and the UK —, urging the Europeans to stop demanding negotiations over Iran's ballistic missiles and its influence in the region. "The situation in America is not clear. The Europeans are constantly taking stances against Iran. While they are making the most improper interferences in the region's issues, they tell us not to interfere in the region. And while France and Britain possess destructive nuclear missiles and Germany is moving in this direction, they tell us not to possess missiles," the Leader pointed out.

Directly addressing the Europeans, the Leader added, "What business is it of yours. Correct yourself first and then make remarks."

As Biden was projected to win the U.S. presidential election, many pundits and even some officials in the region and Europe called for broader negotiations with Iran that would include Iran's missile program and its regional influence. The French even went so far as to call on the U.S. to make Saudi Arabia a partner on any future nuclear deal with Iran, which Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan called "JCPOA++."

But Ayatollah Khamenei made it clear that Iran is not only not considering any broader negotiations with the West, but it is also not pinning any hope on the lifting of the sanctions in the future. Ayatollah Khamenei's strategy to nullify the U.S. sanctions through internal capabilities should be viewed in this context.

Senior MP rejects Saudi 'JCPOA++' offer

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Mojtaba Zolnouri, the head of the Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, has rejected a Saudi offer to be a partner on any future nuclear deal with Iran.

Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud told CNBC that President Donald Trump's "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran has set the groundwork for a new agreement with Iran and that Saudi Arabia should be a part of any potential negotiations between the incoming U.S. administration and Iran on a new nuclear deal. The chief Saudi diplomat said Saudi Arabia seeks to partner with the U.S. administration on a potential new agreement, which would not only limit Iran's nuclear activities but also seek to address what he called its "regional malign activity."

Such an accord could be labeled the "JCPOA++," he added. The JCPOA, or Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, is a 2015 agreement between Iran and world powers that limited the country's nuclear ambitions in exchange for the lifting of sanctions. The original agreement was signed by the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council — China, France, Russia, the U.K., and the U.S. — Germany and the European Union.

But President Donald Trump withdrew the United States from the JCPOA on May 8, 2018, calling it the "worst deal in history." Since then, the White House has imposed sweeping economic sanctions on Iran under the "maximum pressure" policy in a bid to reach what he called a better deal with Iran.

Other signatories remain committed to the nuclear deal and refrained from going with Trump, but now that Trump seems to be losing the U.S. presidential election, there is talk that a renegotiated pact could be on the cards, with more pressure on Iran over its missile program and other regional issues. A new agreement has been touted as a "JCPOA+" — that is, like the



original deal but with more conditions attached according to CNBC.

The Saudi foreign minister believes such an agreement could go even further, claiming that a "JCPOA++" deal could also seek to address Iran's alleged "arming of militias, whether it's the Houthis in Yemen, or certain groups in Iraq or in Syria, or Lebanon, and even beyond."

"And, of course, its ballistic missile programs and other arms programs, which (it) continues to use to spread havoc around the region," bin Farhan added.

Zolnouri said these remarks indicate the weakness of Washington, Tel Aviv, and Riyadh.

"These remarks indicate three things: First, the United States, the Zionist regime, and Saudi Arabia are alone, and none of them see themselves as capable enough to confront the Islamic Republic of Iran. They need the help of others. Second, the remarks of the Saudi foreign minister show the hostile ties of Saudi Arabia with the Zionist regime and the United States. [Third], neither the U.S., nor Israel, or Saudi Arabia have the right to interfere in Iran's decisions, and Iran is free to negotiate with any country it wants," the senior lawmaker told the Islamic Consultative Assembly News Agency (ICANA) on Monday.

Iran is yet to start negotiations with the U.S. or other parties. Some Iranian officials have ruled out any prospect of a new round of talks between Tehran and Washington due to the U.S. withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal.

Parliament moves to raise uranium enrichment level to 20%

POLITICAL TEHRAN — The Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee discussed on Tuesday a plan to significantly increase Iran's nuclear activities, including uranium enrichment level.

The plan is part of a broader strategy that aims to lift the United States sanctions on Iran. Iranian lawmakers had put forward a "strategic bill to lift sanctions" in early November that aims to force the U.S. into lifting sanctions on Iran through doubling down on nuclear activities.

The Tuesday meeting came on the heels of another meeting on Monday during which the lawmakers approved some of the bill's articles requiring the government to raise uranium enrichment levels to 20%.

Abolfazl Amouei, the spokesman for the parliamentary committee, said the committee discussed the bill on Monday and approved three articles of it.

"Despite Corona restrictions in Majlis (Parliament), the meeting was attended by two-thirds of the members. Discussing articles of the Strategic Action Plan for the lifting of sanctions was on the agenda. In today's meeting, three articles of this plan were reviewed and the opinions of the representatives were obtained and amendments were made to the clauses. Representatives from the Foreign Ministry, the Central Bank, and the Parliamentary Research Center also attended the meeting," Amouei told the Islamic Consultative Assembly News Agency (ICANA) on Monday.

According to Amouei, the three articles that were discussed on Monday include measures that, if adopted, would significantly increase Iran's nuclear activities.

The spokesman said the first article of the bill is about obliging the government to raise the uranium enrichment level to 20%. The second article is about increasing Iran's stockpile of low-enriched uranium. And the third article stipulates that the government and the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) must use IR-2M

and IR-6 advanced centrifuges.

These three articles were all approved by the lawmakers, according to Amouei.

He also said that the Tuesday meeting of the National Security and Foreign Policy Committee was to hold further discussions about the strategic bill.

According to the 9-article bill, the AEOI will be required to produce and store at least 120 kilograms of enriched uranium with 20 percent purity at the Fordow nuclear facility every year, and to fulfill the country's peaceful industrial demands with uranium enriched above 20%. Tasnim news agency reported on November 2, adding that once ratified, the bill will oblige the AEOI to increase the monthly output of enriched uranium for various peaceful purposes with different purity levels by at least 500 kg.

The news agency also said that the bill entails uranium enrichment activities with at least 1,000 IR-2M centrifuge machines at Natanz within three months after the ratification of the law, and compels the AEOI to launch uranium enrichment as well as research and development activities at the Fordow nuclear site with at least 164 IR-6 centrifuges and increase the number of centrifuge machines to 1,000 by March 2021.

The new bill also necessitates the inauguration of a metallic uranium factory in Isfahan within 5 months and restoration of a 40-Megawatts heavy water reactor in Arak, which was supposed to be re-designed and optimized under the 2015 Iran nuclear deal. The bill requires the government to prevent any foreign access and monitoring beyond the Additional Protocol.

The bill also requires the government to suspend the voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) three months after the ratification of it if the parties to the nuclear deal between Iran and world powers, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), failed to uphold their obligations under the JCPOA.

Deputy FM meets Armenia ambassador to Iran

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Seyed Abbas Araghchi, the deputy foreign minister of Iran for political affairs, met on Monday with the Armenian Ambassador to Iran Artashes Toumanian to discuss the latest development related to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

During the meeting, Toumanian briefed Araghchi on the situation and recent developments in Armenia and the Nagorno-Karabakh region after the adoption of a trilateral peace deal statement signed by the leaders of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Russia, Armenia's embassy said in a statement on Monday.

The statement said the two diplomats exchanged views on the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the issues of post-war procedures, the regional and trans-regional actors' participation, and their future possible roles.

"The direction and aspects of cooperation based on mutual interest and accordance between Armenia and Iran, particularly under the existing complicated circumstances were

discussed. Both sides stressed maintaining and fostering the permanent mutual relations and consultative contacts between the circles and authorities in both levels of State and society," the statement added.

Earlier on Saturday, Toumanian met with Reza Ardashir, the Iranian Energy Minister and Co-Chair of the Armenia-Iran Intergovernmental Joint Commission.

"During the meeting, the Armenian Ambassador and Iranian Energy Minister discussed the operation of the projects based on the decisions of the Joint Commission, particularly the gas-electricity joint project and both sides' tasks in this regard to be accomplished by 2020," the Armenian embassy said in a tweet following the meeting.

Earlier this month, Araghchi traveled to Azerbaijan, Russia, Armenia, and Turkey to present an Iranian peace initiative with the purpose of putting an end to the Armenia-Azerbaijan war. On November 10, Baku and Yerevan signed a ceasefire

agreement, ending a 44-day war that resulted in Azerbaijan liberating its occupied territories.

The ceasefire agreement prompted wild rumors that the Armenia-Iran border was cut off, a claim that was rejected by Araghchi.

"Unfortunately, disinformation and misleading information along with fake maps are being spread in cyberspace. Claims such as cutting Iran's border with Armenia, creating a corridor inside Armenia, or even inside Iran, changing the geopolitics of the region, etc. have been raised but they are fundamentally untrue and being spread for specific political and propaganda purposes," Araghchi told IRNA.

Araghchi called these rumors "baseless," saying that "there will be no change in Iran's transit routes to Armenia or the Republic of Azerbaijan."

Araghchi himself posted a map on his Telegram channel showing Iran-Armenia borders were intact.

SPORTS

Women's captain Ghomi retires from national team

SPORTS TEHRAN — Iran women's national football team captain Sara Ghomi announced her retirement from national duty.



Ghomi made 34 appearances for Iranian national team and scored 10 goals.

She started her footballing career as a forward but played left midfielder in the national team.

A legendary player in Iranian club Malavan Bandar Anzali, Ghomi was chosen as the top goalscorer of Iran premier league five times.

"I think it's time to say goodbye to football. I decided to retire two years ago but my coaches didn't let me retire," Ghomi said.

Former Iran wrestler Mohammad Khadem dies

SPORTS TEHRAN — Mohammad Khadem, who represented Iran at the 1960 Summer Olympics in Rome, Italy passed away on Tuesday at the age of 85.

He seized a silver medal at the 1962 World Championships in Toledo, the U.S. after losing to his Japanese opponent Osamu Watanabe at the 63kg category.

Khadem was father of Iranian Olympic medalists Rasoul and Amirreza Khadem.

