

TEHRAN TIMES

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Greco-Roman
wrestler Hamid
Sourian qualifies
for Rio **13**

Leader: U.S. in a fight against Islam, Iran, Shias

On the occasion of the anniversary of the Ordainment of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), senior Iranian officials, ambassadors of Muslim states in Tehran as well as a

group of families of martyrs met with Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei Thursday.

In the meeting, the Leader of the Islamic

Revolution highlighted the survival of the two currents of "ordainment" and "paganism" since Islam's heyday to date, noting that the main specification of the ordainment current was

"wisdom guided by messengers of God" and the outstanding feature of the paganism current was "lust and wrath."

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Major companies expanding presence in Iran's oil sector

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Renowned international companies from 38 countries across the globe are participating in the 21st International Oil, Gas, Refining and Petrochemical Exhibition of Iran (Iran Oil Show 2016), which is being held at Tehran Permanent International Fairground from May 5 to 8.

On the sidelines of the oil show and in their meetings with Iranian senior officials, representatives of the foreign companies have sought avenues to have a share in Iranian lucrative oil sector via making joint venture and signing MOUs.

BP to open representative office in Iran

British Petroleum (BP), one of the world's seven giant oil and gas companies, has voiced readiness to invest in Iranian projects, Deputy Oil Minister as well as Managing Director of National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) Roknaddin Javadi said after his meeting with the British company's representative in Tehran. As Shana news agency quoted Javadi on Friday, BP seeks new gateways of cooperation and is aimed at transferring data and knowledge to the Islamic Republic.

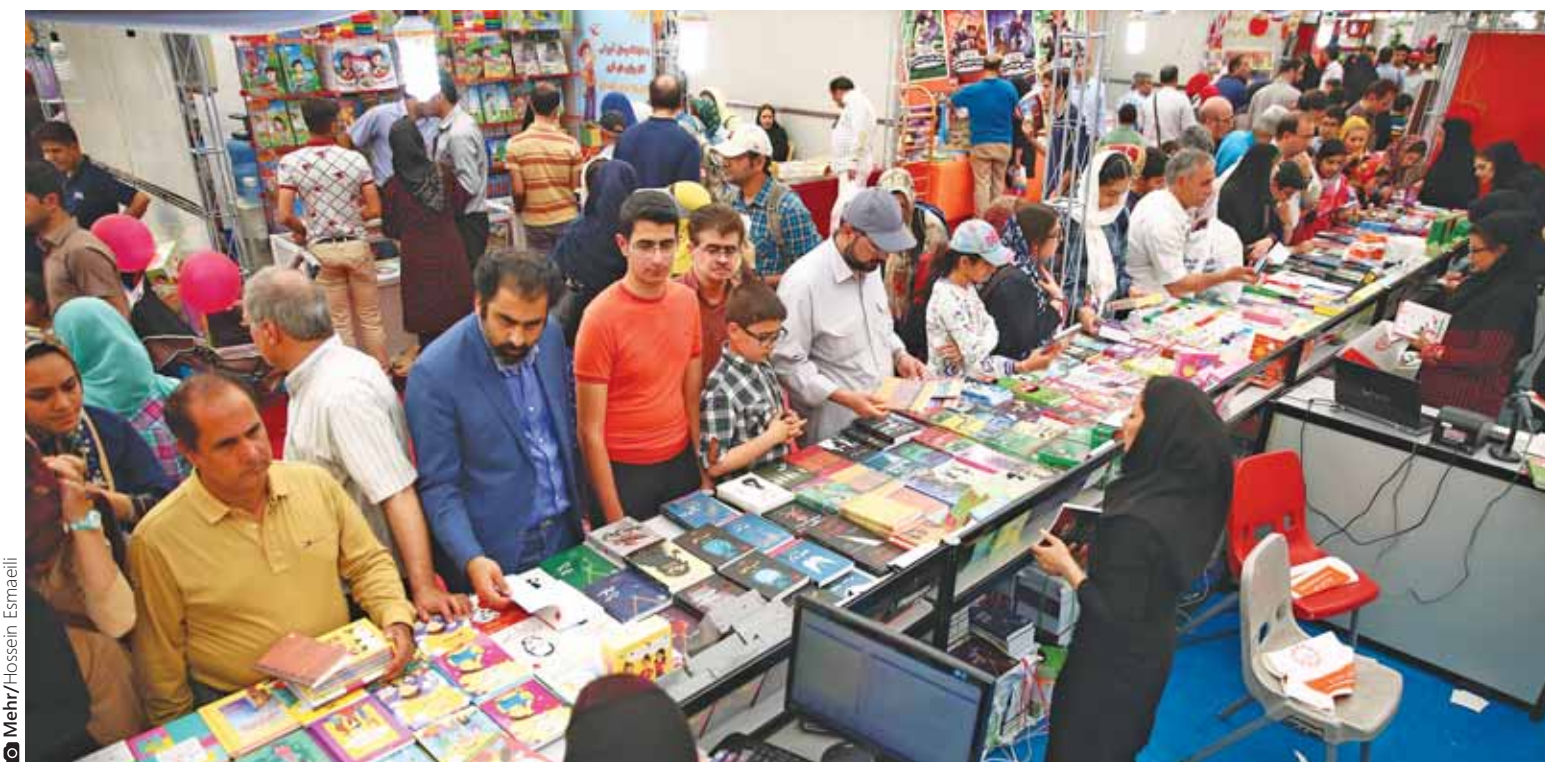
→4

Tehran Intl. Book Fair warmly received at new venue

CULTURE TEHRAN — The 29th Tehran International Book Fair (TIBF) was warmly received by visitors at its new venue while experts predicted that the relocation of the fair would result in a drop in the number of visitors.

The publishers were surprised by the large number of visitors on Thursday, the second day of the event, Hodayun Amirzadeh, the director of the TIBF Council for Supervision and Evaluation, told the Persian service of IRNA.

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Velayati: Daesh and al-Qaeda are 'exports' of Wahhabism

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Ali Akbar Velayati, a senior foreign policy adviser to the Supreme Leader, has said Daesh, al-Nusra, and al-Qaeda are "exports" of Wahhabi ideology which originates from Saudi Arabia.

In an interview with IRNA published on Friday, Velayati also rejected the view by certain Lebanese political figures and media outlets that there will be no solutions to the complicated regional issues so long as there is no dialogue between Iran and Saudi Arabia, saying Iran is against interference in other countries' affairs.

He said Iran's presence in some countries, like Syria and Iraq, is upon request by these countries' legal governments. However, the veteran politician said if Saudi Arabia is present in Syria it is not because of a request by the legitimate Syrian government, rather it is upon a request by Takfiri groups which Saudi Arabia "itself is the origin of them".

In a commentary in August 2014 in the Huffington Post titled "You Can't Understand ISIS If You Don't Know the History of Wahhabism in Saudi Arabia", Alastair Crooke, a former MI-6 agent, elaborates on the emergence of Wahhabi ideology in Saudi Arabia.

Velayati said, "Wahhabism is an extremist and incorrect interpretation of Islam and its exports are Daesh, al-Nusra, and al-Qaeda."

India to pay Iran \$6.4b for oil dues via European banks

The central banks of India and Iran have reached an arrangement to use European banks to process pending oil payments to Tehran, Indian Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan told Reuters, unlocking \$6.4 billion in stalled funds.

Buyers of Iranian oil were prevented from using global banking channels to clear their transactions after sanctions were imposed on Iran in 2011 over its nuclear program. With the end of those sanctions in January, Iran is finally gaining needed access to the funds.

Refiners in India have been holding 55 percent of its oil payments to Iran after a route to

make payments through Turkey's Halkbank was stopped in 2013, although payment of some of those funds was allowed after an initial temporary deal to lift the sanctions.

"There is an agreement between (India and Iran's) central banks. European banks will be the clearing agent. They will be dealing with Iranian banks and we have to pay those European banks," Pradhan told Reuters in an interview.

Indian government sources said during Pradhan's visit to Tehran last month Iran had asked India to consider clearing the oil payments through Europaisch-Iranische Handelsbank (EIH) of Germany, Central Bank of Italy

and Halkbank of Turkey.

The government sources said Indian refiners will remit funds to Iran through state-owned UCO Bank. Reserve Bank of India Governor Raghuram Rajan said on April 5 India will make payments to Iran in a staggered manner.

Despite the sanctions, India continued its engagement with Iran and was among a handful of countries that sourced oil from Tehran.

Iran was India's second-biggest oil supplier before the sanctions. The country is set to import at least 400,000 barrels per day of Iranian oil in the year from April 1.

(Source: Indian Express)

Iran and Pakistan emphasize closer security and economic ties

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iran and Pakistan have insisted on expansion of bilateral ties, particularly in economic and security sectors, IRNA reported on Friday.

Iran's Ambassador to Islamabad, Mehdi Honardoust, and Pakistani Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan said this during an appearance on Thursday in Pakistan.

Referring to his recent trip to Lahore and Karachi and exchange of ideas with senior economic and political figures of the two, Honardoust reminded the high potential for boosting trade relations, calling for removal of banking obstacles.

"Pakistani banks should take rapid steps to operationalize

cooperation with Iranian banks and pave the way for trade ties between the two countries' businessmen," Honardoust was quoted as saying in the meeting.

Considering that the 20th Iran-Pakistan Economic Commission is approaching, both officials saw the event being different from its earlier versions as it will be held at a time Iran is emerging from years of economic sanctions following the nuclear deal.

Also, the two sides exchanged views on shoring up security cooperation.

Iranian officials have always been complaining about terrorist groups penetrating from Pakistan into Sistan Balouchestan province, eastern Iran.

Senior MP says Larjani is best option for parliament speaker

POLITICAL TEHRAN — The Chairman of Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, Alaeddin Boroujerdi, has backed Ali Larjani for the post of parliament speaker in the next Majlis, claiming he just fits the job, Tasnim reported on Friday. Larjani's main rival is the reformist-minded Mohammad Reza Aref, who topped the elections in Tehran, people familiar with the matter say. Aref, a Stanford-educated former presidential candidate and minister, also has served as vice-president to the former reformist president.

Boroujerdi stated the position demands tactfulness and ability to manage all political groups. "As far as I know him, he (Larjani) is the best speakership option

for the 10th parliament."

Elsewhere, Boroujerdi hailed Larjani as the right figure to take the influential seat for holding "correct and exact foreign policies," having contributed to country's foreign policy.

This is the first time a senior principlist parliamentarian openly backs Larjani's speakership after the February parliamentary elections. While Boroujerdi has spoken in support of Larjani, citing criteria, he has not elaborated on how and why other possible candidates, including the reformist Aref, do not meet his standards.

Larjani, who won a re-election in the religious city of Qom in the Feb. elections, has been the parliament speaker since 8 years ago when the 8th parliament opened.



PERSPECTIVE

By **Martin Moslem**
international
relations expert

Is Assad the problem?

President Obama may be willing to, as he was enough to forge the nuclear deal with Iran, win praise for ending the Syrian crisis, the deadliest in the seven past decades. But, how one could trust in Barack as he is under the gun from at least two fronts: opponents of the nuclear deal with Tehran and foreign policy grumblers who are tired of Obama's passivism.

Yet, a third dimension is Obama feeling like an outgoing president in his last office months. "In just six short months, I will be officially a lame duck, which means Congress will now flat-out reject my authority. And Republican leaders won't take my phone calls," Obama said at the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner.

In the U.S., there are many like Senator John McCain of Arizona waiting for the 44th U.S. president to move out of the White House. And outside the situation is no better: international and regional allies of the U.S. have mixed feelings of indifference and wrath toward Barack. Last week, Secretary of State John Kerry headed to Geneva, hopeful of working out a solution to save the February 26 ceasefire, brokered by Washington and Moscow, between the Syrian government and the armed opposition groups. However, Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov was conspicuous by his absence.

The Kremlin's decision not to attend the negotiations was interpreted by many political cliques as sign of Moscow's dissatisfaction with regional developments and actions of the armed opposition groups and their supporters in Aleppo. Or contrariwise, it may be the other side of the coin, the mighty Russia. As a senior French diplomat told De Mistura privately, it is quite clear Russians have a feeling of superiority over the whole Middle East from the heights of Damascus and probably they are entitled to feel so.

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French expert Bernard Franco to discuss comparative literature in Tehran

CULTURE TEHRAN — Professor Bernard Franco of Paris-Sorbonne University is scheduled to deliver a lecture on comparative literature this afternoon at the 29th Tehran International Book Fair, the organizers announced in a press release on Thursday.

In his article "European Comparative Literature as Humanism" Franco presents an epistemological reflection on comparative literature in the context of the evolution of

the relationships between different forms of knowledge.

He wrote that in the late nineteenth century the notion of the "humanities" replaced that of the "human sciences," but that we have recently returned to a humanist concept of knowledge linked to ethics. Teacher at Paris-Sorbonne since 1992, Franco is professor of comparative literature and the director of the UFR of French and Comparative Literature at Paris-Sorbonne since 2012.

Special issue

21st Iran International Oil, Gas, Refining and Petrochemical exhibition

See page 5-12

بیست و یکمین
نمایشگاه بین المللی
نفت، گاز، پالایش و پتروشیمی

۱۶ الی ۱۹ اردیبهشت ۱۳۹۵

محل دائمی نمایشگاه‌های بین‌المللی تهران

21st
INTERNATIONAL
OIL, GAS,
REFINING &
PETROCHEMICAL
EXHIBITION

MEDIA MONITOR



Media should not politicize morality police: commander

TEHRAN — The commander of the General Staff of Armed Forces on Friday requested media outlets not to politicize the issue of undercover morality police, ILNA reported.

"The enemy has always sought to undermine moral and social codes," Hassan Firouzabadi said. "It is a duty with police to safeguard religious and moral values and fight enemy's approach."



No chance of compromise with U.S. based on Islamic rules: cleric

TEHRAN — The interim Tehran Friday prayers leader told worshippers that "there will never be a possibility of compromise with the U.S. according to the rules of Islam".

Describing confrontation with the U.S. as a "duty", Kazem Seddiqi asserted that countering America is in fact countering coups, deception and terror, ABNA reported.

Seddiqi made it clear that Islam's battle against the arrogant powers has entered the toughest phase in the contemporary era since the hegemonic power is equipped with science and technology.



Ecuador thanks Iran for dispatching aid to quake-hit people

TEHRAN — The president of Ecuadorean National Assembly has appreciated Iran for sending humanitarian aid to the Latin American country's quake-stricken people.

"We thank Iran for offering relief, medical services and humanitarian aid to the affected areas in Ecuador," Gabriela Rivadeneira said in a letter sent to the Iranian embassy in Quito, Fars reported on Friday.

The letter further read that the valuable role of Iran which helps strengthen friendship and solidarity between the two nations is praiseworthy.



Tavakoli: Minoo Khaleghi case should be referred to dispute settlement council

TEHRAN — A top MP has said the best way to decide the fate of controversial lawmaker-elect Minoo Khaleghi is to refer her case to the inter-branch dispute settlement council.

Posting on Telegram, Ahmad Tavakoli on Friday said since dispute over the Khaleghi case is raised between the Guardian Council as part of the legislative branch, and the Ministry of Interior as part of the executive branch, the dispute is one between the two branches and should be referred to the council.



President to host lawmakers-elect for dinner

TEHRAN — President Hassan Rouhani will host lawmakers-elect at a dinner feast on Saturday evening.

Announcing the news, Majid Ansari, the vice president for parliamentary affairs, said on Friday that the meeting will serve to fraternize the executive and legislative bodies, according to the government's website.

Commenting on the post of Majlis speaker, Ansari said the government will not interfere with the issue.



Majlis committee to study JCPOA report on Sunday

TEHRAN — The Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee will analyze the 3-monthly report about the implementation of the JCPOA, the committee's spokesman said on Friday.

Related officials will be present in the session that will discuss the report, Mansour Haqiqatpour said, Tabnak reported.

He said officials from the ministries of foreign affairs, science, economy, Central Bank, and the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran will attend the committee session.

Leader: U.S. in a fight against Islam, Iran, Shias

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Ayatollah Khamenei added: "Today, the most important task assigned to the Muslim community is to counter the current of paganism led by the United States. And the Islamic Republic of Iran, as the harbinger of the current of ordainment, will push ahead with its movement without being intimidated by powers on the path initiated by the great Imam [Khomeini]."

Ayatollah Khamenei offered congratulations on the Ordainment of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) to the Islamic Ummah and the great Iranian nation, and citing verses from the holy Quran, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution elucidated the substantive concept of ordainment, saying: "Mabath (ordination) is the feast of resuscitation and the day of returning to the divine nature and life endowed with 'wisdom, freedom of spirit, justice and serving God' and messengers of God are tasked with guiding humans towards this pure nature and thinking within the framework of Almighty God's instructions and monotheism."

Highlighting mankind's persistent need for the Ordainment's instructions, Ayatollah Khamenei said the current of paganism is the opposite front of ordainment, adding: "The paganism current does not belong to the period of the Prophet (PBUH), but is a continuing front against thinking guided by the prophets. Today, it has emerged in a new form thanks to science and technology."

Stressing that lust, wrath and carnal desires are the outstanding features of paganism, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution said: "The result of performance of the Front of Paganism has always been suffering, hardship and humiliation for mankind and carnage of millions of human beings and pillage of resources of nations and corruption, manifested clearly in the two international (world) wars."

Referring to the emergence of the two currents of paganism and ordainment at individual, social and international levels, Ayatollah Khamenei said: "If, at the international level, powerful [governments] behave within the framework of wisdom guided by messengers, the world will have one form and if they behave within the framework of carnal desires, power thirst and seditionism, the world will be a different one."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution said the nations being trampled upon under the boots of colonialist powers was another clear example of the performance of the current of paganism and referring to the pillage of resources of India and its misery after decades of British colony, Ayatollah Khamenei noted: "The wars and seditions underway today



in West Asia region are also the result of the performance of the Front of Paganism and Evil."

Stressing that the Zionist current dominating the world is a clear example of system development by Evil powers, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution said: "The status quo in the world is the result of the domination by a vast network of Zionist capitalists who control and influence even a government like the U.S., and these currents and parties will come to power [only] if they follow this Zionist current."

Ayatollah Khamenei said the main root of massive movements by the Islamic Ummah and Iran as well as Islamic Awakening was to counter the rule of the corrupt Zionist current, adding: "On this basis, 'fighting Islam, Iran and Shia' have become the definite policies of the U.S. and its affiliated governments."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution said the vigilance and awakening of the Iranian nation and Muslim nations against corrupt moves by powers was the main cause of their anger, adding: "That is why Iran is threatened with sanctions due to its opposition to the U.S. policies in the region because they consider the Islamic Republic as an obstacle to their ambitious, excessive policies in the region."

Emphasizing that the result of domination of the front of paganism and devilish powers will be "rebellion and diabolism", Ayatollah Khamenei said: "The current of paganism and diabolism killed hundreds

of thousands of humans in Hiroshima by [dropping] A-bomb, but after so many years it is still refusing to apologize and is destroying the infrastructure in Iraq and Afghanistan and other countries without showing any sign of remorse."

"The Islamic Republic of Iran has never initiated any war and military action against any country, but it has declared its stances manifestly and it will continue to do so," the Leader of the Islamic Revolution noted.

Citing Imam Khomeini about drawing a parallel between "dogmatic Islam" and "American Islam" against "pure Islam", Ayatollah Khamenei said: "Corrupt and corrupting groups who are carrying out the worst and the most tragic crimes in the name of Islam are supported by Western powers."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution added: "The Western governments have apparently set up an anti-Daesh coalition, but in practice they are supporting this current and within the framework of fighting Islam they refer to them (Daesh) as 'Islamic State' in their propaganda in a bid to sully the image of Islam."

Referring to the expansion of Islamic movement despite the existence of the paganism current's fight on Islam, Ayatollah Khamenei said: "The Islamic movement, which has become stronger and deeper rooted after the establishment of Islamic Republic in Iran, will continue its path and it will definitely emerge triumphant."

"That is why Iran is threatened with sanctions due to its opposition to the U.S. policies in the region because they consider the Islamic Republic as an obstacle to their ambitious, excessive policies in the region," Leader says.

NAM protests U.S. court ruling against Iran

TT POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — In a letter to the UN chief Ban Ki-moon on Thursday the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) protested the U.S. Supreme Court which has ruled that almost \$2 billion in frozen Iranian assets must be turned over to American families of people killed in the 1983 bombing of a U.S. Marine Corps barracks in Beirut and other attacks allegedly blamed on Iran.

The letter condemns the violation of principles of sovereign immunity of states by the U.S., saying such rulings against other countries, including Iran, is antithetical to the fundamental principles of international law.

120-nation bloc asked the UN chief to circulate the letter and its enclosure as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item entitled "Rule of law at the national and international levels" and of the Security Council.

The following is the text of the communiqué:

Communiqué by the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement in Rejection of Unilateral Actions by the United States in Contravention of International Law, in Particular the Principle of State Immunity

The Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement rejects the illegal practice of the United States in defying international law by allowing and facilitating

private plaintiffs to bring civil action before US courts against sovereign States, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, leading to the awards of default judgments against them and their national institutions. Legislation by US Congress to pave the way for illegally confiscating foreign assets in the US and the actions by the US government to unlawfully hold them enable US courts to issue groundless rulings.

The CoB objects to US defiance to international law through the unilateral waiving of the sovereign immunity of States and their institutions in total contravention of the international and treaty obligations of the United States and under a spurious legal ground that the international community does not recognize. This practice runs counter to the most fundamental principles of international law, in particular the principle of sovereign immunity as one of the cornerstones of the international legal or-



der and a rule of customary international law - a principle whose primacy is recognized by the community of nations, all legal systems and the International Court of Justice and was most recently codified in the United Nations Convention on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and Their Property.

The CoB calls upon the United States of America to respect the principle of State immunity, and reiterates that failing to do so would have adverse implications, including uncertainty and chaos in international relations and the undermining of the rule of law at the international level, and would constitute an international wrongful act, which entails international responsibility.

The CoB seizes this opportunity to reiterate the NAM's call to uphold dialogue and accommodation over coercion and confrontation as well as to promote peaceful settlement of disputes.

Rouhani calls Palestine issue first priority of Islamic world

TT POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said on Thursday that the public opinion should be aware of the fact that the Palestinian issue is the first priority of the Islamic world.

"The enemies and big powers assumed that the issue of Palestine will be forgotten and they can determine the future of this country's people, but today the Palestinian nation has gained a great victory against their will through re-

sistance and resilience," he said during a meeting with Ramadan Abdullah, head of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement.

Resistance of the "oppressed people" of Palestine bears the message that no aggressor can achieve "permanent interests" through occupation, Rouhani noted.

Abdullah praised Iran's support for Palestine and said the U.S. and the Zionist regime of Israel are spreading terrorism in the region in order to undermine the Palestinians' resistance against occupation.



Syrian army fighting terrorists in Aleppo village

By staff & agencies

Syrian government forces are fighting back a major offensive by al-Qaeda's branch in Syria, al-Nusra Front (Jabhat al-Nusra), in southern Aleppo amid reports that scores of the militants have lost their lives in fierce clashes.

The Syrian army troops delivered a major blow to al-Nusra Front terrorists after the latter launched an attack on the government forces in the village of Khan Tuman, located about 10 kilometers (six miles) southwest of Aleppo, on Thursday.

According to the so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) on Friday, dozens of the Takfiri terrorists as well as government forces lost their lives during the heavy fighting.

It further claimed that the Takfiri militants had managed to retake Khan Tuman and its surrounding villages from the army troops.

The Syrian military is yet to confirm reports about Khan Tuman's fall into the hands of the terrorists. The Syrian Armed Forces had driven the terrorist out of Khan Tuman in December.

The Takfiri militants operating in Syria seem to be taking advantage of a two-day truce between the Syrian government and non-extremist militants in Aleppo.

"The Syrian military says it will respect a 48-hour Aleppo truce after Russia and the U.S. agreed to extend a cessation of hostilities in Syria to the province," said a statement issued by the Syrian army command on Wednesday.

Aleppo has been divided between government forces in the west and militants in the east since 2012.

Syrian army denies striking camp near Turkey

Meantime, the Syrian military has strongly dismissed media reports that its military aircraft carried out a series of deadly airstrikes against a camp for



the internally displaced people near the border with Turkey.

"There is no truth to reports ... about the Syrian air force targeting a camp for the displaced in the Idlib countryside," the military said in a statement released on Friday.

It also accused foreign-sponsored Takfiri terrorists of targeting civilians.

An air strike on a camp for internally displaced Syrians near the country's border with Turkey has killed at least 30 people, activists said. The attack on the camp in Idlib province on Thursday also left dozens of others injured.

Syrian Government extends aerial bombardments

Elsewhere, the Observatory said that at least 73 people were killed in the battle which took place some 15km southwest of Aleppo in a location near the Damascus-Aleppo highway.

While multiple rebel sources said it had been captured, a Syrian army source denied Khan Touman had been taken.

The attack was launched by an alliance of armed groups known as Jaish al-Fatah (Army of Conquest), including al-Nusra Front, which has rejected diplomatic efforts to halt the war and

promote peace talks.

The U.S. and Russia this week brokered a ceasefire in the city of Aleppo itself.

Groups fighting under the banner of the Free Syrian Army, which have mostly supported diplomatic efforts in Syria, were not taking part in the attack, a fighter from one Aleppo-based FSA group told Reuters.

Syria's government has been at war with foreign-backed rebels after it violently put down an initially peaceful uprising against President Bashar al-Assad five years ago.

According to a February report by the Syrian Center for Policy Research, the conflict has claimed the lives of over 470,000 people, injured 1.9 million others, and displaced nearly half of the country's pre-war population of about 23 million within or beyond its borders.

The crisis has also given rise to the European refugee crisis, as Syrians join hundreds of thousands of others in seeking refuge on the continent.

Damascus accuses the House of Saud regime, Turkey and Qatar of funding and arming anti-Syria terrorist groups, including the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group.

Hamas leader warns Israel over 'incursions' after days of air strikes

The leader of Palestine's resistance movement Hamas has warned that the group will not tolerate a new Israeli incursion into the Gaza.

"We will not under any circumstance accept these incursions," Ismail Haniyeh said Friday.

Haniyeh, who acts as Hamas boss inside Gaza, noted that the resistance movement was not seeking a new war with Israel two years after an aggression by the Zionist regime inflicted huge losses on the sliver.

Israelis continued to target what they claimed were facilities run by Hamas in Gaza on Friday morning, with eyewitnesses saying two sets of air raids were carried out, one targeting Beit Lahia in northern Gaza and the second in Khuza'a, near Khan Yunis, in the south of the besieged territory.

Hamas had earlier warned Israel to stop provocations or face a deadly response. The Ezzedine Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas, said Israeli forces had on Thursday of

encroached on the Palestinian territory and voiced readiness to retaliate.

In early July 2014, Israel launched a 50-day offensive against Gaza, killing nearly 2,200 Palestinians, including 577 children, and injuring over 11,100 others.

The recent flare-up has raised concerns over the fate of an Egypt-brokered truce deal between Hamas and Tel Aviv that put an end to the 2014 Israeli military campaign, and has since been largely holding.

(Source: agencies)

Invitation for Prequalification

Tender Holder:

Gohar Mess Mining and Industries Development Co.



Announcement Subject: Prequalification of the Financier and contractors for Construction of Chahfiroozeh Copper Concentrator Plant Project on EPCF basis.

Announcement Description:

Subject: Financing and construction on EPCF basis of Chahfiroozeh Copper Concentration Plant Project with the capacity of 7 million tonnes of feed (sulfide ore) per year with average grade of 0.4% to produce 100,000 tonnes of copper concentrates per year with average grade of 25%7920) work hour per year).

Project Description: A brief description of the project is presented in prequalification documents.