Rasoul Khadem won a bronze and a gold medal at the 1992 Barcelona and 1996 Atlanta, respectively. Amirreza also claimed two bronze medals at the 1992 and 1996 Olympic Games.

Tehran Times extends deepest sympathy to Khadem's family, loved ones, and friends over his demise.

Aaron Geramipour at FIBA Asia for the first time

SPORTS TEHRAN — This won't be the first time Aaron Geramipour plays for Iran - that was at the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2019 in China - but it will be his first time playing in a FIBA Asia competition, fiba.basketball reported.

Iran are scheduled to meet Saudi Arabia and Syria on Nov. 27 and 30, respectively in Doha, Qatar at the Window 2 of FIBA Asia Cup 2021 Qualifiers.

Window 1 of the FIBA Asia Cup 2021 Qualifiers featured some of the top talents in Asia and Oceania as they embarked through the first stage of the journey towards the FIBA Asia Cup. However, even after seeing those talents on display in the opening phase, there are still plenty of other interesting players waiting to make their first appearance in these Qualifiers.

Nonetheless, Iran fans will be excited to see their up-and-coming big man get the chance to show off his talents once again. Iran's opponents should be less enthusiastic about seeing Geramipour on the court, as he will make it much harder to beat the Asia Cup 2017 finalists.

Iran's Haratian, Hassanmiraei make history in AFC

Iranian doctors Zohreh Haratian and Bahar Hassanmiraei have joined the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) history books by becoming the first women Medical Officers to be appointed in an AFC men's club competition.

Janis Ann Figueroa Espino-De Vera from the Philippines and New Zealand's Liesel Geertsema are the other two doctors.

The quartet are among nine Medical Officers including Doping Control Officers working behind the scenes to ensure the safety of players and officials at the AFC Champions League (East) in Doha, Qatar.

Their appointments showcase the AFC's continued commitment to promote and create equal opportunities for women in the Asian football workforce.

Last year, Japanese referee Yoshimi Yamashita alongside assistant referees Makoto Bozono and Naomi Teshirogi officiated in an AFC Cup match for the first time while Kim Se-in from Korea Republic, Nguyen Thanh Ha of Vietnam, Lau Cheuk Chi of Hong Kong and Kanya Keomany of Laos were selected as the first women match commissioners in the joint Asian Qualifiers.

Keomany was also appointed as the match commissioner in the 2019 AFC Cup Final, the first time a female was selected to take charge in a men's Final.

Haratian, who has been in the forefront battling the COVID-19 pandemic in her country, said: "There has been a revolution in the development of women's football since women referees took part in the AFC Cup last year. As a former futsal player, it has always been one of my dreams to participate in a men's tournament, and now this dream has come true. I am very happy to be one of the first lady doctors in a men's tournament."

Hassanmiraei hopes to inspire more women to follow in their footsteps. "It is always an honor to be the first. To know that you are in a group who are the first but not the last. The AFC makes it possible to learn how to deal with different situations to become an expert and they continue to support women by putting them in charge in every important position."

(Source: the-afc)

Olive exports up 34% in 7 months on year

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran's export of olives has risen 34 percent during the first seven months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-October 21), compared to the same period of time in the past year, according to a provincial official.

As announced by Farhad Dalqopoush, the head of Industry, Mining and Trade Department of Gilan Province (in north of Iran where olive is cultivated vastly), the country has exported 129,409 tons of olives during the seven-month period.



Olives are grown in 27 other provinces, but Gilan has 11 percent of the total area under olive cultivation and 20 percent of the country's olive production, the official stated.

Support for this product is on the agenda, as it has high capacity to be exported, he noted.

Olive oil production in Iran reached 11,600 tons in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), the manager of the Agriculture Ministry's "Olive Project" initiative has announced.

"Olive oil production in our country is in a good place and the production of this product has increased from 3,300 tons in [the Iranian calendar year] 1391 (ended in March 2013) to 11,600 tons in 1398 (last year)," Rahmatollah Parichehr has stated.

The official has stated that in the year of "surge in production", the quantitative and qualitative increase of olive oil production and also the increase of its per capita consumption is on Agriculture Ministry's agenda.

"The per capita consumption of this product in the world is 500 grams and we have planned to reach the global average," Parichehr said.

The official has also said that demand for olive oil in Iran exceeds 12,000 tons per year and the shortage is mainly imported from Turkey, Italy, Spain and Greece.

The Agriculture Ministry's olive project scheme titled the "National Plan for Development of Olive Cultivation and Processing" seeks to increase olive oil production in Iran to a level where the country would have no further needs for import.

TEDPIX loses 18,000 points on Tuesday

ECONOMY TEHRAN — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 18,597 points to 1.356 million on Tuesday.

Over 22.882 billion securities worth 198.368 trillion rials (about \$4.723 billion) were traded at the TSE on Tuesday.

The first market's index lost 12,669 points, and the second market's index fell 41,024 points.

11 cargoes of basic goods loaded, unloaded at Chabahar port since mid-March

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Some 11 large-scale vessels carrying basic goods have been loaded and unloaded at Iran's oceanic port of Chabahar since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20), Behrouz Aghaei, the director-general of Sistan-Baluchestan Province's Ports and Maritime Department, announced.

"Although the coronavirus pandemic has overshadowed the world and Iranian trade since the beginning of the year, the process of importing basic goods to the port of Shahid Beheshti in Chabahar has continued, during which 11 ships carrying these goods have been unloaded and loaded, including 8 ships carrying wheat," Aghaei said.

According to Aghaei, the imports of basic goods into the south-eastern Chabahar Port in the current year has increased significantly compared to the previous year and the upward trend is continuing.

"A few days ago, a ship of Russian origin carrying more than 68,000 tons of wheat was unloaded at Shahid Beheshti port," he said.



The loading and unloading processes are going smoothly in this port because of the modern equipment as well as the existence of the necessary infrastructure, he added.

According to Aghaei, with an annual loading and unloading capacity of 8.5 million tons, Chabahar port is a new destination for the import of basic goods in Iran.

Back in July, the official had announced that 627,000 tons of basic goods were unloaded at Chabahar port since the beginning of the current Iranian year.

"This year, we registered the record of 800 loaded trucks leaving Chabahar's Shahid Beheshti port in a single day; since one of the goals of this department is to increase the quality of maritime and port services, including facilitation of unloading and loading goods in this ocean port," the official said.

Having advanced equipment and round-the-clock efforts of the workforce have made this goal achievable and we are witnessing the satisfaction of cargo and goods owners and the significant growth of imports and exports through Chabahar port, he added.

The strategic port of Chabahar in southeastern Iran is the only ocean port on the Makran coast and it has a special place in the country's economic affairs.

Chabahar consists of two separate ports named Shahid Kalantari and Shahid Beheshti, each of which has five berths.

Iran has awarded the development project of this port to India, and the South Asian country committed \$500 million to build two new berths in this port.

India has doubled the allocated funding for the development of the port in its national budget bill for 2020.

Railway fleet receives 70 domestically-made wagons

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iranian railway fleet received 70 domestically-made wagons and a rebuilt locomotive in a ceremony on Tuesday.

The unveiling ceremony was attended by the Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami, and the Head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (RAI).

As the eighth stage of a program for renovation of the country's railway fleet in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 20), 57 four-axle wagons, 10 two-axle container wagons, and a renovated self-propelled locomotive joined the railway fleet on the mentioned day.

The mentioned wagons and locomotive have been manufactured and renovated by domestic companies namely Arak Steel, Wagon Kowsar Company, Wagon Pars Company, and Mapna.

On the sidelines of the mentioned ceremony, the first locomotive made by Wagon Pars Company was also unveiled and the locomotive production line was started in this company.

The development of the railway sector



is one of the macro policies of the Iranian government as it has been emphasized by

the general policies of the Sixth Five-Year National Development Plan (2016-2021).

In this regard, the national railway fleet has constantly received new domestically-made locomotives and wagons in the current Iranian calendar year (began on March 20), which is named the year of "Surge in Production" by Leader of Islamic Revolution Seyed Ali Khamenei.

Advantages such as consuming less fuel and creating less pollution as well as high safety attaches priority to the railway when compared to some other transportation systems, and makes its development economically viable.

When it comes to railway development, the renovation of existing infrastructures comes also under the spotlight, as according to RAI, currently, the average age of the country's passenger and freight wagons stands at 24 years and there are also rail tracks that have been built over 50 years ago.

In the last seven stages of the mentioned program, the railway fleet has received 451 freight and passenger wagons and locomotives. The production of this fleet in eight phases has saved the country 26 million euros and has created employment for 856 people.

Iran, Qatar ink co-op MOU in 7th joint economic committee meeting

I → Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCI) Gholam-Hossein Shafei, the Qatari ambassador to Tehran Mohammed Ben Hamad Al-Hajri, Chairman of Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry Khalifa Bin Jassim Al-Thani, as well as the representatives from the Iranian ministries of Foreign Affairs, Finance, and Industry also attended the meeting.

Cooperation between the two countries' chambers of commerce to encourage the private sectors of the two sides for joint ventures, the development of cooperation in the

fields of agriculture, electricity, water and wastewater and gas, cooperation in the field of cultural heritage, handicrafts and tourism, including holding a cultural week in Isfahan, were among other provisions of the mentioned MOU.

The MOU also covered cooperation in the fields of pharmaceutical and medical equipment, higher education and scientific research, transit and transportation of goods, communications and information technology, as well as protection and maintenance of fiber optic cables (submarine).oto:



Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian (R) exchanges signed MOU documents with Qatar's Minister of Commerce and Industry Ali bin Ahmed Al Kuwari in Isfahan on Tuesday.

National budget bill: how much oil income is forecast?

I → However, with simple math, we can come up with some figures and fill the blanks.

Last Wednesday, Mohammad-Baqer Nobakht, head of the Planning and Budget Organization, said: "The average oil sales this year were between 600,000 and 700,000 barrels per day, and the next year's budget bill is drafted almost based on the same estimation."

He also mentioned the oil prices based on which the next year's budget bill has been drafted: "We have not yet determined the oil price based on which the budget will be set, but the initial estimation is around \$40 a barrel."