Condition: All Iranian and foreign contractors and financier may take part in the pre-qualification stage, providing that they have the financial and technical capabilities and also international experience in terms of tender subject.

Location of The Project: 240 kilometers west of Kerman city in Kerman province, 135 kilometers northwest of Sarcheshmeh mine and 35 kilometers northwest of Shahre-Babak city.

Prequalification Document: Applicants (company or consortium) should submit their readiness letter for receiving pre-qualification documents to the address listed in this announcement.

Deadline for Receiving Documents: From 7 May 2016 until the end of the working day (17:00 pm) on 1 June 2016 (Tehran time)

Deadline for Proposals Submission: End of the working day (17:00 pm) on 29 June 2016

Address: No. 29, Floor 5, North Unit, 18th St. Before of Saeed Park, Valiasr Ave. Gohar Mess Mining and Industries Development Co Tehran, Iran, Post Code: 1461115118

Tel No: +9821 88718085 Fax No: +9821 88718197

Email: **To:** ariafiroozeh@gmail.com **CC:** goharmess@gmail.com

For any question contact with mentioned email address.

Qualitative Evaluation Results: After evaluation and confirmation by the assessment committee, bidders who passed pre-qualification stage will be invited to receive tender documents and submitting the technical and financial proposals and the letter of guarantee subsequently to participate in the tender. This invitation does not create any rights or privileges for them in next steps.

This announcement is just for pre-qualification of applicants and tender documents will be presented to the applicants who are qualified at this stage.

Gohar Mess Mining and Industries Development Co.



PGPICC We Secure the Supply

Who We Are

PGPICC, established in 2015, is a young trading company of petrochemical products which benefits from oil and gas industry experts. Sales and marketing of petrochemical products of Persian Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company (the second large petrochemical holding company in Middle-East) subsidiaries, forms the core business activities of PGPICC.

Main Products



Polymers

- PET (TG, BG)
- HDPE, LDPE
- PVC (S, E)
- SBR
- Epoxy resin
- Polycarbonate

%11



Chemicals

- Ethylene
- Propylene
- EDC
- VCM
- PTA
- NaOH
- Butadiene

%26



Aromatics

- Paraxylene
- Orthoxylene
- Benzene
- Ethylbenzene
- Styrene monomer

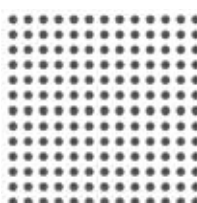
%14



Fuel & Feed

- Ethane & LPG
- Heavy & Light End
- C+5
- Raffinate
- MTBE
- Pyrolysis Gasoline

%49



Address: No.38, Karimkhan Zand Blvd. 7th Tir Sq. Tehran-Iran
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Tel: +98-21-88848140
Fax: +98-21-88848143
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Website: www.pgpicc.com

PARSIAN Insurance Company



Parsian Insurance Co. provides insurance coverage and risk management services in the following fields:

Upstream Industries :

1. Offshore and onshore drilling rigs and related operations,
2. Well Controlling
3. Constructing, installing and commissioning platforms,
4. Installing subsea equipment as well as constructing offshore and onshore pipelines

Downstream Industries:

1. Designing, constructing and installing the refining industries,
2. Utilizing and operating refineries and petrochemical complexes as well as other chemical and refining industries
3. Terminals and oil terminals



Address: 5th Floor, No. 22, Ghobadian St., Above Mirdamad Blvd., Vali-e Asr Ave., Tehran, Tel: 8259

www.parsianinsurance.ir

NEWS

Iran to boost number of commercial attachés by 9 in a month: TPO head

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The number of Iran's commercial attachés will be increased to 30 from its current 21 within a month, ISNA reported on Friday quoting Valiollah Afkhamirad, the head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO).

Less than a month ago, Deputy Head of TPO Abutaleb Badri announced that his organization intends to augment the number of Iranian commercial attachés abroad, according to IRNA.

"Representatives of the TPO will be forwarded for missions in the United Arab Emirates, South Africa, Afghanistan and India as commercial attachés," he said underlining that one of the government's important programs for current year is to increase dispatching commercial attachés abroad.

He also pointed out that removing problems of Iranian businessmen, creating commercial links with decision-makers and officials are the aim of the commercial attachés.

An increase in the number of Iran's commercial attachés is not unwarranted as there has been a resurgence of foreign investors and companies to seek trade avenues in the enticing market in the wake of the nuclear deal clinched between Iran and major powers.

Malaysian trade delegation to embark for Tehran next week

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — A 36-member Malaysian commercial delegation will start its four-day trip to Iran next Monday to hold talks with Iranian companies and officials from Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA).

The Malaysian delegation, as IRNA reported on Friday, is headed by Dzulkifli Mahmoud Chief Executive Officer of Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE) and is comprised of directors and representatives of 27 private sector companies.

The visit comes a week after Malaysian foreign Minister Anifah Aman's journey to Tehran last Tuesday where he met President Hassan Rouhani, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, and Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh.

In his meeting with Zarif, Aman called for expansion of ties between the two countries in various spheres, especially economy.

For his part, Zarif said that Iran and Malaysia have always had "good relations" and Tehran has no limit to expand ties with Kuala Lumpur.

"Relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Malaysia have been good and forward moving from a historical point of view and the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to expand all-out cooperation with Malaysia," Zarif said.

Major companies expanding presence in Iran's oil sector

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Iranian, Italian companies endorse industrial MOU

Society of Iranian Petroleum Industry Equipment Manufacturers hammered out a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on industrial cooperation with Italian Valves and Taps Constructor Association on the sidelines of the said oil show.

Addressing a meeting of the two countries' officials before signing the MOU, Reza Khayamian, the head of the Iranian association, expressed hope that the MOU will be put into action as soon as possible, Shana reported on Friday.

Maurizio Brancaleoni, the head of the Italian association, for his part thanked Iranian officials and hoped that bilateral industrial cooperation would grow dramatically in near future.

Iranian, S. Korean institutes ink deal

Also, Research Institute of Petroleum Industry of Iran and Korea Institute of Geoscience and Mineral Resources (KIGAM) inked a cooperation agreement on Thursday.

French company seeks Iranian partner

The managing director of France's IPC PIPING, an international supplier of piping solutions for oil, gas, chemical and petro-



chemical industries, said that his company has attended the oil show in a hope for finding an Iranian partner, Shana reported on Friday.

Referring to Iran's access to Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) after the implementation of its nuclear deal with the P5+1, the French industrialist said that a proper ground is set for further ties with Iran.

Omani minister lauds Iranian oil industry

"The oil show comprehensively presents Iran's capacities in oil industry," Omani Oil and Gas Minister Mohammed bin Hamad Al Rumhy told Shana on the sidelines of the oil show, "I am astonished by the country's technology, capabilities and self-sufficiency in this industry".

"Famous international companies namely

Gazprom, Lukoil, Sulzer, Lincoln Electric, and FUCHS are the definite participants of the oil show, while some Italian companies are conducting negotiations to confirm their presence in the show," according to Director of Iranian Oil Ministry's Public Relations Department Akbar Ne'matollahi.

Ne'matollahi underscored that transfer of technological know-how into the country is the focal point of the oil show.

New oil investment contract to be ready by July

Iran's new oil industry investment contract for international oil firms will be ready by July, NIOC chief Javadi said, Reuters wrote on Friday.

"The new contracts will be ready in June, July ... We welcome investors from all countries," IRNA reported Javadi as saying.

Iran aims to sweeten the terms it offers on oil development contracts to attract foreign investors deterred by years of sanctions.

"Hopefully we will have oil tenders with new oil contracts in July," Javadi said. "Iran's doors are open to all investors."

Iran now aims to return its oil production to pre-sanctions levels.

"Iran's oil exports are expected to increase in the coming days to 2.2 million barrels per day (bpd)," Javadi said.

Iran's output has risen to 3.7 million bpd.

Lifting sanctions on Iran opens up business opportunities

Economic sanctions have cost Iran an estimated \$120 billion (€105 billion) since 2012, primarily in lost oil and gas revenues. That equates to about 30 percent of the economy of the second-largest country in the Middle East after Saudi Arabia.

But, the lifting of nuclear-related sanctions in January is being billed as a panacea to the country's economic woes.

Western countries have been queuing up for a slice of the action. Tehran has hosted 16 trade missions, including the one from Ire-

land, since January and has already signed major trade deals with France, Italy and South Africa.

The country has the fourth-largest proven crude oil reserves in the world, estimated at 157.8 billion barrels – enough to supply China for 40 years.

A Boston Consulting Group study placed Iran third in car market potential among developing economies, with sales of 1.5 million projected by 2020.

There is an expectation that the next Irish

government will move quickly to re-establish an embassy in Tehran in a bid to cement deeper trading ties. Civil servants have already drawn up draft proposals.

"I am very conscious of the political, economic and trade factors in favor of opening of a resident diplomatic mission in Iran with the primary aim of assisting Irish companies who wish to avail of the new trade opportunities now opening up there," Minister for Foreign Affairs Charlie Flanagan told The Irish Times this week. The Department of Agriculture and

Bord Bia led a trade mission to Iran last week to explore the options for food companies.

Iran's fast-growing appetite for dairy, particularly butter and cheese, was highlighted as an opportunity, as was the potential to export farming technology.

"The lifting of international sanctions on Iran opens the way for Irish food exporters to explore trading opportunities in the second largest economy in the Middle East," Bord Bia chief executive Aidan Cotter said.

(Source: Irish Times)

Islamic Republic of Iran
Ministry of Energy – Kashan
Water & Wastewater Company

Invitation for Bid
Construction of Kashan Wastewater Collection
Network -Zone B1 Date: April 27, 2016
IDB Financing Agreement No: 21RN 0078
Reference Identification No. IDB/ICB-MC

1. Kashan Water & Wastewater Company has received financing from the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) toward the cost of Kashan Sewage Project, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments for Kashan Sewage Collection Network (Zone B1).

2. Kashan Water & Wastewater Company now invites sealed bids from eligible Bidders for the supply, transportation, installation and implementation of Kashan Sewage Collection Network (Zone B1) with associated connections (total number: 3,313 connections).

3. Bidding will be conducted through the international competitive bidding (IDB) procedure specified in the Islamic Development Bank's Guidelines for Procurement Goods and Works (2009 edition) and is open to all bidders from eligible sources from IDB member countries as defined in the Bank's guidelines and set forth in the bidding documents.

4. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from and inspect the Bidding Documents at the offices of Kashan Water & Wastewater Company at the address below starting from April 27, 2016 (from 07:00AM to 02:30PM).

5. A complete set of bidding documents in English may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of IRR 3,500,000 or €100. Method of payment will be direct deposit to Account No. 1477916605, with Saba Branch of Mellat Bank in Kashan (for payment in Iranian Rial) and Account No. 2290115015, with Central Branch (Code No. 2901) of Melli Bank in Kashan, Swift Code: MELIIRTHXKSN (for payment in Euro). The Bidding Documents may be collected by Bidders' authorized representatives from 07:00 AM to 02:30 PM at the address below upon presentation of the Bidder's of documents confirming payment of the non-refundable fee to one of the above accounts.

6. The sealed Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 10:00AM Kashan time on June 28, 2016 and must be accompanied by a security of IRR 6,500,000,000 or €192,000.

7. Bids will be opened in the presence of Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at 11:00 AM (Kashan time) on June 28, 2016 at the address below. Late bids will be rejected and returned unopened.

The address for submission of bids and the Bid Public Opening is:
Kashan Water and Wastewater Company
Address: Corner of Jihad Square, Bahonar Boulevard
Moalem Square – Kashan, Islamic Republic of Iran
Postal Code: 87148-73651
Phone: (+ 98315) 555 9100, (+98315) 557 0014,
(+98315) 558 0017
Fax: (+ 98315) 554 2700, (+98315) 555 9100
Email: ed.abfakashan@gmail.com
ed.abfakashan@yahoo.com

جمهوری اسلامی ایران
وزارت نیرو – شرکت آب و فاضلاب کاشان

دعوتنامه مناقصه
پروژه شبکه جمع آوری فاضلاب کاشان واقع در ناحیه B1
تاریخ: ۸ اردیبهشت ۱۳۹۵
شماره توافقنامه با بانک توسعه اسلامی: 21RN 0078
شناسه مرجع: IDB/ICB-MC

۱. بمنظور تأمین هزینه های پروژه فاضلاب کاشان، شرکت آب و فاضلاب کاشان وامی از بانک توسعه اسلامی دریافت نموده و در نظر دارد بخشی از وجوه موافقتنامه مذکور را برای اجرای شبکه فاضلاب (واقع در ناحیه B1) استفاده نماید.

۲. شرکت آب و فاضلاب کاشان بدینوسیله از متقاضیان واجد شرایط برای شرکت در مناقصه تأمین، حمل، نصب و اجرای شبکه فاضلاب واقع در ناحیه B1، بانضمام انشعابات مربوطه (تعداد انشعابات: ۳۳۱۳ عدد) دعوت بعمل می آورد.

۳. ارزیابی مناقصه گران از طریق مناقصه رقابتی بین المللی محدود به کشورهای عضو و بر اساس دستورالعملهای بانک توسعه اسلامی برای "تدارک کالاها و کارها تحت تأمین مالی بانک توسعه اسلامی (می ۲۰۰۹)" انجام خواهد شد و شرکت در این مناقصه برای کلیه متقاضیان از کشورهای عضو و طبق دستورالعمل شرکت در مناقصه آزاد می باشد. (مناقصه گران داخلی باید حداقل رتبه ۲ آب را بر اساس رتبه بندی سازمان مدیریت و برنامه ریزی و با رعایت ضوابط مربوطه داشته باشند).

۴. مناقصه گران علاقه مند و واجد شرایط جهت دریافت اسناد و کسب اطلاعات بیشتر میتوانند از تاریخ ۸ اردیبهشت ۱۳۹۵، به شرکت آب و فاضلاب کاشان به آدرس ذیل و از ساعت ۷ الی ۱۴:۳۰ (وقت اداری) مراجعه نمایند.

۵. متقاضیان علاقه مند می توانند با مراجعه به آدرس ذیل و ارائه درخواست کتبی و نسخه اصلی فیش بانکی (غیرقابل استرداد) به مبلغ ۳,۵۰۰,۰۰۰ (سه میلیون و پانصد هزار) ریال ایران یا ۱۰۰ (یکصد) یورو، مجموعه کامل اسناد مناقصه به زبان انگلیسی را دریافت نمایند. وجه خرید اسناد به ریال بایستی به حساب شماره ۱۴۷۷۹۱۶۶۰۵، بانک ملت شعبه صبا در شهر کاشان و وجه ارزی باید به حساب شماره ۲۲۹۰۱۱۵۰۱۵، بانک ملی، شعبه مرکزی (کد شعبه: ۲۹۰۱) کاشان با کد سوئیفت MELIIRTHXKSN واریز شود.

۶. کلیه پیشنهادات بهمار ضمانتنامه شرکت در مناقصه بمبلغ ۶,۵۰۰,۰۰۰,۰۰۰ ریال یا ۱۹۲,۰۰۰ یورو باید در پاکات مهر و موم شده تا قبل از ساعت ۱۰ صبح مورخ ۱۳۹۵/۰۴/۰۸ به شرکت آب و فاضلاب کاشان (به آدرس ذیل) تحویل داده شوند.

۷. بازگشایی با حضور نمایندگان مناقصه گران (با ارائه معرفی نامه کتبی) راس ساعت ۱۱ صبح روز ۱۳۹۵/۰۴/۰۸ در محل شرکت آب و فاضلاب کاشان انجام خواهد شد. اسناد رسیده پس از زمان مذکور بدون بازگشایی عودت داده خواهد شد.

آدرس محل تحویل اسناد و بازگشایی:
آدرس: جمهوری اسلامی ایران - کاشان - نیش میدان جهاد - ابتدای بلوار باهنر

کدپستی: ۸۷۱۴۸ ۷۳۶۵۱-
تلفن: ۵۵۵۹۱۰۰۰-۵۵۸۰۰۱۷ (+۹۸۳۱۵)
دورنگار: ۵۵۴۲۷۰۰-۵۵۵۹۱۰۰ (+۹۸۳۱۵)

پست الکترونیک:
ed.abfakashan@gmail.com
ed.abfakashan@yahoo.com



National Iranian oil company, a symbol of self-efficiency, dynamism and prosperity

Realization of production and development goals in light of resistance economy



Oil industry as the pioneer sector in the country's economy has always played an undeniable role in realization of national economic goals so that the vast majority of the country's budget is funded through oil sector. With more than 154 billion barrels of recoverable liquid hydrocarbons as well as 34 trillion cubic meters of recoverable reserves of natural gas, Iran is one of the world's major energy-supplying countries and considering the country's oil and gas resources' condition, this position will be maintained.

Iran's privileged position in world's energy market and the special role of oil industry in national economy has made this sector's development and enhancement a priority for officials and authorities. Among the activities done to achieve that goal, strategic long and mid-term programs, Iranian oil and gas industry prospects in Iranian calendar year of 1404, general policies issued by the leader in the oil and gas sector, the overall goals of the development of oil and gas sector in the sixth development plan, oil ministry policies in order to achieve the goals of 20-year vision plan and etc. could be mentioned.

Reviewing the performance indicators of National Iranian Oil Company in the past year and especially during post-JCPOA shows that this industry, following the policies of resistance economy, has been able to achieve its productive and developmental goals and this can be an omen for the prosperous years ahead. Like the past, Iran's national oil company will follow the

resistance economy policies issued by the supreme leader in the current year.

● Returning to pre-sanctions production rate

Among the achievements of the National Iranian Oil Company, particularly during the post-JCPOA period, boosting the oil production to a volume close to the pre-sanctions ceiling, negotiating and signing agreements with foreign companies, exporting to Europe and making new export markets could be mentioned.

It is worth mentioning that because of the sanctions imposed by west over the past four years Iran hasn't have any export to Europe and this shipment is the first cargo of Iranian crude oil to Europe after the implementation of JCPOA, while before imposing the sanctions, 17 percent of Iran's crude oil was exported to the European markets, and countries such as Spain, Greece and Italy were among leading importers of Iran's oil.

● 130 billion cubic meters of gas Produced in South Pars

Regarding oil and gas production, particularly in shared fields with neighboring countries, there has been significant activities focusing on Karoon West and South Pars fields which are of highest priority in development programs of the oil industry. Inaugurating the phases 15, 16 of South Pars gas field with an expected \$20m/d of revenues for the country's economy, Production of 130 billion cubic meters

of gas from South Pars in 12 months and constant production and transfer of gas to the national grid during the past year, are among the achievements in this area.

It is worth mentioning that launching the South Pars phases 15 and 16, shared between Iran and Qatar has risen country's gas production from 370 million cubic meters to 420 million cubic meters per day.

● New steps in the operation of the phases 20 and 21 refinery

The first step to inaugurate the refinery of South Pars gas field's phases 20 and 21 was taken when the first train was launched and the phases' flare was lit up using the sour gas from phases 6 to 8.

The production process of joint fields such as Karoon West, North and South Azadegan, Yadavaran, North and South Yaraan is also satisfactory and in line with planned targets. So that the North Azadegan and Yadavaran fields with daily production of 160 thousand barrels are ready to be operational.

Executing overhaul and sustainable production in joint fields of Persian Gulf, national Iranian oil company enjoys an evolving position so that all maintenance and output increase programs of Iran in the Persian Gulf with priorities of joint oil fields will become operational.

● Signing exploratory Studies contract with Russia's Lukoil

Oil and gas exploration is in fact the basis for following activities in the oil and gas value chain, therefore it is of utmost importance. In the past year, the National Iranian Oil Company signed a contract with Russia's Lukoil Company regarding exploration studies.

National Iranian Oil Company is conducting Joint study programs regarding geological and geophysical exploration potential in sedimentary basins in Iran with participation of leading European and Asian universities and companies. These studies are

funded by foreign participants and Iran hasn't paid for them.

The National Iranian Oil Company's exploration management is signing 3 new contracts with prestigious universities in the world and the volume of investment for these three projects is estimated at \$ 13 million.

In the past two years, despite the cruel sanctions imposed on the country, National Iranian Oil Company's exploration management has had various negotiations with 25 foreign companies and universities regarding investment in the field which resulted in three research program agreements with prestigious universities one of which is Russia's Lukoil.

● Iran ranked first in the Middle East gas storage

National Iranian Oil Company has been successful regarding gas storage in the previous year, so that with the Khorasan's Shourjeh reservoir being operational, Iran ranked first in the Middle East regarding gas storage capacity. The company is also working on the two storages of Khangiran and Gonbadli in north-east of the country the majority of this reservoir's production capacity will be used to meet the needs of the North and North East provinces, and for the country's power plants and in petrochemical industries.

Regarding the gas flare elimination plan which aims to create added value from these resources and to reduce environmental pollution caused by burning the gas, Iranian Offshore Oil Company (IOOC), Arvandan Oil and Gas Company and National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC) have finalized contracts with three private companies for selling flare gases.

● Preventing the waste of associated gases

If Khark NGL 3100 and 3200 projects which are now in the process of attracting investment, get operational, almost all the associated gases produced by oil fields will be gathered and used and it is possible that these gases which are estimated as one of the South Pars phases production, could create added value and employments for the country.

National Iranian Company succeeded in drilling over 330 meters of oil and gas wells using 75 onshore and offshore rigs in oil and gas fields. This amount has increased 22 percent compared to the same period before the sanctions.

● 3 million barrels of oil Produced by NISOC

National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC) has reported producing 3 million barrels of crude oil per day by the end of Iranian calendar month of Khordad 1395 (June 2016). It should be mentioned that last year, the company performed an extensive overhaul on the machinery, compressors, turbines and other equipment.

What has been mentioned here is just a small part of the ongoing activities and constant progresses of the National Iranian Oil Company during the last year and especially during post-sanctions era; and efforts to improve the industry continues constantly.

بیست و یکمین
نمایشگاه بین المللی
نفت، گاز، پالایش و پتروشیمی
۱۳۹۵ اردیبهشت ۱۹ الی
محل دائمی نمایشگاه‌های بین‌المللی تهران

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Iran enters the circle of modern countries in oil industry

An interview with Bijan Alipour:

Chairman of National Iranian south oilfields company (NISOC)

Since NISOC's field of activity is limited to extraction and processing of oil and gas and it is essentially a manufacturing company, we are not involved in sales and marketing, so it would be better if you asked such questions from the international affairs authorities at the National Iranian Oil Company.

■ How do you see the importance of lifting the sanctions in encouraging the major oil companies to invest in Iran's oil industry?

Iran's oil industry has its own special features and attractions for major international investors and companies. The history of foreign companies' presence in Iran and wonderful experiences and achievements of Iranian companies during the sanctions has increased the country's bargaining power facing the foreign firms. However, based on the principles of national interests, all countries try to attract investors in various fields and of course oil and gas industry is also no exception.

■ What is the effect of post-sanctions era on oil and gas downstream industries, mainly increasing exports in this section?

Considering the fact that not being just a crude seller means entering the realm of downstream products and value creator industries, undoubtedly after lifting of the sanctions the condition will be ripe for exporting oil derivatives and petrochemical products to the international markets. In the new situation the country will be able to move in the path toward developing downstream and value creator industries in a long-term perspective.

■ How do you assess the need for domestic investment in oil and gas sectors in post-sanctions era?

Foreign investment is certainly in line with our strategies to strengthen the country's domestic foundations, expand our resources and to develop productive and service provider companies in the field of oil and gas. In this

regard our country now stands in a position which cannot be compared to three previous decades. Relying on domestic resources and capacities and moving toward self-efficiency has been one of the most important manifestations of Iran's revolution and this has been much more outstanding regarding oil and gas industry. So in this post-sanctions opportunity we will benefit the world's modern technology and knowledge while maintaining our own achievements. Of course, achieving some of the goals of domestic development in post-sanctions era depends on the determination of the private sector and the strategic operation of this sector in competition with prestigious foreign firms. However public sector's support should continue to be maintained and extended by the government.

■ What is the effect of post-sanctions on Iran's oil industry modernization as an important principle in the oil minister's speech?

Considering the fact that the Minister has a long history and an extensive experience and familiarity with Iran's oil industry both in upstream and downstream spheres, he definitely has a comprehensive awareness of the oil industry's needs. Definitely, to expand and modernize the production facilities and to improve and update downstream sectors, one of the main goals is to invite investors into the field. The realization of this goal will ultimately increase productivity and the possibility of export of oil products and derivatives.

■ What is NISOC's main strategy and priority to an ideal entrance to the post-sanctions era?

Considering the fact that NISOC is the biggest oil company in Iran and more than 80% of the country's oil is produced in this company, with an eye on the principle of protective production, our main strategy is to boost production while enhancing the quality to

maintain our participation in international markets in line with the policies of the Ministry of Petroleum and programs assigned by the national oil company.

■ How do you see NISOC's infrastructure for an ideal entry to the days after the lifting of sanctions?

As I mentioned, the most important strategy for NISOC is to reach a maximized sustainable production. This strategy could be explored and pursued from different angles, the first of which is human resources as the most important base in achieving the organization's goals. Second is considering a program for renovation and improvement of facilities and industrial infrastructure necessary for our production plans so that it could guarantee increased productivity and safety for human resources. The third is introducing new technologies in to the field and enhancing our own technology in order to develop the technical knowledge required to increase the recovery factor and to reduce the costs associated with production.

■ What are NISOC's programs regarding the development of a scientific and technical atmosphere in the company and also to utilize the world's knowledge in your field?

Due to the diversity of professions and specialties, as well as the quality of expert work, NISOC has always been known as a center for training of recognized experts and scholars in the oil industry. Using the opportunity presented in the post-sanctions era for interaction and communication with the world and for scientific transaction, NISOC (and Iran's oil industry in general) will be able to align itself with advanced companies and compensate for some shortcomings regarding technology in a very short period. Anyway, if we believe that regarding quality sky is the limit, then we will see utilization of modern technologies and enhancing the quality as a crucial aspect of our production process, but of course this doesn't necessarily mean that our oil quality is not good enough now! In comparison to some of the OPEC members we surely have a much better situation regarding our technical knowledge and technology but there is always place for improvement.



Engineering and plans manager of IOPTC explained the company's ongoing projects



In a comprehensive interview, Mr. Abolghasem Mousavi, the engineering and plans manager of Iranian oil pipelines and telecommunication company (IOPTC) explained the company's projects and activities. What comes below is a brief summary of his comments:

One of the main responsibilities of the engineering and plans manager is to manage and deal with finished projects' affairs and to close the related accounts. Since Bahman 1392 (January 2013), A total of 30 projects have been managed in our directorate. 19 projects have been financially settled and the final contractor's invoice has been issued for 11 projects.

Regarding the remaining 10 contracts, for some of them we are waiting for the insurance organization to execute contractual formalities and for others we are negotiating with the contractors and pipelines management for the final handover.

The manager further noted, "This directorate has signed two separate contracts and a consultant deal, one for the project of constructing the water systems of the fire station for Maroon pump plant which includes 7 stations and a terminal and also the project of constructing the water systems of the fire station for Rey crude oil pump plants; and Considering the progresses it is expected that these projects will be operational this year.

He went on saying that the projects which are defined in engineering and plans management sector are placed in various categories including pipeline development projects (it might be adding new pipeline or it could be improving the capacity), maintaining pipeline projects (Replacement of the pipeline) and development projects for transmission centers.

Regarding unfinished development projects from the last year, Mousavi said,

Ahvaz's Shahid Chamran pump station project will be financially settled soon, the final contractor's invoice for Rey - Tabriz, 16 - 14 inches project has been issued and only the site supervision deal for the 16-inches Abadan to Nezamieh pipeline project remains which will soon be completed.