So considering the exports of 700,000 bpd of oil and with the oil at \$40 per barrel, then Iran is expected to earn \$10.08 billion from selling crude oil in the next Iranian calendar year.

The figure, of course, is just an estimation and it could be very different in case of new developments regarding the U.S. sanctions on the country's oil industry.

■ What the money will be spent on?

Part 1 of paragraph "b" of Note 1 of the national budget bill draft states: "The ceiling of the resources provided



by the oil exports listed in row 210101 of Table No. (5) of this bill is equivalent to rials which will be completely spent on the import of basic goods, livestock feed inputs, medicine, and medical equipment."

As it is clearly stated, all the revenues earned from oil sales are expected to be used for the imports of basic

goods and medicine in the next year.

Although it should be mentioned that based on the Iranian law, the government's share of the country's oil income is only 47.5 percent which means, only about \$5 billion of the mentioned figure will be provided to the government for the imports of the basic goods.

According to Mohammad-Baqer Nobakht, any surplus revenues earned from oil exports will not be spent on current expenses but will be used for development projects, urban transportation, e-government development, strengthening knowledge-based companies, and strengthening the health transformation plan.

■ Implications

A look at the mentioned figures clearly shows that the Iranian government is determined in distancing itself from the oil revenues and is not counting much on the oil incomes for its expenses.

Nobakht had previously said that the budget resources for the next year will be supplied from oil, taxation, and issuance of government bonds, so obviously oil is not going to be the main player in this regard, and that is good news.

Housing price falls 10% in Tehran city in 3 weeks

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Housing price in the capital city Tehran has fallen 10 percent in the past three weeks, the head of Tehran Property Advisers Union announced.

Mostafa Qoli Khosravi also said that the number of real estate deals has dropped 48 percent in Tehran during the eight month of the current Iranian calendar year (October 22-November 20), compared to its previous month, while risen 12 percent compared to the same month in the past year.

Last month, a member of the Iranian Parliament (Majlis) Civil Committee said that the drastic and unprecedented rise in housing prices in recent months is going to lead the housing market to a recession in the coming months.

"With the dramatic and unprecedented rise in housing prices, the market is expected to enter a recession for at least three to four years in the coming months, but naturally, as the recession intensifies, housing prices will fall by about 10 to 20 percent", Mojtaba Yousefi stated.



Unfortunately, housing prices have risen by about 200 percent in recent months, and this has created many problems for real house buyers, he lamented.

"The main problem is that in such a market real buyers cannot afford to buy houses and instead the market has become a playground for brokers and speculators."

According to the official, the housing market trend in Iran has been sinusoidal, meaning that housing prices have risen over a period of time and then the market has entered a recession, however, in the last two years the trend has become contrary to

the previous years and the housing prices have been constantly increasing.

President Hassan Rouhani launched and inaugurated the projects for the construction of nearly 11,000 residential units throughout the country via video conference in mid-October.

The executive operation for the construction of 8,896 units under the National Housing Action Plan was started in some provinces, while 1,959 units under the Mehr Housing Plan were inaugurated in the southern Fars province, in an online ceremony attended also by Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami.

Back in August 2019, Rouhani had officially launched the government's National Housing Action Plan, by inaugurating a project for constructing 110,000 affordable housing units across the country.

The National Housing Action Plan aims to construct 400,000 small and medium-size apartments (70-100 square meters in size) across the country and particularly in

Tehran, where housing prices have risen most sharply.

Nearly half of the total number of the said homes will be constructed in Tehran's suburban "new towns" such as Parand and Pardis, respectively located in the west and east of the city.

According to the transport and urban development minister, the government plans to complete the new units by April 2021.

While the ministry will provide the land for the new developments, it will only supervise construction, enlisting private sector construction firms who will bid for contracts that entitle them to receive state loans and subsidized building materials.

The government's investment in construction will help create new jobs across the country and is expected to boost wages among laborers.

Providing housing to low-income families could also help alleviate economic hardship, especially if the government's assistance can help inflation-hit renters become homeowners.

Value of plants export rises 5%

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran's value of edible and decorative plants, industrial and medicinal herbs has risen five percent during the first seven months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-October 21) compared to the same period of time in the past year, according to an official with Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO).

Mahmoud Bazari, the director-general of TPO's office of agricultural products and processing industries, also said that the export of the mentioned products has increased 47 percent in terms of weight in the mentioned time span. The official named Pakistan, Hong Kong, the United Arab

Emirates (UAE), and Spain as the major export destinations of Iran's herbs and plants.

As previously announced by the head of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), Iran is the 17th largest producer of flowers and plants in the world and the 107th largest exporter of such products.

Three billion flowers and plants are produced annually, of which only 200 million are exported, according to Ruhollah Latifi.

Iran exported nearly \$40 million worth of cut flowers, ornamental plants during the previous Iranian calendar year of 1398 (ended on March 19).



Hamas advises Saudi Arabia not to stand at Israel's side

Normalization agreements with Israel were a "free gift for Israel to continue its aggression against the Palestinian people," says Hamas spokesman

➔ The following is the text of the interview:

■ What were the motives that pushed some Arab regimes in the Persian Gulf to rush to normalize ties with Israel?

A: The process of normalization of ties with Israel, which began with the UAE signing a normalization and cooperation agreement with the Zionist regime, then Bahrain joined it, and then Sudan, is considered a stab in the back of the Palestinian cause and a victory for the Zionist narrative and the right-wing discourse, especially by Netanyahu.

The normalization of ties with such a brutal regime not only is against the Palestinian cause, Arab interests, and stability in the region but also didn't help Trump in his election campaign.

This won't save Netanyahu in his internal crises.

These agreements represent a political sin par excellence that helps the expansionist Zionist approach to continue its plan in the region and expresses the efforts of some regimes to reinforce their position at the expense of Arab interests and the Palestinian cause.

Parties to the Abraham Accord must withdraw from it because of the great damage it inflicts on the Palestinian cause. These agreements encourage the Israelis to continue the aggression against the Palestinian people.

Since the accord was signed, we have noticed escalating aggression against the Palestinian people, whether in Jerusalem, the West Bank, or Gaza.

The settlement has doubled, and this indicates the deception practiced by the countries that signed peace agreements with Israel when they claimed that these agreements would prevent annexation while the Israeli plan to annex the West Bank is taking place on the ground step by step. Therefore, we see that these agreements are very harmful and dangerous.

The Arab world, including peoples and movements, are against this plan, but some regimes try to move along this path to gain the support of Israel and the United States in their regional conflicts, and this is also a strategic mistake that could add fuel to the fire of differences in the region in favor of the United States by increasing tension, plundering the wealth of the Islamic nations and selling more arms to the Arab countries.

■ Are there any differences inside Israel or between Israel and its allies regarding the implementation of the annexation project?

A: The colonial annexation plan is one of the pillars of the Zionist right-wing vision, which believes that it should include the largest areas in the West Bank including the Jordan Valley and East and West Jerusalem with the exception of the population blocs inside the West Bank.

This is the vision of the biblical right-wing, and this is the position of the Zionist right-wing



movement since its inception. Consequently, there are historical and biblical ambitions in addition to the strategic importance of the West Bank that provides Israel a deep defense that it lacks because of its geographical composition in the occupied Palestinian territories. It is also an expression of the expansionist tendency that does not stop at the Zionist project and tries to expand in any area it can and as Israel occupied large parts of the Sinai Peninsula, the Golan Heights, southern Lebanon, and Jordan.

Israel occupies where it can because its project is based on an aggressive expansionist basis, while it is supported by the arrogant powers, especially the United States.

The American support also increased Israel's motivation to take the annexation decision, amid the state of international neglect of the Palestinian situation, and the weakness of the European Union's stance as well as the differences in the Arab world; and the fabricated intra-regional conflicts altogether provided a better environment for the Zionist regime to dare to take such an adventurous decision.

Also, the behavior of some states in the region especially those which follow the orders of the United States, including the countries that signed peace agreements with Israel, encourage the Zionist regime to complete the annexation plan.

The Israelis are negotiating in their government about the scope of this annexation.

They prefer not to announce the exact area of annexation because there are differences between them over the spaces, mechanisms, and the extent of coordination with the international powers, especially with the United States. In general, there is an agreement within the Zionist regime that the issue of annexation is a strategic plan for them.

■ How do you assess the reaction of the Arab peoples to the normalization of ties with Israel?

A: According to what we monitor as a Palestinian people, parties, factions and based on indicators monitored through opinion polls published in think tank centers, and from what we

hear in the media, the Arab people still believe that Palestine is the central cause.

Each Arab country may have its own priorities, but in all around the Arab region, Palestine is present and is in peoples' hearts and consciousness. The Arab nations still consider Israel an occupying regime and an enemy, while the polls reveal that the overwhelming majority in the Arab world reject the plan of normalization with Israel.

Nationalist parties, besides the Islamic movements, express their rejection of this project. However, there are efforts by some regimes to integrate Israel into the region through their media outlets and to frustrate the Arab and Palestinian people by spreading rumors, lies, and misinformation.

They claim that the Palestinian people are the ones who forgot their cause and the Palestinian leadership has failed to follow its goals. These media accuse the Islamic Resistance of not serving the Palestinian people. However, we are confident that the Arab peoples support the Palestinian cause, and the Palestine map is present in the consciousness and heart of all Arabs. All Palestinian forces must move and raise their voice in rejecting the normalization of ties with Israel.

■ How did the Palestinian people react to Bahrain and the UAE which have normalized ties with Israel?

A: The Palestinians expressed their severe anger and great condemnation about the normalization of relations with Israel. These countries (the Emirates and Bahrain, etc.) were expected to provide Palestine with financial, military, and political support so that our people could face the Zionist aggression and be able to defend their land and sanctities in Jerusalem, but they stab us in the back by signing the Abraham Accord.

There is a vast consensus at the political level between parties, factions and the political elites that this normalization is a political crime against the Palestinian people, and Israel won't stop its occupation plan. It was a free gift for Israel to continue its aggression against the Palestinian

people.