Maintenance projects include Arak's 10-16 inches (settled), Abadan's refinery two internal pipelines (settled), 8-lines project in north of Abadan refinery, Redirecting 14 - 20 inches Asar-Pol Baba Hussein and redirecting the 24 - 18 inches, Isfahan - Ray lines which all are in the final stages.

Regarding transmission center projects; construction of Reservoirs in Pol Baba Hosein, Bardasby and Maroon 1 and 3 pump stations have been completed and the Provisional handover is executed and now we are waiting for final handover.

Director of Engineering and projects added, in the sixth five-year development program, about 4000 billion Toman worth of projects is defined which includes the development of pipelines, maintenance, development of transmission centers, constructing industrial and non-industrial buildings and Mechanizing the transmission system. These projects are provisioned for 1395 onwards and will

continue until 1399.

For now, Sabz Ab-Tangeh Fani 20-inches oil pipeline project which is of great importance, has been executed completely and handed over to the Beneficiary and only some ancillary services are in progress.

According to him rivers crossing pipelines using HDD method, redirecting Gorgan route pipelines, executing Ray - Sari pipelines are among other projects underway. The construction of the terminal facilities of Kerman and construction of terminal facilities of Malayer storage have been started from 1394 (2015) and will be completed in two years.



Iran Launches the First PMA Manufacturing Unit in the Middle East



TEHRAN - Mr. Ali Sedighzadeh, the managing director of Karoon Petrochemical Co. (KRNPC) announced launching of the first PMA manufacturing unit in the Middle East.

In an exclusive interview with Sharto newspaper, Mr. Sedighzadeh said, "by the efforts laid by my colleagues and coworkers in different sectors of KRNPC, the first PMA unit in the Middle East is put into operation".

He went on saying, "The first and second phases of Karoon project were started simultaneously in Iranian calendar year of 1386 (2008) and finally the first phase plant which produces methylene diphenyl diisocyanate (MDI) and Toluene diisocyanate (TDI) was put into operation in 1390 (2011)".

He added, "Since 1392 (2013), Phase 2 of the complex has developed substantially and now we are in the final stages of constructing this phase."

KRNPC's managing director also noted, "Aniline and Nitrobenzene units were launched in 1394 (2015) and we are proud to also set up the PMA unit shortly, achieving the final product (MDI) requires just about a month."

Mr. Sedighzadeh added, "The majority of Karoon Petrochemical's staff are young and very motivated. This generation has ability, knowledge and courage and we are proud to have such knowledgeable and active coworkers".

In the end the director stated, "I want to thank all my colleagues and staff at the Karoon Petrochemical, since it would be impossible

to achieve these successes without their hard work and dedication". "I hope our endeavor and hard work pay off in near future and be of service for our beloved country" he added.



Mr. Rafizadeh,
Karoon's phase 2 project manager:

PMA unit is unique in the Middle East

Based on the research and the estimations and also our meetings with the IKCO board, their company would be needing 15 thousand tons of MDI annually. And SAIPA Company can also have a share in our products. If we can get this product to market with a fixed price, it would un-

doubtedly be an important step in production of Petrochemicals inside the country.

PMA is the raw prerequisite for MDI unit so it has a key role in the production. Our product does not have any equivalent in the Middle East and it can compete with similar western products.



Mr. Shayeseh,
head of PMA unit's operation:

We can!

PMA unit was built on the efforts of Iranian specialists and my colleagues in Karoon Petrochemical Company after lifting the sanctions.

We had to deal with several problems that European-American countries imposed on us and also there were some ambiguities regarding the documents provided by the .designer company. All the operation instructions were rewritten by our operation team and we used our documents instead. Now we are proud that we showed the world that Iranians Can!

Dr. Asgari,
head of technical services:
Iranians CAN!

Annual production capacity of PMA unit is 32 thousand tons. The final product can be used in auto industry, airplanes, shoe making and etc. by this volume of production we can not only see to the



domestic needs but also export to other countries.

We managed to show our abilities and knowledge to the world and this is exactly in line with the resistance economy which the leader emphasized.

Mr. Miri,
Head of utilization:

Iran, at the peak of power and glory

Relaying on indigenous knowledge, today our country has reached high peaks of development and progress and this couldn't be possible without the guidance of the supreme leader. Being in line with the guidance of the leader in business spheres should be top priority for all companies and producers in the country.



Mr. Sasan Tarighi,
head of HSE:

Where there is a wish, there is a way

Since we had to complete the PMA Project without the cooperation of Swedish Company, it was a little challenging but with knowledge, courage and hard work dedicated by our staff in different sectors we managed to finish it and show the west that we can!

Considering all the limitations and shortages Karoon Petrochemical Company's HSE Unit was always present at the project site to prevent any possible accident and to help with emergencies. I must thank all our colleagues in the HSE Unit.



Mr. Afshin Kiani,
director of Karoon Complex:

The first in the Middle East

We could manage to succeed without the cooperation of Swedish company. With the efforts and collaboration of Karoon Petrochemical Company's different departments, today we are closer to our ultimate goal which is the production of MDI. This final product can be used in auto indus-

try, airplanes, shoe making and etc. and utilizing our products we can not only see to the domestic needs of the country but also export to other countries. This product doesn't have any equivalent in the Middle East and can compete with Western products.

Iranian oil terminals company back to pre-sanctions glory



Iranian Oil Terminals Company (IOTC) as the last ring in exploration and production of crude oil chain has always had a key role in the country's oil industry and it showcases the oil industry in Khark, Asaloyeh, Neka and Mahshahr.

With a strong management team and committed employees, the company has successfully passed through war, reconstruction and sanctions era. And now with the post-sanctions opportunity presented, the condition is ripe for the company to utilize its technical capacities and skilled human resources to achieve its bright future goals.

In this regard we had an interview with Seyed Pirouz Mousavi chairman of the company which comes as follows.

IOTC's Director mentioned the post-sanctions era to be Iran's oil terminals' return to glory and said, "by executing infrastructure works such as the development and modernization of infrastructure and storage and export facilities, IOTC is completely ready to return to the pre-sanctions capacity, so that now the volume of crude oil export is at its highest

level since Iranian calendar year of 1390 (2011)"

■ Iranian Oil Terminals Company, a model for resistance economy

IOTC was ranked among the top 100 companies contributing to the resistance economy in 1394 (2015).

Supporting domestic production by Iranian manufacturers and effective communication with research centers and universities to apply academic research in the oil industry have always been on the agenda for IOTC.

In this regard, Mousavi explained that localizing Production of electronic cards for metering and master systems, as well as the design and construction of loading arms and tug engines that were built for the first time in the country and the Production and utilizing Microbial powder for purging oil-contaminated soil and investing 60 billion rials for implementing Iranian Oil Terminals' 12 research projects are among achievements of the company.

He went on saying that "among the projects done with the cooperation of Iranian academic center for education, culture and research (ACE-

CR), "Design and construction of a system to prevent the formation of Sediment in the storages (SRJ) " Design and construction of a systems to display sediments Profile", Design and production of microbial powder to remove oil pollution", Designing and making a measurement systems accuracy evaluator (Tank Prover)"and "Technical development, design and manufacturing the metering system electronic cards in Khark Island" could be mentioned among which the projects related to loading arms and SRJ were highly regarded due to their application, as well as technology transfer.

He further explained, "building 4 SRJ systems and achieving self-efficacy in manufacturing the mentioned devices which resulted a significant amount of saving in costs and time are some of the company's achievements which have made overhauling of the reservoirs less time consuming".

He added, "our company welcomes foreign investment in various spheres such as new technologies in storage and terminal maintaining for crude oil, natural gas condensate and oil products", "this indicates the commitment of the management and staff of the Iranian Oil Terminals Company to resistance economy, the company always places high importance on employment, sustainability in manufacturing and also exporting".

Referring to the abilities of its staff, IOTC's director said, the company's creative and experienced experts were able to repair and exploit Behregansar buoy mooring in accordance with the standards and norms of international safety. He pointed out that the Bahregansar buoy maintenance was done only by experts of Iranian Oil Terminals Company. by doing so the company saved 6.5 million Euros for the country.

Mentioning the fact that all the complicated and delicate steps of the Bahregansar buoy repair were done in the sea and at the location, mousavi noted, "all stages of repair, replacement and modernization of the equipment was done while the buoy was not out

of service even for a minute, this successful operation is a significant accomplishment for the oil industry".

■ Exporting more than 7 million barrels of crude oil per day, a record

Underlining the company's capabilities in crude oil export, the CEO said, "The company hit the record of exporting 7 million barrels per day last year for the first time". He went on saying that 8 ports in the western and eastern piers of Khark oil terminal were simultaneously involved for loading on that day, this was made possible for the first time after ten years.

After lifting of the sanctions, we had some negotiations with domestic and foreign manufacturers, which resulted in a contract to update 7 SPMs of the company using the latest technology available. Of these 7, 3 SPMs are to be implemented in the South Pars and the other 3 in Jask project.

About the Jask project Mousavi said, "the consultant group has been chosen and basic research is done and construction of 10 million barrels of storage is on the agenda". "SPM management and operating subsea pipelines is entrusted to Iranian oil terminals company".

■ An Endeavour to activate the country's oil diplomacy

Due to the country's active diplomacy in the oil industry which is intended for the resumption of swap, Iran's oil terminals are completely ready

to execute swap, currently north oil terminals throughput is approximately 200 thousand barrels per day which by developing this terminal, crude oil and petroleum products' swap capacity will reach 500 thousand barrels per day.

He explained: during the period when we couldn't use swap, the company tried to maintain and preserve the one billion dollar equipment of the north and keep in service. In this regard the company also managed to completely repair a reservoir and save more than 6 billion rials for the country.

We have also requested financing for the north oil terminal and the development plan for this terminal will be operational after getting the necessary licenses and fund for the project.

Underlining some of the important projects in the current year such as smart sphereing, The CEO said, "By implementing this project evaluation of subsea pipelines between Ganaveh and Khark and Assaluyeh's gas condensate lines will begin".

"Assessing the scouring in subsea pipelines between Khark, Asalouyeh and Genvaeah is another project which will be executed in current year. for this project 280 spots have been located and the project is of high importance."

Mousavi said that agility, speed, accuracy, security and compliance with the standards in Iranian Oil Terminals complex, has made the company a trusted and leading company at the international level.



Oil market at crossroads as big rally masks risks lurking ahead

If the oil market needed a theme song for now, it might turn to the one where Taylor Swift nervously sings: "Are we out of the woods yet?"

A slump in U.S. production, unexpected cuts in output from Nigeria to Colombia and rising gasoline demand have helped drive a major rally since mid-February. As investors boost their bullish bets, analysts from UBS Group AG to Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs Group Inc. see pitfalls ahead.

The global crude glut has spread to diesel and will threaten gasoline after the peak summer driving season. Unplanned outages may be resolved in coming months, boosting supplies as Iran seeks to regain market share and Saudi Arabia defends its turf. Demand is "underwhelming" in emerging markets, says Morgan Stanley. Goldman Sachs warns U.S. output may rebound if prices rally too quickly.

"Oil fundamentals are improving but the market is still apprehensive," said Ehsan Ul-Haq, a senior consultant at KBC Advanced Technologies in London. "Only when refiners start complaining about the lack of supply will we see a sustainable recovery."

In China, increased gasoline production has been accompanied by a surge in diesel output that's exceeding consumption and leading to all-time-high exports. Now as the economy of the world's second-biggest oil user faces the slowest expansion since 1990, there's concern the gasoline market may also be heading for oversupply.

After exporting a record amount of gasoline last year, China has boosted shipments in February and March, customs data compiled by Bloomberg show. Stockpiles of light distillates including gasoline in Singapore, Asia's oil-trading hub, are at near record levels, while inventories of the fuel in the U.S. are more than 25 million barrels higher than the five-year average for this time of the year.

"If gasoline starts to fizzle out, it makes the recovery in crude a bit precarious," said Neveyn Nah, a Singapore-based analyst at industry consultant Energy Aspects. "Gasoline has been the star of the barrel, and now with high inventories and slowing demand growth, it could lose some of its shine."

Oil futures are on track to outperform analyst predictions for the first time in a year, data compiled by Bloomberg show. Brent crude, the benchmark for more than half the world's oil, advanced above \$38 a barrel earlier last

month, climbing past the median forecast for the second quarter and reached \$48.14 on April 28, the highest in almost six months.

Oil on Friday was headed for its first weekly drop in more than a month as rising U.S. stockpiles and OPEC production cushioned the impact of declines in North American output. Brent was at \$44.65 a barrel, while West Texas Intermediate traded at \$43.82.

Brent and WTI, the U.S. marker, have soared more than 60 percent since tumbling to a 12-year low earlier this year. Speculators' net-long position in WTI jumped to the highest since May of last year in the week ended April 26, according to data from the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. Short positions dropped to a 10-month low.

"Although futures markets are being supported by speculative interest, physical markets are not showing tightness yet," KBC's Ul-Haq said. "Tightness in the physical market will be the harbinger of a strengthening market."

Unplanned disruptions and maintenance that have taken about 800,000 barrels a day offline this year have helped drive the rally in crude since February. A number of these outages are set to be resolved in coming months, Morgan Stanley analysts including Adam Longson said in a report dated April 25. What's more, the gain in prices may encourage more production.

Drilled, uncompleted wells in the U.S. could return 500,000 barrels a day back to the market, according to Richard Westerdale, a director at the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Energy Resources.

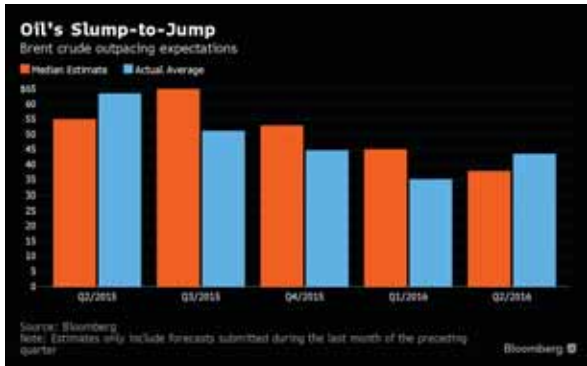
"When oil prices rebound, there's a chance that those who stopped drilling may resume production as there are drilled but uncompleted wells," said Hong Sung Ki, a senior analyst at Samsung Futures Inc. in Seoul. "But the resilience to do so must have fallen compared to last year because a number of producers went bankrupt since the plunge in oil."

It's premature to embrace "green shoots" in the market because the current rally in prices is being driven by temporary factors such as supply disruptions while longer-term problems of surplus capacity persist, Goldman Sachs analysts including Jeffrey Currie said in a research note dated April 22. Oil fundamentals are poor and set to deteriorate, especially if prices move higher, the Morgan Stanley analysts said in its April 25 report.

Output from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries may jump 1 million barrels a day by June from 32.5 million barrels in March as Saudi Arabia and Iran boost supplies, according to Morgan Stanley. "More aggressive efforts" from the group's members could push daily production to 34 million barrels, offsetting estimated global crude demand growth and declines in U.S. output for 2016, it said.

"We're seriously concerned that the market may suddenly realize we have too much oil," said Dominic Schneider, the head of commodities and Asia-Pacific foreign exchange at UBS's wealth-management unit in Hong Kong. "Oil is ripe for a consolidation or correction into the mid-to-low \$30s."

(Source: Bloomberg)



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South pars special economic energy zone, a symbol of resistance economy



■ USD 20,000 saving in contracts with Boushehr scientific centers

Stating that strengthening ties between the industry and academic centers is a must, Mehdi Yousefi, managing director of Pars Special Economic Energy Zone (PSEEZ), said that a Technology Transfer Center (TTC) has been established in the capital of Iran's energy zone.

Iran's oil industry strategically supports universities, scientific and educational centers in order to deploy modern technology and the latest knowledge in the industry. This approach would help us to achieve the industry's goals.

University-industry interactions should lead to solving industry problems, otherwise we will not reach our primary targets. Given that nowadays technological activities in the country are very important, while strengthening the infrastructure, we need to go through this path.

Yousefi went on saying that last year 13 million and 238 thousand and 684 tons of goods worth 7 billion and 328 million and 471 thousand dollars have been exported abroad, this amount of exports is increased by 28 percent compared to the same period last year.

During this time contracts with Boushehr scientific centers worth IR.Rial 24 billion (USD 6.8 Million) were signed which brought about USD 20,000 savings.

University-industry cooperation should solve challenges of the industry. Considering the value of technological activities in today's life, we in Iran should provide the infrastructures for that.

In the first 13 years of PSEEZ life, gas production in the South Pars fields amounted to 270 million cubic meters, while in past two years, following the plans of the Ministry of Petroleum, the amount increased to 170 million cm.

■ Protecting environment priority of MoP in South Pars

Protecting the environment is a top priority for Iran's Ministry of Petroleum (MoP) in the South Pars projects.

PSEEZ believes that clean and green environment, and protecting it is what

all people demand. Considering the fact that PSEEZ's is contributing to a giant energy project formed to develop the South Pars fields with nearly 29 refinery phases and 27 petrochemical complexes and over 56 thousands direct employees the organization would take all necessary measures to protect the environment.

It is worth mentioning that after completing all the development phases, considering USD 50 per barrel of oil price, country would earn over USD 110 billion in oil revenues from South Pars. This shows the remarkable role of PSEEZ nationally and internationally.

Pars Special Zone director pointed out that environmental standards and licenses are considered in the organization's industrial activities. In this regard he said, "Flaring and gas torches in ten phases of South Pars has been reduced from 56 million cubic meters in the year of 1387 (2008) to 5 million cubic meters of burning torch in 1394 (2015)".

In the field of waste disposal, with follow-up and coordination of Pars Special Zone Organization and the Bushehr's department of environment, a protection schedule is set and effective measures will be taken to reduce

community participation in industrial activities".

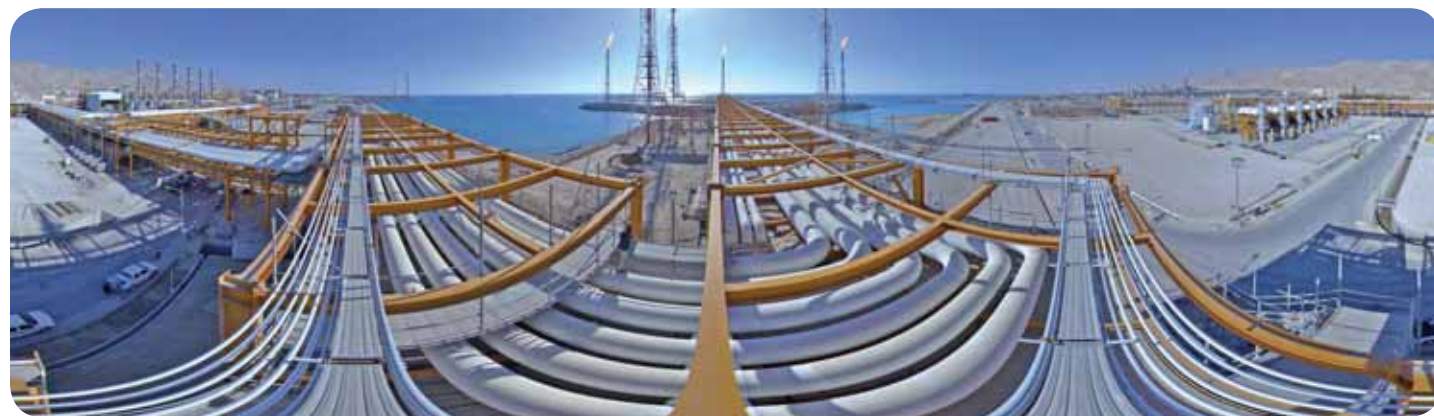
In this regard, ministry of oil has spent 600 billion Tomans for construction projects, completion of health care projects, providing drinking water in the Nakhil E Taqi and Jam towns and construction of roads network. In terms of ethnic diversity, common political border with different countries, joint resources and religious and cultural diversity Pars is an exceptional zone which this causes the political geography of the region to be very special.

Outside South Pars, there are also various important international gas and oil projects going on which makes the area even more economically important.

Conducting Training courses by Pars Special Economic Energy Zone Organization is among the most influential services done on behalf of the oil industry in the region.

South Pars can add 100 billion dollars (with \$ 50 per barrel) to the country's income, annually; South Pars zone is the country and world's largest energy area and this fact urges the need for communication between country's intellectuals and universities with the oil industry.

It should be mentioned that a thou-



pollution in this area.

He added, "Nowadays, world's view toward environment is very serious and will pursue this goal with consistency and confidence."

■ 55 thousands direct job opportunities in South Pars projects

In a meeting with a group of experts and scholars managing director of PSEEZ emphasized that the Pars Special Economic Energy Zone is a strategic area in the country and said, "Based on the latest statistics more than 55 thousands employees are working directly in the South Pars".

He added, "South Pars and Iran's oil ministry strategy in the area is to create a safe zone through increased

sand hectares of land is allocated for private sector investment in downstream industries which completion of these investment projects will have a significant role in increasing employment in the area.

■ 75% of the Pars II Zone (Kangan) budget is funded

Pars Special Economic Energy Zone managing director also announced that 75 percent of Pars 2 zone (Kangan) financing has been funded during the last year.

Eight projects with a value of 987 billion riyals in roads, buildings and flood control spheres were going on last year which three of them with the value of 497 billion rials were completed by the end of Iranian calendar year of 1394 (2015).



Kangan Petro Refining Company is also settled in the area which its excavating operation is in progress now. It should be mentioned that the financing for infrastructure of Siraf Refineries Park and Kangan Petro Refining Company are both funded by the pri-

the area are among the main tasks of this management.

■ Pioneers in development of the country's energy capital

In a meeting with the organization's employees and workers, the managing director of PSEEZ stated working in the South Pars zone to be like Jihad and added:

"Pars Special Economic Energy Zone Company has always valued the workers role in the country's development. Increased production in South Pars gas field and ranking first in exports in two consecutive years is obtained only with the efforts of dedicated workers in the country's energy capital."

Yousefi also pointed to organizing the employment activities and said, "Assigning ten supervisors by the organization to constantly evaluate the workers and employees situation shows how much the company cares about its staff". The mentioned inspectors attend the sites and working places periodically and evaluate the situation of workers, their welfare and the health services provided.

organizing cultural activities, social welfare and workers' elections are among the achievements of the organization in employee support.

In 1394 (2015) the company succeeded to hold 12 workers election with the participation of employers and industrialists. And Workers' representatives in various commissions have been selected from among this hardworking group to participate in major decisions.

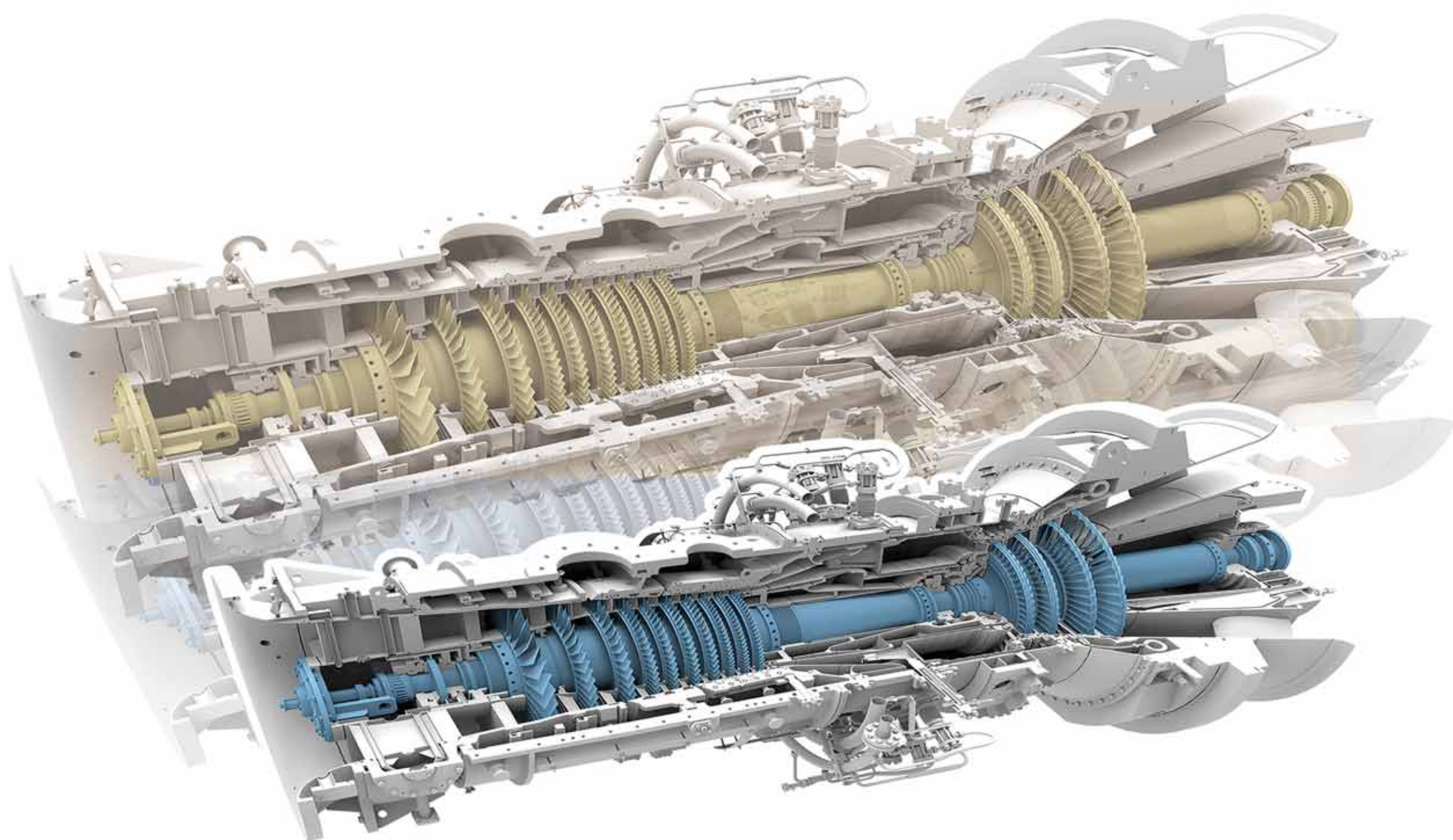
Nearly two thousand employees and workers were added to the system In Iranian calendar year of 1394 (2015) among which 1500 were local.





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Domestic and foreign investors eye “MAKRAN petrochemical project” as new investment hub

Privately-funded MAKRAN petrochemical project will be turned into one of the three main petrochemical hubs in the country in the next 10 years. Nowadays, this giant petrochemical project is attractive for both domestic and foreign investors. This petrochemical project has been highly welcomed both by domestic and foreign investors due to various types of exemptions which are offered to them. In other words, domestic and foreign investors select this petrochemical site as their prioritized objective for investment. Hereunder are the exemptions and fringe benefits offered in this project to domestic and foreign investors: taking advantage of 20 to 25 percent exemption in price of feedstock due to its location in free zone and also in disadvantaged and underprivileged area, benefiting from 20-year tax exemption due to its location in free zone and also 30 percent exemption in price of feedstock by GTPP complexes, etc.

Of the other salient advantages of MAKRAN petrochemical project, located in southeastern Iran, it should be referred to: proximity of the site to target markets including China and India and considerable reduction of transportation costs, benefitted from exclusive tanks on a land area as large as 20 hectares in Shahid Beheshti Port in Chabahar in order to export products, connecting to nationwide railway by 1396 (to start March 20, 2017) as well as conclusion of contract for completing supply of gas to Iranshahr, etc.

It should be noted that MAKRAN petrochemical project in Chabahar is the first large petrochemical hub in the country, construction operation of which is underway by the private sector, costing approx. \$15 billion. With the studies made in this regard, this giant petrochemical project will be put into operation in three phases in 10 years.