■ What is the role of Hamas in unifying the Palestinian forces to confront the challenges?

A: Hamas, based on its national, moral, and religious responsibilities, moved from the beginning to unify "the Palestinian groups to face the challenges, especially the "deal of the century" supported by the American administration.

We contacted with all Palestinian factions in order to unify the Palestinian policies and succeeded in providing a positive atmosphere that was reflected in the West Bank in a joint press conference between Sheikh Al-Arouri, deputy head of the political office of Hamas, and Major General Jibril Rajoub, Secretary of the Central Committee of Fatah.

There is a process launched by the Palestinian parties to unify the policies and visions to counter the challenges, whether they are political, such as the "deal of the century, normalization of ties with Israel and the annexation plan, or the health crisis emerging with the breakout of the Corona pandemic.

These contacts are continuous and strenuous, and there is a positive atmosphere surrounding these contacts, and we will work with full force to push it forward so that we reach a state of unification, ending rifts, and restore credibility of the Palestinian groups by representing everyone and activating popular resistance in all places where the Palestinian people are, especially in the West Bank.

We will continue these efforts until it succeeds with all we can and with full force, because we believe that we can only face these challenges through unity and harmony.

These challenges make a real threat to the entire Palestine and not to one group or party, and it is an existential danger.

■ What is your comment on the Saudi desire and support for the process of normalizing ties with Israel?

A: After the UAE, Bahrain, and then Sudan signed the normalization deal with Israel, we heard a lot from the U.S. administration that there are countries seeking normalization with Israel, including Saudi Arabia, and we heard similar statements from the head of Mossad, and Trump spoke about five or more countries that welcome normalization with Israel.

We call on Saudi Arabia not to be dragged into this trap that is harmful to the Palestinian cause and dangerous for Arab national interests and destructive to the national interests of all these countries.

The relationship with the Zionist regime harms the leadership of countries that support this process, while we want to strengthen the Arab position and not to dismantle it. We call on Saudi Arabia not to submit to pressure and it must not stand on the enemies' side, and we hope that Saudis stand beside the Palestinian people and cause.

U.S. protests: Trump rally filled less than a third of Arena

Turnout for President Donald Trump's rally in Tulsa was just under 6,200 people, a spokesman for the city's fire department said. That's far fewer than the over 19,000-seat capacity at the BOK Center. The Trump campaign blamed "radical protesters" for blocking entrances and causing the cancellation of an earlier outdoor Trump speech, though there was little evidence the 100 or so protesters outside the arena had actually stopped anyone.

Trump at the rally rapped up his criticism of the protests that have broken out after the death of George Floyd on May 25, a day after warning against "protesters, anarchists, agitators, looters or lowlifes" who might plan to converge on Tulsa.

The president called Democrat Joe Biden a "puppet of the radical left." He referred to "very violent people," and near the end said: "When you see those lunatics all over the streets, it's damn nice to have arms."

Tensions heated up after Trump ended his speech. Police fired projectiles near demonstrators who flooded Tulsa's streets before backing off.

Earlier, #CancelYale was trending on Twitter as people took to social media to protest against the university's name, traced back to merchant and slave trader Elihu Yale. Users also pointed out an incident in 2018 when a white student called the police to report a black graduate who was napping in her dorm's common room.

Key Developments:
* Protests for Racial Justice Take Root in Suburbia
* Juneteenth Tests Corporate America's Pledges to Fight Racism
* NextDoor Cuts Police Communication Tool, Citing 'Anti-Racism'
* Quotas Can Help Fix the Glaring Whiteness of America's C-Suites

Putin still won't congratulate Biden despite start of formal transition

Russian President Vladimir Putin will not congratulate U.S. President-elect Joe Biden despite news that the Trump administration has approved the formal presidential transition process, the Kremlin said Tuesday.

Trump eased some lingering post-election uncertainty by tweeting late Monday that the agency that works with incoming administrations would begin work to assist Biden's team. While the president tweeted that it was time for the General Services Administration to "do what needs to be done," he remained steadfast in his claim that he won the election and would carry on with legal challenges to the result, Moscow Times reported.

"No, that's not enough," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters when asked whether Trump's tweet was reason for Putin to congratulate Biden.

UK faces new legal challenge over arms sales to Saudi Arabia

Campaigners have filed for a judicial review of the UK government's decision to renew arms sales to Saudi Arabia.

The Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT) said the weapons would "fuel destruction and prolong the conflict" in Yemen, where a Saudi-led coalition has employed widespread bombing in a war that has killed thousands of civilians, Guardia reported.

Last month, a United Nations report said countries arming parties involved in the conflict could be "aiding and assisting" war crimes, and said there had been "documented patterns" of serious international humanitarian law violations.

In a June 2019 case, also brought by CAAT, the court of appeal ruled British arms sales to Saudi Arabia were unlawful and said ministers had illegally signed off on arms exports without properly assessing the risk to civilians.

It ordered the then international trade secretary, Liam Fox, to hold an immediate review of at least £4.7bn-worth of arms deals with Saudi Arabia and the government suspended new arms sales to the country.

However, in July this year the government announced it was re-summing arms sales to Saudi Arabia, after a review concluded there had been only "isolated incidents" of airstrikes in Yemen that breached humanitarian law.

Turkey summons EU, German, Italian envoys over vessel search bid

Turkey has summoned the envoys to Ankara of the European Union, Germany and Italy to protest against a German attempt to search a Libya-bound, Turkish-flagged commercial ship, according to the foreign ministry.

The move came hours after Ankara accused the German navy of conducting an "unauthorized" search on the Roseline A freighter, al Jazeera report. j

Resistance News

Sheikh Salhab: Normalization of ties with Israel will not succeed

INTERNATIONAL TEHRAN— Sheikh Abdul-Adheem Salhab, head of the Islamic Awqaf Council in Occupied Jerusalem, has strongly denounced the Saudi regime for receiving Israeli premier Benjamin Netanyahu and holding a meeting with him.

In press remarks to the Palestinian Information Center (PIC), Sheikh Salhab also deplored the growing Arab normalization of ties with the occupation state with no regard for its crimes and violations against the Aqsa Mosque, Jerusalem and Palestine.

"The ferocity of the Israeli occupation and its attacks against the Aqsa Mosque are multiplying as part of its schemes and practices on the ground to Judaize the holy city culturally and demographically," the Awqaf official underlined.

However, he expressed his belief that the current Arab normalization of ties with the occupation state would be doomed to failure and would not dissuade the Palestinian people from upholding their land and rights.

A few days ago, different media sources affirmed that Netanyahu met with Saudi crown prince Mohamed bin Salman and US secretary of state Mike Pompeo in Neom, Saudi Arabia, on Sunday.

Netanyahu, along with Mossad chief Yossi Cohen, national security adviser Meir Ben-Shabbat and Netanyahu's military secretary Avi Bluth, used a private plane belonging to businessman Udi Angel, which the premier had used for past diplomatic trips. The plane left Israel at 5 pm on Sunday and returned after midnight.

The Israeli and Saudi sides discussed Iran and normalization. The Wall Street Journal reported, citing a senior Saudi adviser.

Biden surrounding himself with a cadre of right-wing hawks

By Stephen Lendman

Throughout most of the post-WW II period, permanent war on invented enemies has been official U.S. policy.

Since Woodrow Wilson involved the U.S. in WWI, Dems have been notoriously more belligerent than Republicans — Bush I, II, and Dick Cheney major exceptions.

Unlike most other Dems, Jack Kennedy transformed himself from a warrior to a peacemaker.

He opposed Pax Americana, supported nuclear disarmament, normalization with Soviet Russia, and respect for Palestinian rights.

For these and other reasons, the CIA eliminated him on November 22, 1963.

Pro-war Lyndon Johnson replaced him. A decade of Southeast Asia quagmire followed.

Throughout his time as U.S. senator and vice president, Biden was notoriously pro-war.

He's expected to surround himself with a cadre of right-wing hawks.

Former third-ranking U.S. war department official, its highest-ever-ranking woman, co-founder of the neocon Center for a New American Security (CNAS), war OF terror backer Michelle Flournoy is expected to be named Biden/Harris regime war secretary.

According to Bloomberg News on Sunday, Tony Blinken — longtime Biden foreign policy advisor — is expected to be named the likely incoming regime's secretary of state.

He, Flournoy, and Joe Biden backed all U.S. new millennium preemptive wars on nonbelligerent nations threatening no one.

Perpetual war on the phony pretext of supporting world peace and stability appears to be taking shape as one of the centerpieces of the presumptive Biden/Harris regime's geopolitical agenda.

Wars by other means against China, Russia, Iran, Venezuela, Cuba, North Korea, and other nations unwilling to subordinate their sovereign rights to U.S. interests are also likely to continue endlessly.

Blinken and Flournoy co-founded political strategy firm WestExec.

He was Vice President Biden's national security advisor from 2009 to 2013.

He was Obama/Biden regime's deputy national security advisor from 2013 to 2015.

From 2015 — 2017, he was deputy secretary of state.

Time and again he argued for "tough diplomacy." If unable to achieve compliance with U.S. demands, he said "military action is possible."



An advocate of American exceptionalism (sic), the indispensable nation (sic), he said the following weeks earlier:
"On leadership, whether we like it or not, the world just doesn't organize itself."

The U.S. always "played a lead role in doing a lot of that organizing, helping to write the rules, to shape the norms, and animate the institutions that govern relations among nations."

"When we're not engaged, when we don't lead, then one or two things is likely to happen."

"Either some other country tries to take our place — but probably not in a way that advances our interests or values — or no one does."

"And then you get chaos or a vacuum filled by bad things before it's filled with good things. Either way, that's bad for us."

Pre-election he said if Biden is elected, "(t)he first thing is we have to dig out from a strategic deficit that (Trump) has put us in," adding:

The incumbent "helped China advance its own key strategic goals."

A Dem regime will "step up...Taiwan's" defensive capabilities.

"We need to focus on readiness for whatever may come."