This project has been funded by the private sector, costing approx. \$15 billion, without government's investment.

MAKRAN Petrochemical Township enjoys 18 upstream and midstream projects as well as more than 30 downstream industries in the field of producing engineering polymers. Once phases of this petrochemical hub are put into operation, approx. 17,000 employment opportunities will be generated for job-seeking people directly. Moreover, 22 million tons products out of total 26 million tons, which will be manufactured in this petrochemical township, will be exported to world countries. Broadly speaking, giant stride will be taken in export of petrochemicals once all phases of this petrochemical township are put into operation.

To learn more about the details, physical progress of project, status of investment and exemptions offered to domestic and foreign investors in this zone as well as perspective of petrochemical industry in Iran, our correspondent has conducted an interview with chief executive of 3rd petrochemical hub of country Eng. Mohammad-Reza Movaseqinia which comes as follows:

Let's review the interview in questions and answers.

■ As the first question, what are the advantages of petrochemical project located in free zones as compared with other zones such as Assaluyeh and Mahshahr?

A: In response to your question, I should say that MAKRAN petrochemical project in Chabahar Free Zone is located both in free zone and underprivileged and disadvantaged Sistan-Baluchestan Province. Given the above issue, this petrochemical site can benefit from tax exemptions of these two zones. Exemption in price of feedstock of petrochemical complexes is the most important legal exemption in this respect. That is to say that MAKRAN petrochemical site in Chabahar Free Zone will benefit from two kinds of exemptions in terms of price of feedstock due to its location in free zone and also underprivileged area. Altogether, this project will benefit from 20 to 25 percent exemption in feedstock price.

Since feedstock price has high weight in economic calculations of petrochemical complexes, this issue is very significant. Also, free zones across the country enjoy 20-year tax exemptions, the issue of which has brought about special attractiveness for both domestic and foreign investors. MAKRAN is the only petrochemical project in the country which is located in free zone and it has a special privilege than Assaluyeh and Mahshahr areas.

For this purpose, Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh has recently announced



that petrochemical complexes equipped with GDPP unit (downstream industries) will enjoy 30 percent discount in terms of feedstock. Of course, this advantage will be added to the previous discounts and benefits as well.

■ Accordingly, do you see bright prospect for investment in petrochemical industry?

A: Certainly, yes. There is a rosy and bright future in petrochemical industry of country. Responsible officials are planning and working hard towards development of this industry. According to the statistics, income as a result of selling petrochemicals in the country will hit \$70 billion before termination of 6th Five-Year Socioeconomic and Cultural Development Plan.

It should be noted that government's current policymaking in the field of attracting investor in this sector has also boosted status of this industry. Due to its location in Chabahar Free Zone, MAKRAN petrochemical project has other salient advantages with regard to two other petrochemical hubs in the country, mainly due to its proximity to target petrochemical markets. Currently, China and India are main target markets for country's petrochemical products. Given the above issue, distance of Chabahar Free Zone to India and China is approx. 1,000 km shorter than that of Assaluyeh and Mahshahr, the issue of which has reduced transportation cost significantly.

■ What are the other salient advantages of MAKRAN petrochemical site to Mahshahr and Assaluyeh?

A: The issue of short distance, as mentioned in above, is one of the most important advantages of Makran petrochemical site than Mahshahr and Assaluyeh. For this purpose, Indian, Chinese, Omani and Pakistani investors held several talks with us in order to attend Makran petrochemical site for investment purposes. In general, Makran petrochemical site was highly welcomed by foreign investors. Passage of main export petrochemical products of country from Hormuz Strait and Persian Gulf is another salient advantage of Makran as compared to current petrochemical hubs in the country. Generally speaking, Makran petrochemical site is located in a safer region in the vicinity of Sea of Oman.

Hereunder are regarded as other salient advantages of Makran petrochemical site in Chabahar Free Zone: benefitted from expert, competent and skilled manpower, benefitted from three universities in Chabahar, construction of Chabahar rail line and connecting it to the nationwide railway network by 1395 (to end March 20, 2017) and its completion by late 1396 (to start March 20, 2017), passage of this rail line in the vicinity of Makran petrochemical units, construction of new airport in Chabahar [It should be noted that bylaw for construction operation of this airport has been finalized in the government and will be completed by 2021], being located in the vicinity of Shahid Beheshti Port and allocation of 20-ha land area as exclusive storages for Makran petrochemical project with the aim of exporting products, etc.

■ With regard to the sublime statements of Supreme Leader on reclamation of Makran costal areas and also special emphasis of president and 1st vice president, it seems that government officials' support in this regard can help accelerate implementation of Makran projects?

A: Yes. Fortunately, governmental officials have thrown their heavyweights on materializing objectives of this project vehemently and have taken effective steps for development of this zone. Even, an organization will be set up for development of Makran project, the issue of which has been ratified in 6th Five-Year Socioeconomic and Cultural Development Plan.

■ Would you please tell us about Makran petrochemical project's current situation?

A: Fortunately, necessary environmental licenses and certificates have thus far been received, so that a parcel of land as large as 20 ha has been purchased in Shahid Beheshti Port as exclusive storage for this giant project. Moreover, a contract has been concluded for constructing gas transfer pipeline from Iranshahr to Chabahar. At the official order of oil minister, 20 million cubic meter feedstock has been earmarked to Makran petrochemical project in its first phase. Moreover, engineering and development operation for constructing utility unit and also construction of three petrochemical units have been fully funded by three investors.

We also have managed to identify successful investor for construction of four other units of the project. According to statistics, approx. \$2 billion is required for construction of these four units. Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) Unit, Firefighting and Administrative Building of the site have also been commissioned. Feasibility studies and engineering activities for constructing exclusive tanks have been finished in Shahid Beheshti Port and pipeline engineering activity will be kicked off in the very near future.

■ How is the classification of current investors in Makran petrochemical site? How do you assess the outlook of this site?

A: Presently, 20 and 80 percent foreign and domestic investors are working in this giant project respectively. With regard to the outlook of Makran petrochemical project, I should say that this giant project includes 17 petrochemical units, total of which will be constructed in 10 years. With the studies made in this regard, first phase of this project [including six petrochemical units, 1st phase of utility complex and 1st phase of exclusive storages located in Shahid Beheshti Port] will be commissioned by mid 2018, costing \$5 billion at large.

■ In your opinion, what drastic measures should be taken in order to develop petrochemical industry in the country?

A: To me, stabilization of investment conditions and stability of feedstock price in the country should first be taken into consideration which is effective in attraction of investor. Also, compilation and formulation of 20-year plan for comprehensive development of petrochemical sector in the country is vital. These issues can help promote status of petrochemical

sector in the country to a great extent.

■ “Japan”, “South Korea”, “Oman” and “India” Ready to Invest in “Makran Petrochemical Project”

Japan, South Korea, Oman and India are forerunners of making investment in lucrative Makran Petrochemical Township, based in Chabahar Free Zone. In general, these countries are vying one another to have a leading role in this giant project. For this purpose, investors of these countries held several talks with Iranian officials and visited the site consecutively with the aim of concluding contract for construction of this giant project.

A couple of days ago, three contracts were inked between Iranian and South Korean companies for development of infrastructures of Makran Petrochemical Township. In his visit of the site in the beginning of current Iranian calendar year in 1395 (started March 20, 2016), Indian oil minister also expressed readiness of his country to make hefty investment in Makran Petrochemical Township.

Senior managers of Japan's Toyo Company also inked joint venture contract for the construction of this petrochemical township in a way that financial transactions have been made in this regard. To date, companies from Japan, South Korea, and Oman, pension funds, banks and also private companies have concluded separate contracts for development of this giant project as joint venture.

■ South Korea Inks Contract with Iran to Develop Makran Petrochemical Township

Iran and South Korea Economic Forum was recently held in Azadi Intl. Hotel in the presence of South Korean Minister of Trade Cho Hong-hyun, Korean Ambassador to Tehran, Chairman of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (IC-



Negin Mokran
Development Co.

CIMA) Mohsen Jalalpour, Vice Chairman of South Korean Intl. Trade Association, Head of Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPOI) Valiollah Afkhamiraad, Managing Director of Chabahar Free Zone and CEO of Makran Petrochemical Company Hamed-Ali Mobaraki, based on which three contracts were signed and sealed between Iranian and Korean companies for development of infrastructures of Makran Petrochemical Township.

It should be noted that joint investment forum between Iran and South Korea was held in the presence of Korea's giant companies such as Hyundai, LG, Samsung and Doosan which sent their representatives to Tehran in order to participate in this prestigious business event. It is worth mentioning that more than 270 Iranian economic activists, industrialists and economic enterprises welcomed this forum wholeheartedly.

In one of contracts signed between Managing Director of Makran Water Company (responsible for constructing and commissioning utility in Makran Petrochemical Township) and chief executives of South Korean Doosan Company, it was agreed that Korean company will embark on financing, designing, constructing and equipping power plant unit, seawater extraction unit, cooling tower unit, water unit, wastewater treatment unit, nonindustrial buildings' unit and gas pressure-reduction station.

According to this report, South Korea's Doosan Company, as provider of financial, technical and engineering services, intends to embark on financing, designing, supplying and constructing utility in Makran Petrochemical Township.

Korea's Doosan Company was established in 1896 in South Korea which is active in various financial, industrial, power plant and energy sectors. With its annual revenue exceeding \$21 billion, Korea's Doosan Company is among world's top 40 companies according to Business Week Magazine.

■ Indian Oil Minister Visits Makran Petrochemical Township

To follow up the issue of investing in Iran's petrochemical industry based in Chabahar, Indian Oil Minister Darmendra Yerradhan traveled to Iran and visited Makran Petrochemical Township.

During his visit, the Indian oil minister expressed willingness of his country to make investment in petrochemical projects in Chabahar.

Earlier, Indian minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers had announced that the decision to construct a urea plant in Chabahar to meet New Delhi's demand to this product is certain. Of total 30 million tons of its required urea, India imports eight million tons of which from abroad annually. For this purpose, India intends to make \$800 million worth of investment (equal to 50 billion rupee) in Iran for the construction of fertilizer production plant.

Mokran Petrochemical Complex	
• The Complex area:	more than 1200 hectares
• The Projected units:	
Upstream: 18 units	Downstream Industries: 30 units
• Investment amount:	\$ 15 billion
• Production capacity:	26 million tons/year
• The direct employment:	17000
• Types of feeds for units:	
Methane: 57 million m ³ /day	
Ethane: 2.6 million tons/year	



Chabahar; The 3rd Iran's Petrochemical Hub



217-bed hospital opens in Amol, northern Iran

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A hospital with the capacity of 217 beds opened on Thursday in the northern city of Amol, Mazandaran Province.

Health Minister Hassan Qazizadeh-Hashemi officially inaugurated the hospital.

About 430 billion rials (nearly \$12.5 million) has been spent on the construction of the hospital over a 10-year period, IRNA reported.

The hospital with a total area of 18,000 square meters has been built in four floors.

The hospital is equipped with ICU, CCU, CT scan, radiology, sonography, and physiotherapy wards as well as a lab and a pharmacy.

Widely used heart drug tied to dementia risk

People with the heart rhythm disorder atrial fibrillation may have a heightened risk of developing dementia -- and the quality of their drug treatment may play a role, a new study hints.

Specifically, researchers found, patients on the clot-preventing drug warfarin showed a higher dementia risk if their blood levels of the medication were frequently too high or too low.

And that was true not only for people with atrial fibrillation, but also for those using warfarin for other reasons.

Dr. Jared Bunch, the lead researcher on the study, said the findings uncover two potential concerns: People with atrial fibrillation may face an increased risk of dementia, independent of warfarin use, but warfarin might also contribute to dementia if the doses are not optimal.

"If people's levels of warfarin were erratic, their dementia risk was higher, whether they had AF or not," said Bunch, who was scheduled to present his findings Thursday at the Heart Rhythm Society's annual meeting, in San Francisco.

The results do not prove that either atrial fibrillation or warfarin are to blame, according to Bunch, a cardiologist at Intermountain Medical Center, in Murray, Utah.

But, he said, there is reason to believe that both could contribute to dementia -- in part because of effects on blood flow to the brain.

(Source: HealthDay News)

Pluto's strange haze might be the result of gravity waves

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has possibly found the answer to the streaks present in the hazy atmosphere in Pluto: gravity waves.

New Horizons flyby in 2015 gave a clearer picture of what Pluto looks like. Not only does it have an atmosphere, but it also tends to be hazy.

The latter point is the reason why NASA and New Horizons team decided to investigate further. With the help of computer simulations and observations of the data coming from the probe, they determined that it could be gravity waves.

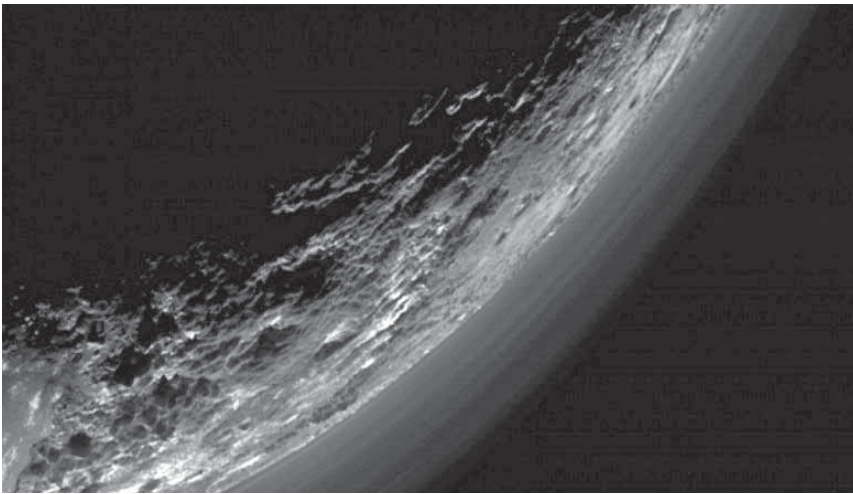
Some people may confuse gravitational and gravity waves, which is perfectly understandable.