On U.S. relations with Israel, he said the Biden/Harris regime "would not tie military assistance to Israel to any political decisions that it makes, period, full stop."

Support for its apartheid rule, occupation, and theft of Palestinian land, along with cross-border hostilities will continue unchanged.

Last summer, Blinken said Biden (if elected) will use the JCPOA "as a platform to try to build a stronger and longer deal working with (U.S.) partners," adding:

E3 countries and Brussels are "likely to join us in trying to curb other actions by Iran that we find objectionable."

Biden advisor Jake Sullivan called it "impractical to think that the United States will provide significant sanctions relief without assurances that Iran will immediately begin negotia-

tions on a follow-on (JCPOA) agreement that at least extends the timelines of the deal and addresses issues of verification and intercontinental ballistic missiles (sic)."

According to Bloomberg, he's expected to be named presumptive Biden/Harris national security advisor.

Linda Thomas-Greenfield reportedly will be named UN envoy.

He and Blinken were involved in earlier JCPOA negotiations that produced the landmark agreement.

Now it appears they want it hardened, notably to include restrictions on Iran's legitimate missile program.

Under the UN Charter and other international law, the right of self-defense is inviolable.

Iran's military, its missiles, and other weapons development are solely for defense, not offense.

The country is the region's leading proponent of peace, stability, and cooperative relations with other nations.

Its anti-war geopolitical agenda stands in sharp contrast to U.S., NATO, Israeli belligerence.

Hardline US policies toward Iran are expected to continue at least largely unchanged if Biden/Harris succeeds Trump.

In public remarks and op-eds, Blinken supports the Russiagate hoax, earlier saying:

Trump's "collusion with Russia's plans is really striking (sic)."

Putin "managed to sow doubt about our electoral system (sic)."

"He managed to help defeat the candidate that he despised, Hillary Clinton (sic)."

"He managed to get the first national security adviser (John Bolton) fired (sic)."

"Every step along the way, either knowingly or not, wittingly or not (Trump) has aided and abetted this effort at delegitimizing our institutions and our leaders (sic)."

Whenever hostile claims are made about Russia and other independent nations on the U.S. target list for regime change, supportive evidence is absent — rendering them baseless.

Note: Bloomberg reported that Biden chief of staff Ron Klain said initial cabinet announcements will likely be made on Tuesday.

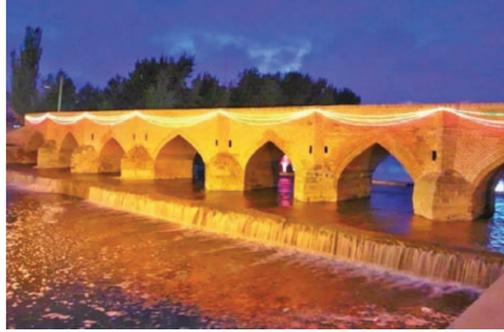
Stephen Lendman, born in 1934 in Boston, started writing on major world and national issues began in the summer of 2005. In early 2007, radio hosting followed. Lendman now hosts the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network three times weekly. Distinguished guests are featured. Listen live or archived. Major world and national issues are discussed. Lendman is a 2008 Project Censored winner and 2011 Mexican Journalists Club international journalism award recipient.

(Source: Press TV)

Lengthy ancient bridge being reinforced, restored in northeast Iran

TOURISM TEHRAN — A new round of restoration work has been commenced on the Safavid-era (1501–1736) Shaharchay bridge, which is considered one of the longest of its kind in northeast Iran.

This phase of the restoration project seeks to strengthen, reinforce and repair the foundation of the bridge as well as replace the worn-out bricks and stones, provincial tourism chief Ahmad Hamzezhadeh announced on Monday.



Constructed from bricks, stone slabs, and mortar, the monument is located in Miyaneh, East Azarbaijan province. The monument was inscribed on the National Heritage list in 1969.

The rehabilitation work is carried out under the supervision of experienced cultural heritage experts, the official added.

The style of architecture and the type of materials used in the construction of the bridge is the same as that of the gorgeous Si-o-Se-Pol, a historical bridge with 33 arches in the city of Isfahan, sources say.

The only difference is that Shaharchay bridge has 23 arches with a simpler structure.

Iranian Azerbaijan was a center of several ancient civilizations. It formed part of Urartu and later of Media. In the 4th century BC, it was conquered by Alexander the Great and was named Atropatene after one of Alexander's generals, Atropates, who established a small kingdom there. The area returned to Persian (Iranian) rule under the Sasanians in the 3rd century CE.

Soaked in history and culture for millennia, the provincial Tabriz embraces several historical and religious sites, including Jameh Mosque of Tabriz and Arg of Tabriz, and UNESCO-registered Tabriz Historic Bazaar Complex to name a few. The city became the capital of the Mongol Il-Khan Mahmud Gazan (1295–1304) and his successor, Timur (Tamerlane), a Turkic conqueror, took it in 1392. Some decades later the Kara Koyunlu Turkmen made it their capital, it was when the famous Blue Mosque was built in Tabriz.

Tabriz retained its administrative status under the Safavid dynasty until 1548 when Shah Tahmasp I relocated his capital westward to Qazvin. During the next two centuries, Tabriz changed hands several times between Persia and the Ottoman Empire. During World War I, the city was temporarily occupied by Turkish and then Soviet troops.

The myth and magic of the Persian carpet

HERITAGE TEHRAN — Most carpets and rugs are just floor coverings, some are valuable works of art and a rare few are the stuff of myth and legend. They fly or they represent ancient magical jewels. To sum it up, they're magical. Any time you hear the story of a magical carpet it's a fair bet you're hearing a tale that originated about a Persian rug.

Persian carpets or rugs, defined as a kind of precious textile fluffy ground cloth woven from cotton, wool, and silk in some cases, are considered as one of the ancient industries of Iran; and, as per the artifacts recovered from people of the past and what writings of historians, tourists, and fighters implies, weaving different types of carpets in Iran, as a craft and public, rural, and nomadic art have long been popular and ancestrally incentive.

Investigating texture and images of the oldest carpet in the world, i.e. the Pazyryk carpet, suggests that the carpet motifs are considerably similar to the reliefs in Persepolis, and many researchers consider this carpet as a Persian carpet woven by people of Median-Parthian territories or Persia (Greater Khorasan), according to Visit Iran.

Baharestan Carpet, dating back to the Sassanid period which is also known and associated with Bahar Khosrow and Bahar Kasra names, is well known as another symbol of evolution in carpet weaving and the peripheral industries such as design and dyeing in ancient Iran, and was fragmented and destroyed being transmitted to Medina after the Arab invasion of Iran.

At the domination of the Mongols (thirteenth or fourteenth centuries CE) which coincided with the reign of Ghazan Khan, the industry reached a very high level in terms of style and technique. However, the most apparent excellence of Iranian classic art of carpet weaving, which is also referred to as the renaissance of Persian rug, is believed to have taken place in the reign of Safavid Shahs especially Shah Tahmasp and Shah Abbas. In that period, medallion carpets replaced the carpets which were then known as having Mongolian and Timurid designs, and besides the medallion carpets, weaving carpets with images of animals or hunting grounds in their patterns became popular.

Today, there are around 3000 carpets remained from this period, and are kept in the world's greatest museums or personal collections. Overall, the motifs and patterns of the carpets represent how the craftsmen or artists view the environment, climate, and the nature around; and, motifs and patterns of handmade carpets sometimes convey a message representing the current culture, history, architecture, climate, and the time of weaving.

Also, the geometrical patterns of Iranian carpet, sometimes implies a verse of poetry, a verse or sura of the holy Quran, a legendary or historical tale, or a hadith from the prophets.

According to some carpet experts and designers, carpet patterns or textures can be divided into two styles quite distinct from each other: the rural style (broken or geometric patterns) and urban style (curved or revolving patterns); in some patterns, these two styles are combined leading to an almost compound style called as revolving-broken pattern.

At present as well, the most important industrial product of Iran is handmade or hand-woven carpet and rugs, and the major centers of carpet weaving in Iran are the cities of Tabriz, Isfahan, Kashan, Kerman, and Mashhad.

One-stop: see Iran attractions like never before

By Afshin Mojleshi

TEHRAN — If you are in Tehran and desire to get to know the cultural resources of the country at a glance, the Miniature Garden Museum is the right place for you to roam through.

Spanning 2.9 hectares in area, the park is home to replicas of the most important historical landmarks and landscapes including giant models of some UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Miniature maquettes of other UNESCO-registered sites will be constructed in the future, according to the Tehran Municipality website.

There are some eighty species of floras and plants that are endemic in the country, and a permanent photo gallery showing a variety of real shots of the World Heritage sites.

One of the key characteristics of the ensemble is that its replica models have entirely been designed and constructed by domestic sculptors and artists, according to executives.

The replicas are at one twenty-fifth of their original size. One of the complex's highlights is probably the 17th-century Naghsh-e Jahan (Imam) Square that itself is composed of the Royal Mosque, the Ali Qapu Palace, the Mosque of Sheikh Lotfollah, the magnificent Portico of Qaysariyeh, and a 15th-century Timurid palace all linked by a series of two-storied arcades.



Students visit a giant model of the UNESCO-registered Imam Square at Tehran's Miniature Garden Museum.

The park also features copies of the Armenian Monastic Ensembles in the north-west

of the country; Bam and its Cultural Landscape, and ancient mudbrick fortress in the

south-east; magnificent ruins of Persepolis that was the capital of the mighty Achaemenid Empire in southern Iran; Tchogha Zanbil, a prehistoric Elamite ziggurat in the southwest; and Pasargadae which was the first dynastic capital of the Achaemenid Empire, founded by Cyrus II the Great.

The sites include Gonbad-e Qabus, the one-millennium-old brick tower in the north; Jameh Mosque in Isfahan; the 18th-century Golestan Palace in downtown Tehran; rock-carved dwellings with the Cultural Landscape of Maymand at the southern extremity of Iran's central mountains; and several of famous Persian gardens scattered across the country.

It sometimes plays host to occasional sales exhibitions dedicated to breadwinner women to showcase their handicrafts such as handmade shoes and clothing, embroidery, and traditional jewelry.

The Miniature Garden Park opened its doors to the public in 2014. It is situated in district 8 of Tehran, sandwiched between West Janbazan St. in the south, Kerman St. in the west, and Imam Ali Hwy. in the east.

The miniature park is regularly visited by tour groups of schoolchildren, students, families, and domestic sightseers and it's also a destination for foreign travelers more or less. It is a must-see for people who are not able to traverse the country on tours of these heritage sites.

Lack of budget halts maintenance of millennia-old site near Tehran

➔ Back in 2016, the archaeological enclosure opened to the public as an open-air museum of cultural heritage. It was announced in the same year that the archaeological enclosure is in the queue for registration in the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Experts say the significance of the site was such that the invaders, after occupying it, chose it as their settlement and their rulers built a castle to control a major part of their territories in the central plateau.

Considering the scattered form of the mounds and according to earthenware findings, it can be said that the area of Ozbaki site is about 100 acres. Before excavations at Ozbaki Tappeh, the oldest sites so far found in the central Iranian Plateau were only found in the Silk Tappeh near Kashan and Zagheh Tappeh in the Qazvin Plain.

Until the 1970s, the in-depth knowledge of the chronicle of prehistoric cultures in the Central Plateau was based on the results of French excavations in Kashan's Silk mound. According to this chronology, since the most ancient times up to the mid 4th millennium, BC the societies of these regions belonged to the same culture, one which continued

during the above millennia continuously.

However, in the early 1970s, excavations led by this author in the Qabrestan Tappeh in the Qazvin plain revealed new findings in the form of different earthenware. In excavations in Ozbaki Tappeh we found similar remains of earthenware called Plum Ceramics because of their color. Coherent architectural remains belonging to this culture were also found, leaving no doubt about the invasion of migrating intruders, confirming social and political changes in this part of the land of Iran. Although there is still no concrete evidence of the origin of the invaders, it seems that their original homeland was a region beyond the Caucasus Mountains.

Furthermore, a minute study of the prehistoric earthenware of the Central Plateau shows that the differences between these periods are so considerable that each kind of pot represents a different ethnic group, indicating the movements of different ethnic groups in the Central Plateau. Doubtlessly future studies on human bone findings, particularly DNA tests will answer such questions.

Studies also suggest that the discovery of objects



Pottery spouted vessel, unearthed from Ozbaki Tepe, Nazarabad, 2nd millennium BC, National Museum of Iran

Permanent handicrafts market to open in Taleqan

TOURISM TEHRAN — A permanent handicrafts market-place will be opening in Taleqan, a rural district in Alborz province near capital Tehran, to assist local artisans putting products directly on sale.

In order to support crafters to offer their handmade products and considering the touristic nature of the region, establishing such a market seems necessary, Taleqan's tourism director Saied Shahraki said on Sunday.

Over the past months, the coronavirus outbreak has overshadowed handicrafts exports and sales across the country. 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 Febru-

ary 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.

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 trans-

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

Alborz province is surrounded by Mazandaran, Tehran, Markazi, and Qazvin provinces. Its name is driven by the Alborz Mountains. The significant part of the mountains is located in the north part of the province. Historical resources and documents as well as archaeological studies indicate that Alborz has a rich culture dating back to prehistoric times.

Archaeological hills, mansion, and garden placed on protected heritage list

TOURISM TEHRAN — A select of ten historical properties have recently been added to Iran's National Heritage List in a bid to receive more protection than ever before.

New entries include archaeological hills, a mansion, and a garden, all situated in the northern Golestan province, the provincial tourism department announced on Monday.

The registration was officially announced on the same day in a letter the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts submitted to the governor-general of the province.

Four archaeological hills across the province as well as Minoodasht Anthropology Museum are among the properties added to the National Heritage list.



The list also includes Sherbaf and Sepahsalar mansions, Fakhreddin Asad Gorgani Hall, Bandar-e Torkaman Train Station, and Shah-Abaasi Road.

Golestan is reportedly embracing some 2,500 historical and natural sites, with UNESCO-registered Gonbad-e Qabus — a one-millennium-old brick tower — which is of high architectural importance as an exemplar and innovative design of the early-Islamic-era architecture.

Narratives say the majestic tower has influenced various subsequent designers of tomb towers and other cylindrical commemorative structures both in the region and beyond. The UNESCO comments that Gonbad-e Qabus bears testimony to the cultural exchange between Central Asian nomads and the ancient civilization of Iran.

Virus spike pushes tribe festival online

TOURISM TEHRAN — The 14th edition of the International Festival of Tribes Culture will be launched entirely online as a spike in coronavirus cases forces organizers to cancel plans to stage the regional event this year.

The festival was scheduled to be held in Iran's northern Golestan province, which is home to various ethnic communities, late in November as in previous editions, however, due to the coronavirus pandemic and to prevent the spread of the virus, it will be held online, provincial tourism chief Ahmad Tajari announced on Tuesday.

The festival is known as a cultural brand of the province domestically and in the in-

ternational scene, which has been held for thirteen editions so far, due to the unprecedented welcome of the people and officials, he added.

Producing appropriate content in different types, holding virtual exhibitions, workshops, and related training courses on regional arts, handicrafts, souvenirs, and culinary traditions as well as holding online competitions are some of the programs of this edition of the festival, the official explained.

Diplomats, cultural officials, indigenous performers, craftspeople, and artists from Iran and neighboring countries such as Armenia, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Iraq, and Afghanistan participated in the previous

editions of the festival, which was mostly held in the capital city of Gorgan and the city of Gonbad-e Qabus.

Previous editions of the festival put the spotlight on different regional cultures, folklore performances and local music, various tribal handicrafts, and souvenirs such as Siyah-Chador (nomadic black tents, and they also staged various competitions.

Golestan province is home to various ethnic groups including Turkmen, Kazak, Katoul, Qizilbash Turk, Baluch, Semmani, Khorasan amongst others. The northern Iranian province enjoys a colorful landscape and different subcultures as well.

Various tribes and ethnic groups who live



in different parts of Iran are just like colors, which make a great painting. Iran is home to about 20 ethnic groups who live in different regions of the country.

Iranian mountains: a great place to see plants you never have seen before

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN — Iran is a mountainous country harboring an extraordinary vascular flora including many rare and endemic plant species in the alpine zone.

The importance of mountain biodiversity for the whole of humanity triggers the necessary changes both in attitude and behavior required to secure mountain biodiversity and its genetic resources for future generations.

Mountain environments cover about 12 percent of the world's land surface and directly support those 22 percent of the world's people who live within mountain regions and their immediate forelands. Mountain biodiversity provides basic ecosystem services such as freshwater, timber, medicinal plants, and recreation for the surrounding lowlands and their increasingly urbanized areas, according to the 'mountain biodiversity and global change' report published by FAO in 2010.

By preventing erosion, mountain plant diversity secures livelihoods, traffic routes, and catchment quality. More than 50 percent of mankind benefits from mountains as the world's water towers. They host some of the world's most complex agro-cultural gene pools and traditional management practices.

Based on total mountain land area only, a conservative estimate of the world's mountain plant species is 50,000 species of flowering plants (out of a total of ca. 260,000). Given the inclusion of tropical lowland mountains in the above definition, the number may well be twice as high.

On average, a single mountain system such as the Alps, the Pyrenees, the Scandes, or the New Zealand Alps hosts a few hundred (often 500–600) different species in the alpine belt alone. There are no such estimates available for animals, invertebrates (e.g. insects) in particular, but a common estimate for temperate to cool climates is a 10-fold higher animal than plant species diversity.

Iranian mountains among unique global heritage

Referring to the rich biodiversity and unique characteristic of mountains in the world, the report calls Iran a great place to see plants you never have seen before; according to which, more than 100 mountain peaks can be found in Iran, some in the Zagros and Alborz mountains which reach altitudes of more than 4000 m.

The upper limit of vascular plants is 4800 m, the highest point where a plant has been found in Iran. A first evaluation of the vascular flora shows that 682 species belonging to 193 genera and 39 families are known from the



alpine zone. This zone is characterized by many species of hemicryptophytes and thorny cushions; species numbers decline strongly as altitude increases. The mountain flora of Iran is exceptional.

The Iranian mountains are situated between Anatolia/Caucasus and the Hindu Kush; their flora contains elements from both regions. However, more than 50 percent of these species are endemic to Iran (they occur nowhere else) and some are remarkable relic species, primarily local endemics with a narrow ecological range. These plants need strong conservation and protection management, not only because they are rare but because the ecosystems where they live are fragile, often very restricted, small and isolated in high elevation areas.

These plants adapted to the cold are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and intensive grazing over large parts of Iran's mountains is expected to exert additional pressure on them. Many of these plants are potentially endangered and vulnerable species, and their threatened status should be assessed according to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) criteria.

Land-use change among most dangerous incidents

The report then points to the most dangerous incidents that severely affect the mountain biodiversity, including, natural disasters, wildfire, overgrazing, and the most destructive land-use changes caused by humans.

The natural disasters in the form of landslides, floods, and avalanches strike mountains each year, affecting only small areas but also habitat diversity and ecosystem dynamics. These natural disturbances result in surprisingly fast natural regeneration of plants. In contrast,

human impact dominates large areas, and its effect is often irreversible. Land-use change's effects can be more dramatic than natural disasters or climatic change.

Climate change impact on diversity

Then it highlights that climate change can have dire consequences for mountain diversity, including, an increase in atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases, progressively earlier onset of spring activities, migration of plant and animal species, or even extinction.

Global warming threatens mountain biodiversity by forcing life zones upslope, thus reducing the higher land area for organisms specifically adapted to the cold. With higher temperatures predicted, longer summers with a greater incidence of drought are expected in many mountain regions worldwide. Although effects vary regionally and the extent of the increase of temperatures is debated, it is clear that the Earth has experienced exceptional warming during the past century, one that cannot be explained by natural drivers.

Climate change is linked to an increase in atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases (Carbon dioxide CO₂, Methane CH₄, Nitrous oxide N₂O, halocarbons) caused by human activities.

Greenhouse gases affect the absorption, scattering, and emission of radiation in the atmosphere and at the Earth's surface (IPCC 2007). Studies show that temperatures are very likely to increase more in the 21st century.

Rising temperatures are coupled to a decrease in the mountain glacier area, shorter duration of snow covers at elevations below treeline in temperate and boreal latitudes, and increased annual precipitation with otherwise changing

seasonality, i.e. not excluding periodic droughts in summer.

It is expected that many small glaciers will disappear, while the volume of large glaciers will be reduced by 30 to 70 percent by 2050, with consequent reductions in discharge in spring and summer.

Also, climate warming since the 1960s has led to a progressively earlier onset of spring activities below the tree line. Above the tree line, warming-associated increases of precipitation may enhance snowpack in some regions, and thus even delay spring.

Plants show an earlier bud break or flowering, while increased temperatures have changed the timing of hibernation, breeding of animals, and, in some cases, the dependence of predators on traditional prey. The effects of climate change on one species are likely to affect a cascade of other species in the food web.

Another widely observed phenomenon related to climate warming is the migration of plant and animal species. In the northern hemisphere, a northwards shift of bird and butterfly species has been observed as well as migration to higher elevations. The size of the cool habitats, however, will shrink significantly, leaving less space for more species.

Protecting valuable mountain ecosystems

Management of mountain biodiversity has increasingly been recognized as a global responsibility. In the past 40 years, protected areas have increased six- to eight-fold, largely in mountain areas, expanding from 9 percent of the total mountain area in 1997 to 16 percent in 2010.

While protected areas are essential, they alone cannot ensure the conservation of biodiversity or cultural heritage. Traditional indigenous communities often use and manage biodiversity in mountain protected areas, and maybe even more threatened than biodiversity itself.

Mountain regions where people live and work require innovative and respectful approaches to conservation; local people should be encouraged towards stewardship of both their natural and cultural heritage. Participation of mountain communities at all stages is crucial in the sustainable management and use of biodiversity.

A gradual paradigm shift in conservation policies and practices has included the acceptance of communities as an integral part of national conservation initiatives, and the integration of many global conventions.

Mountain land users also may be compensated for the lack of on-site benefits through payment for environmental services.

Teacher of 'silent flowers': in memory of Baghcheban

1 → The first kindergarten he established was called "Baghche-ye Atfal" which means "Children's Garden". That is why he was given the nickname Baghcheban which literally means "gardener" in the Persian language.

Few people know of his life's ups and downs. He left school as a child due to financial problems and worked in architecture and confectionery with his father, but because he loved writing, at the same time, he wrote for satirical magazines and gradually became the editor of the magazine.

In 1928 he wrote the first Iranian children's book in Persian. The book was called baba barfi which means "father snow" in Persian.

He used to say that if a primary and secondary school teacher is called a "teacher", the kindergarten teacher is a kind of guardian of flowers, so he is a gardener, and he changed his family name from Asgarzadeh to Baghcheban.



Baghcheban was critical of the education system in Iran and believed that new methods should be used.

He considered one of the reasons for the low quality of literacy to be the lack of preparation for pre-school and said that for proper education, one should use different methods of playing, role play, poetry, song,

and storytelling.

In 1924, he established the first school for the deaf in Tehran.

His valuable works in the field of literature include childhood life; Alphabet teaching instruction; Self-taught alphabet for the elderly; secrets of education; Baghcheban Alphabet; method of teaching the deaf; and etc.

The translation of Khayyam's quatrains into the local Azeri language is unique among other books and works of him, because the translation of Khayyam's quatrains into Turkish, which is also poetic as the original quatrain, is unprecedented and amazing in its kind.

Finally, the teacher of the silent flowers of Iran, after a lifetime of efforts to promote Iranian culture, passed away on November 25, 1966, at the age of 81.

But his name always remains in the minds and souls of the children of Iran, especially those who could not read and write without him.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → C

Clean air days double for Tehraners this year

Tehrani citizens have experienced a 2-fold rise in the number of clean air days since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (started March 21, 2018) compared to the same period last year, an official with Department of Environment has said.

Since the aforementioned period, clean air stayed in the capital for 27 days, while last year, during the same period, Tehraners breathed clean air for only 14 days, IRNA quoted Shina Ansari as saying on Sunday. Also, the air quality of the capital was healthy for 262 days, while being unhealthy for sensitive groups for 59 days, she said, adding that compared to the same period last year, Tehran's air quality reached healthy levels for 229 days and 97 days of unhealthy for sensitive groups has hit the capital.

تهرانی‌ها امسال دو برابر بیشتر روزهای پاک داشتند

مدیرکل دفتر پایش فراگیر سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست گفت: تهرانی‌ها از ابتدای امسال تا امروز (۱۲ اسفند ۹۷) نسبت به مدت مشابه سال گذشته، دو برابر هوای پاک تنفس کردند.

شینا انصاری روز یکشنبه در گفت‌وگو با ایرنا افزود: تهران از ابتدای امسال تا امروز، ۲۷ روز هوای پاک داشته در حالیکه سال گذشته در مدت مشابه، تعداد روزهای پاک ۱۴ روز بوده است.

وی اظهار داشت: همچنین از ابتدای امسال تاکنون، کیفیت هوای پایتخت برای ۲۶۲ روز قابل قبول و ۵۹ روز ناسالم برای گروه‌های حساس بوده که در مدت مشابه سال گذشته به ترتیب ۲۲۹ و ۹۷ روز بوده که هشت روز نیز ناسالم برای تمام گروه‌ها بوده است.

10-year plan on technological processing of medicinal plants developed

SOCIETY TEHRAN — A 10-year plan for the development of technological activities in the field of medicinal plants and the growth of herbal industrial products was prepared by the headquarters for developing medicinal herbs.

The plan is considered as a roadmap in the field of medicinal plants industry, according to the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology.



According to this program, the most important medicinal plants with useful properties are identified, then knowledge-based, creative, and technology companies that are active in the industry are supported.

In order to determine the appropriate indicators for control and expert supervision in the process of production of seeds and seedlings of medicinal plants and the development of required standards, the roadmap was developed.

The main activities of the project are carried out in three fields, one of which is the registration of plant genetic resources, indigenous and local cultivars of medicinal plants.

The industry of medicinal plants and the extraction of essential oils and active ingredients from these plants are among the industries that require advanced technology. In fact, it is not possible to continue working in this industry using traditional methods.

The headquarters for developing medicinal herbs affiliated to the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology is working to provide a bright horizon for thousands of people who are working in the field of medicinal plants by developing strategic documents and plans.

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 the 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 the medicinal plants development project of the Ministry of Agriculture, announced the increase of 25,000 hectares of medicinal plant 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.

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.

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.

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) are allocated annually.

LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 66)

(Source: saadfoundation.ir)

❑ چیزی که، کسی که، جایی که = کتاب کار

ک is a conjunction also meaning who, whom, which and that:

مداد چیست؟ مداد چیزی است که با آن می‌نویسیم.

کارگر کیست؟ کارگر کسی است که کار می‌کند.

رستوران کجاست؟ رستوران جایی است که در آن غذا می‌خوریم.

❑ **ذکر** = کتاب کار

● تمرین ۱. "هن" یا "نخ" بگذارید و غلط‌ها را درست بنویسید:

۱. () خیابان کارگر فقط یک فروشگاه لباس دارد.

۲. () احمد برای خرید کتاب به دانشگاه می‌رود.

۳. () او از مغازه‌های تهران چیزی نمی‌خرد.

۴. () خیابان کارگر کتابفروشی زیاد دارد.

۵. () دیروز احمد به میدان انقلاب رفت.

۶. () احمد در میدان انقلاب ساعت خرید.

INTERNATIONAL DAILY
www.tehrantimes.com

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Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807

Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603

Printed at: Jame Jam Bartar Borna - 44197737

Tehrantimes79

No. 18, Bimeh Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran
P.O. Box: 14155-4843
Zip Code: 1599814713

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Richness is not having many belongings, but richness is contentment of the soul.
Prophet Muhammad (S)

3rd Sculpture Symposium of Iranian Luminaries kicks off

The symposium aims to bring young and talented sculptors together with the veterans to exchange experience and views.

Last year, a number of 26 sculptors gathered at the Einoddoleh House, a Qajar building in northeastern Tehran, and worked on busts of 26 well-known cultural personalities.

Graphic designer Qobad Shiva, actors Ali Nasirian, Mohammad-Ali Keshavarz, and Davud Rashidi, painters Ali-Akbar Sadeqi and Parviz Kalantari, filmmakers Ali Hatami and Abbas Kiarostami, sculptor Parviz Tanavoli and musician Majid Entezami were among the figures whose busts were made.

Sara Azizi, Fardin Esfandiari, Ata Sahrai, Sara Taqavi, Ali Etebar, Enayat Sahrai and Yasser Hosseini were among the sculptors participating in the second edition.

The participating sculptors of the third edition have not been announced yet.

Albert Hirschman's "Exit, Voice, and Loyalty" comes into Iranian bookstores

Albert O. Hirschman's treatise "Exit, Voice, and Loyalty" has recently been published by the Pegah-e Ruzegar-e Now Publications in Tehran.

The book has been translated into Persian by Mohammadreza Farhadipur.

An innovator in contemporary thought on economic and political development looks here at decline rather than growth.



A copy of the Persian translation of Albert O. Hirschman's "Exit, Voice, and Loyalty".

Albert O. Hirschman makes a basic distinction between alternative ways of reacting to deterioration in business firms and, in general, to dissatisfaction with organizations: one, "exit", is for the member to quit the organization or for the customer to switch to the competing product, and the other, "voice", is for members or customers to agitate and exert influence for change "from within."

The efficiency of the competitive mechanism, with its total reliance on exit, is questioned for certain important situations. As exit often undercuts voice while being unable to counteract decline, loyalty is seen in the function of retarding exit and of permitting voice to play its proper role.

The interplay of the three concepts turns out to illuminate a wide range of economic, social, and political phenomena. As the author states in the preface, "having found my own unifying way of looking at issues as diverse as competition and the two-party system, divorce and the American character, black power and the failure of 'unhappy' top officials to resign over Vietnam, I decided to let myself go a little."

Hirschman was professor of social science, emeritus, at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, following a career of prestigious appointments, honors and awards. Perhaps the most widely known and admired of his many books are "Exit, Voice, and Loyalty" and "The Passions and the Interests".

Indonesian festival to screen seven films from Iran

A R T TEHRAN — The 15th Jogja-NETPAC Asian Film Festival has picked seven movies by Iranian filmmakers to be screened in the various categories of the event, which will open today in Jogja on the Indonesian island of Java.

The lineup includes "Najibeh" by Mostafa Gandomkar, "Numbness" by Hossein Mahkam, "Gabriel" by Yusef Kargar, "The Badger" by Kazem Mollai, "The Warden" by Nima Javidi, "Just 6.5" by Saied Rustai and "A Hairy Tale" by Hodayun Ghanizadeh.

"Najibeh" will go on screen in the Asian Perspectives of the five-day festival. Najibeh is a religious and poor elderly woman who wants to commit a crime because she needs to go to prison for a while. To accomplish her goal, she needs an accomplice, so she tries to get help from her friend.

The section also features "Numbness", which is about Jalal, a philosophy student dropout who is influenced by the community to free himself from any constraints. He realizes that his sister Mary, who has bipolar disease, is married to a bourgeois man named Shahrokh who is addicted to betting on football.

"Gabriel" is the sole Iranian film



Navid Mohammadzadeh acts in a scene from "The Warden".

selected for Light of Asia, a non-competitive section for short films. Gabriel is a middle-aged man who lives with his son. His wife has been missing for some time. All the people are suspicious of her. One day news comes to him and

he has to choose one: expediency or conscience?!

"The Badger" will be screened in the NETPAC section. The film tells the story of Sudeh Sharifzadegan, whose 11-year-old son, "Matiar", is kidnapped

right before her second marriage. After considerable effort, Sudeh is forced to ask for the ransom money from her ex-husband, Peyman. After Matiar's release, Sudeh, being curious, comes to the sudden realization that it was all her son's plan to provide the grounds for his father's return.

The story of "The Warden" is set in 1966, when a prison in southern Iran is being evacuated because of its proximity to the city's new airport. Major Jahed, the warden, transfers the prisoners to the new prison and then soon receives a report that one prisoner, sentenced to death, is missing!

"Just 6.5" a drama about drug abuse and addiction will also be screened in NETPAC.

This section will also screen "A Hairy Tale" about Danesh who is in love with both cinema and Homa, a well-known actress. Kazem Khan is in love with both the movie, "Casablanca" and his barber shop's certificate. Shapoor is in love with both canned tuna and politics. The city is full of beggars while an earthquake may happen soon. Every now and then, a body of a dead woman, with a shaved head, is found near the sea. As Inspector Kiani says: It's a messy situation.

Cinéma VÉRITÉ to screen Frederick Wiseman's 2020 doc "City Hall"



"City Hall" by Frederick Wiseman.

A R T TEHRAN — "City Hall", Frederick Wiseman's documentary that shows why government is necessary for people to successfully live together, will be screened at the 14th edition of Cinéma VÉRITÉ, Iran's major international festival for documentary films.

The documentary was shot in 2018 and 2019, which means that it already plays like a pre-COVID-19 time capsule.

The documentary illustrates that city government touches almost every aspect of our lives. Most of us are unaware of or take for granted these necessary services such as police, fire, sanitation, veterans affairs, elder support, parks, licensing of various professional activities, record keeping of birth, marriage and death as well as hundreds of other activities that support Boston residents and visitors.

It shows the efforts by Boston city government to provide these services. The film also illustrates the variety of ways the city administration enters into civil discourse with the citizens of Boston. Mayor Walsh and his administration are presented addressing a number of their policy priorities, which include racial justice, affordable housing, climate action, and homelessness.

"City Hall" shows a city government successfully offering a wide variety of important and necessary services to a major American city whose population

exemplifies the history of diversity of America. The Boston city government is designed and strives to offer these services in a manner consistent with the Constitution and democratic norms.

The Documentary and Experimental Film Center (DEFC) as the main organizer of Cinéma VÉRITÉ has selected a variety of top documentaries to screen during the festival, which will be held totally online from December 8 to 15 due to a spike in the COVID-19 cases in the country.

"Kubrick by Kubrick", a documentary by the French filmmaker Gregory Monro, and "The Cordillera of Dreams", the winner of the 2019 Golden Eye Award for best documentary film at the 72nd edition of the Cannes Film Festival by Chilean filmmaker Patricio Guzman has also been selected to go on screen at the festival.

Francisco Bermejo's documentary "The Other One" and "Wintopia", a documentary tracing the enigmatic footsteps of iconic Canadian documentary filmmaker Peter Wintonick through his daughter Mira's lens, are also included.

Iran to host Italy for holding film festival

A R T TEHRAN — The Embassy of Italy in Tehran plans to organize a festival of films from Italian directors in Iran.

The five-day festival named "Spotlight on Italian Cinema" will go online from December 1 on the Iranian platform www.hashure.com.

The festival will be organized in collaboration with Iran's Art and Experience Cinema.

The event was first to be organized from February 20 to 26 at the Iranian Artists Forum in Tehran, Golestan Cineplex in Shiraz and Labkhand Cinema on Kish Island.

However, it was canceled three days after its opening due to the shutdown of the cultural centers and programs in Iran following the outbreak of coronavirus.



A poster for the Italian festival "Spotlight on Italian Cinema".

The lineup of the festival will be announced in the near future.

The previous lineup included "Equilibrium" by Vincenzo Marra, "The Path of Oil" by Bernardo Bertolucci, "My Mother" by Nanni Moretti and "Martin Eden" by Pietro Marcello.

"Where the Shadows Fall" by Valentina Pedicini, "Intrepid: A Lonely Hero" by Gianni Amelio and "Happy as Lazzaro" by Alice Rohrwacher were also among the films selected to be screened during the program.

The festival was scheduled to be attended by Italian filmmaker Marra and producer Sergio Toffetti.

Movies by Italian filmmakers were screened during European Film Week that Iran's Art and Experience Cinema and the European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC) co-organized for Iranian

filmgoers from November 7 to 16.

In addition, Italian filmmaker and critic Gianfranco Angelucci discussed "The Clowns", a 1970 mockumentary film by Italian filmmaker Federico Fellini about the human fascination with clowns and circuses during a workshop on the online festival.

Movies from Bulgaria, Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Slovenia, Finland, Denmark and England were also screened during the cultural event.

Filmmakers from Europe, including Dutch director Jean van de Velde, Cypriot producer Marios Pipheris and Swiss producer Thierry Spicher, and several Iranian cineastes held several workshops during the festival.

Director Kambuzia Partovi passes away of COVID-19

Partovi was most famous for his skills in writing. His "Border Café" and "Truck" and "I Am Taraneh, 15" by Rasul Sadr-Ameli and "Ferrari" by Alireza Davudnejad won the awards for best screenplay during the various editions of the Fajr Film Festival, Iran's most important film event.

In 2015, he was invited by director Majid Majidi to co-write "Muhammad, the Messenger of God", the most expensive film ever made in Iran about the childhood of the Prophet of Islam (S). The film was produced with a budget of over \$50 million.

After completion of the screenplay, he said that

the epic is not limited to a certain group of people or a certain geographical area and added, "I worked on the characters in a way that would be acceptable for everybody."

In a statement published on Tuesday, Majidi expressed his grief over Partovi's death and wrote, "Dear Kambuzia, I hope the prophet of kindness intercedes for you on the Judgment Day for your service to him and the contributions you made for years to the movie 'Muhammad, the Messenger of God'."

In his screenplays and films, Partovi showed that he could not remain indifferent to the issues that were

going on the world.

In "Truck", he portrayed the atrocities of the war that broke out in the region initiated by the ISIS terrorists.

"By this film, I intend to say that we could be good supporters for each other during hard times, and giving shelter to the refugees could be viewed as an exercise in humanity," he said after the premiere of the drama at the Fajr Film Festival in Tehran.

"We still witness everyday people who are losing their lives across the world as they are fleeing from their homes under the fire of wars to take refuge in other countries," he lamented.

Jennifer M. Scarce's book on West Asian women's costumes published in Persian

CULTURE TEHRAN — Jennifer M. Scarce's book "Women's Costumes of the Near and Middle East" has recently been published in Persian by SAMT, an Iranian publisher that provides books for university students.

Maryam Sarbandi Farahani is the translator of the book that was originally published in 2002.

The historical and cultural richness of West Asia is reflected visually in its costumes. In this book, Scarce makes brilliant use of years of research to provide a lucid account of the development of women's dress from the fourteenth to the early twentieth centuries. Her study

of costumes is set in the broader context of the social and economic background of the Ottoman Empire, giving the subject a new and fascinating slant.

A detailed discussion of cut and construction is accompanied by pattern layouts and numerous photographs, which clearly illustrate the different styles of dress through the centuries.

"Women's costumes of the Near and Middle East" is a hitherto sadly neglected subject. After years of original research across the world, Scarce's scholarly but readable study has admirably filled this gap.

Scarce is an honorary lecturer on West Asian cultures at the Duncan of

Jordanstone College of Art and Design, University of Dundee, and was formerly principal curator of the West Asian collections of the National Museums of Scotland with special responsibility for Iran and Turkey.

She is a council member of the British Institute of Persian Studies (BIPS) and a founding member of the Association for the Study of Travel in Egypt and the Near East (ASTENE). She has travelled widely in West Asia and has arranged many exhibitions and permanent galleries.

She has published articles and books on architectural decoration including tile work, dress and textiles, especially of Iran and Turkey.



Cover of the Persian translation of Jennifer M. Scarce's "Women's Costumes of the Near and Middle East".