Gravitational waves, which have been catapulted to bigger fame with the confirmation of its existence in February, are ripples in the space-time fabric. These waves are created after significant energetic events have occurred.

Black holes

For example, the waves detected by the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) operated by Caltech and Massachusetts Institute of Technology came from the collision

and merging of two major black holes 1.3 billion years ago. The energy this event generated has finally reached



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and merging of two major black holes 1.3 billion years ago. The energy this event generated has finally reached

Earth this year.

"These are not cosmological gravity waves, but atmospheric buoyancy waves," said New Horizons principal investigator Alan Stern.

As an analogy, imagine a rock thrown into a pond. The fluid, now displaced from its point of equilibrium, creates ripples as the rock travels across the surface. However, the farther the ripples go, the thinner and sparser they become.

In Pluto, or in this case, in its atmosphere, buoyancy lifts the air upward while gravity tries to restore the equilibrium. Further, the waves travel vertically or upward, coming from a lower altitude toward the higher one. Since density is inversely proportional to altitude, the ripples become more pronounced as they go up.

For the waves to happen, there must be a trigger, and in Pluto, these disturbances may include sublimation, or the conversion of gas to liquid, and deposition, or the transformation of gas to solid.

(Source: Tech Times)

A robot surgeon has passed a major milestone — sewing up pig guts

With only a small amount of guidance, a robotic surgeon was able to stitch together pieces of intestinal tubing from a pig — in both a lab setting and an operation on a living animal. This type of procedure is particularly difficult as the soft tissue can bend and flex, but it's necessary to perform a number of life-saving operations. The researchers claim their robot can match and even exceed the safety and precision of a human doctor.

In the study published in Science Translational Medicine, the researchers caution that their new method is only a proof-of-concept and requires more development. They'll need to provide evidence their techniques are safe enough for people, and even there they may face difficulty.

Robotic surgery techniques that have been used in

hospitals for years are still criticized as no safer than non-robotic methods, but much more expensive.

All sorts of ways

The researchers say that in the future there will be all sorts of ways for humans and robots to work together to benefit patient safety, but that the end goal is a ma-



chine that operates entirely by itself.

"It's a very provocative idea and I think it has great potential," Rasa Zarnegar, an associate professor of surgery at Weill Cornell Medical College told The Verge. "But the study is very small [and] definitely doesn't portray a real-life scenario."

The key to the automated surgeon is advanced vision, say the researchers that developed it from Children's National and John Hopkins University.

Like the facial tracking technology used in Hollywood films, the robot — called Smart Tissue Autonomous Robot or STAR — uses markers to follow the movement of flesh. In this case, these are fluorescent dots injected into the pig's tissue that are tracked by an array of cameras and mapped onto a 3D model.

(Source: The Verge)

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Conquest Roland-Garros

Iran's Tasisat Daryaei discovers rivals at AFC Futsal Club Championship

TT SPORTS Tasisat Daryaei of Iran has been drawn in Group B of the AFC Futsal Club Championship Thailand 2016 along with Al Mayadeen FC from Lebanon and Uzbekistan's FC Almalyk.

Group A consists of Chonburi Bluewave from Thailand, Japanese Nagoya Oceans and Vic Vipers FC from Australia.

Iraqi Nafit Al-Wasat, Dalian Yuan Dynasty FC from China and Dibba Al Hissin SCC from the UAE are in Group C.

Vietnamese Sanna Khanh HOA FC has been pitted against Qatari Al Sadd SC and Taipower FC from Chinese Taipei in Group D.

Each group will play a one-round league, from which the top two teams in each group (eight teams in total) will qualify for the knockout stage (quarter-final), the-afc wrote.

The four winners of the quarter-final will qualify for the semi-final. The losers of those semi-finals will face each other in the 3rd/4th placing, while the winners of the semi-final will advance to the final.

The AFC Futsal Club Championship Thailand 2016 will be held in Thailand from July 15 to 23.



Irmatov is a great referee, says Iran's Alireza Faghani

TT SPORTS Iranian international referee Alireza Faghani who has recently selected for officiating football matches at 2016 Rio Olympics believes that Ravshan Irmatov is a great experienced referee.

"He has been a full international referee for FIFA since 2003 while I started international refereeing in 2009. He has officiated in 2010 and 2014 World Cups and has a lot of experience. I will always try to learn from these people to achieve success," Faghani said.

"I am happy to have selected as a referee in 2016 Olympics games but the more important thing is my performance there. If we manage to do well we will get more games to officiate," Faghani added. Faghani made history by officiating the FIFA



Club World Cup final, where Barcelona defeated River Plate 3-0 at the International Stadium in December 2015 in Yokohama, Japan.

Faghani was also appointed to referee the 2015 AFC Asian Cup Final, which was contested by South Korea and Australia.

Jahanbakhsh will stay at Alkmaar until he becomes a star, says agent

TT SPORTS Iranian international Alireza Jahanbakhsh who is enjoying a great season with AZ Alkmaar has caught the eye of European big clubs but his agent Amir Hashemi Moghaddam believes that he will not leave the Dutch side until he becomes the best in Holland.

"Jahanbakhsh has a couple of offers from Middle East and also Spanish teams but he is now focused on his job at AZ Alkmaar. His progress at the team and becoming a complete player is priority for Alireza. I think he will leave AZ when he is one of the best players in Holland," Hashemi Moghaddam said.

The 22-year old winger, who was struggling with injuries in the first half of



the season, has become one of the regular first team players and helped his team to move up to 4th place in the table.

He has scored two goals and provided five assists in the 28 appearances for AZ this season.

FOOTBALL

Iran best Asian team in FIFA rankings

TT SPORTS Iran continue to be the highest ranked Asian nation in the latest FIFA rankings announced on Thursday.

Carlos Queiroz's men ranked 42nd in the world.

Australia is the second best Asian team, followed by South Korea, who has moved up to third.

Meanwhile, Argentina topped the latest FIFA ranking, followed by Belgium and Chile.

Colombia, Germany, Spain, Brazil, Portugal, Uruguay and England made the top 10 list for the month.

FIFA rankings are based on the average number of points that a team accumulates over a four-year period.

The ranking points in each match are determined by its result, its value and the relative strength of the opponent and their confederation. The system also has a yearly basis depreciation for the value of the matches.



Greco-Roman wrestler Hamid Sourian qualifies for Rio

TT SPORTS The London 2012 gold medalist and six-time world champion Hamid Sourian booked a place for Rio on Friday.

In the second World Olympic Games Qualifying Tournament took place at the Bagcilar Sports Complex in Istanbul, Turkey, Sourian defeated rivals from Croatia and Germany before defeating Ukraine's Tsybalyuk Dmitry 8-0 in the semi-final.

The top two wrestlers in each discipline and weight category were awarded Olympic quota spots.

The 59kg wrestler gave Iran entries in all 12 men's events.

President of the Iranian National Olympic Committee Kiomars Hashemi expressed his congratulation to the Greco-Roman wrestler for securing his place in the prestigious event.



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Human Rights Watch (HRW) has criticized the United States for selling cluster munitions to the House of Saud regime, urging Riyadh to stop using such banned arms that leave behind unexploded sub-munitions and endanger civilians.

On Friday, Steve Goose, arms director at HRW and chair of the Cluster Munition Coalition, an international coalition of groups working to eradicate cluster munitions, called on Washington to stop producing and selling the internationally-banned weapons in compliance with international law.

"The U.S. has sold Saudi Arabia cluster munitions, a weapon most countries have rejected due to the harm they cause civilians," said Goose, adding "Saudi Arabia should stop using cluster munitions in Yemen or anywhere else, and the U.S. should stop producing and exporting them."

Goose went on to say that Saudi Arabia has used various types of U.S.-made cluster munitions, including CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons, in its war against Yemen despite evidence of mounting civilian casualties.

"Following multiple attacks in Yemen, it is now obvious that Sensor Fuzed Weapons are not the 'reliable' or 'intelligent' cluster munitions they have been promoted as," said Goose, noting, "The U.S. should cease production and transfer of these weapons following the evidence of their failures and their use in and near

Saudi Arabia using U.S.-made cluster bombs in Yemen: HRW



civilian areas and should join the international ban on cluster munitions."

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have both received CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons from the U.S. in recent years. The U.S. also provided Saudi Arabia with significant exports of other cluster bombs between 1970 and 1999.

The New York-based leading international rights groups also say the U.S. has endangered many civilian lives by selling the cluster bombs to Riyadh regime.

This comes as internationally-banned cluster munitions supplied by the United States have numerous been used in the relentless war.

In the past year, HRW documented civilian casualties in Yemen from the use of four types of U.S.-made air-dropped and ground-launched cluster munitions against Yemenis. This includes using CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons in at least six airstrikes in the Yemeni provinces of Amran, Hodaïda, Sa'ada and Sana'a.

German politicians say Turkish PM's departure worrying

Politicians from Germany's ruling coalition voiced concern on Thursday over Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu's decision to step down, saying his departure paved the way for President Tayyip Erdogan to rule unchecked.

Davutoglu is seen in Europe as the more liberal face of the Turkish government, while Erdogan is heavily focused on creating a powerful executive presidency that critics say will tilt Turkey, an EU candidate, toward authoritarianism.

Davutoglu negotiated a deal with Brussels on stemming the flow of illegal migrants to Europe, which German Chancellor Angela Merkel hopes will shore up support for her conservatives ahead of a federal election next year.

"Erdogan will be able to push ahead with his plans to change the constitution now without opposition from his own ranks," Niels Annen, spokesman on foreign affairs for the Social Democrats, junior party in Merkel's coalition, told Reuters.

"In view of the prevailing climate of repression and the current debate about lifting the immunity of opposition lawmakers this is bad news," he said.

Erdogan's ruling AK Party has faced



accusations of rowing back on media freedoms and also aims to remove lawmakers' immunity from prosecution, a move widely seen as targeting a pro-Kurdish party in the Turkish parliament.

Juergen Hardt, foreign affairs spokesman for Merkel's conservatives, also expressed concern about Davutoglu's departure on Thursday.

"Turkey will decide itself whether its future path leads to Europe or towards greater isolation," Hardt said in a statement.

German politicians have long followed Turkish affairs closely. Germany is home to around three million people with an ethnic Turkish background and is an important trade partner for Turkey.

(Source: Reuters)

Hezbollah official: Saudi Arabia siding with Israel

A senior Hezbollah official has slammed the House of Saud regime attempts to hamper Palestinian struggles in pursuit of their rights, saying the regime in Riyadh backs the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands.

Sheikh Naeem Qassem, the deputy secretary general of Lebanon's resistance movement Hezbollah, made the remarks at a meeting of clerics and Islamic scholars in Beirut on ways to strengthen the anti-Israel resistance front.

Sheikh Qassem further said Riyadh has openly voiced support for an Israeli project to deny the Palestinian nation the right to return to their homeland.

He reaffirmed Hezbollah's support for the Palestinian cause, stressing that occupation would not be able to stand fast as long as resistance is alive.

The top Hezbollah official also denounced a recent statement by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that Tel Aviv will never relinquish the occupied Golan Heights, saying such comments show the expansionist agenda of the Israeli regime in the region.

He further warned that a "hostile plot" is in the works against Muslim nations with the backing of the United States, Israel and the Saudi-sponsored

In Mid February, a CBU-105 attack was recorded on camera, at a cement factory in Amran Province, 40 kilometers northwest of the capital, Sana'a.

Saudi regime has also recently used U.S.-made cluster bombs in two recent airstrikes on a busy market in Yemen.

On April 7, HRW said its investigators traveled to the town in Yemen's Hajjah province the day after the attack and listed the names of 97 civilians killed in the strike, including 25 children. The team said that another 10 bodies were burned beyond recognition, bringing the total number of victims to 107.

They found fragments of a GBU-31 satellite-guided bomb as well as its guidance equipment supplied by the US, matching an earlier report by British television channel ITV.

The U.S. has backed the Saudi campaign in Yemen. In November last year, Washington approved a \$1.29 billion rearming program for Riyadh, including thousands of similar bombs.

The House of Saud regime began its military aggression against Yemen on March 26, 2015.

Nearly 9,400 people, among them over 2,230 children, have been killed and over 16,000 others injured since the onset of the military raids. According to the United Nations, airstrikes account for 60 percent of the civilians killed so far.

(Source: agencies)

Takfiri terrorist groups operating in the region.

In March, Netanyahu said his regime's relations with regional Arab states are "dramatically warming" in yet another acknowledgement of behind-the-scenes ties between Israel and certain Arab states, which publicly pose as Tel Aviv's traditional adversaries.

A former general in the Saudi military has also said recently that the kingdom would open an embassy in Tel Aviv if Israel accepted an Arab initiative to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

On March 2, the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (PGCC) issued a statement labeling Hezbollah a terrorist organization. The bloc comprises Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Bahrain and Kuwait.

Reacting to the decision, Hezbollah described the PGCC member states as "reckless and hostile," blaming the House of Saud regime for the move.

The decision followed recent victories by the Syrian army and allied Hezbollah fighters in their battles against Takfiri militants fighting to topple the Syrian government.

(Source: agencies)

NEWS

Israel pounds Gaza with fresh air strikes

Israeli warplanes have bombed the Gaza Strip for the third day running, escalating fears of a new flare-up in a military confrontation with the Palestinians.



Palestinian witnesses said there were two sets of air raids on Friday morning, one targeting Beit Lahia in northern Gaza and the second in Khuza'a, southeast of Khan Yunis, in the south of the besieged territory.

A military statement said Israeli aircraft targeted a Hamas infrastructure, with no reports of casualties.

It was the fourth Israeli military's air raid on the enclave since Wednesday. According to the Israeli army, Palestinians fired mortar rounds from Gaza at Israeli forces near Gaza border on Friday.

It came a day after the Israeli tank fire killed a 54-year-old Palestinian woman, identified as Aytah al-Amur, in her home in Khan Yunis in southern Gaza Strip. Another Palestinian was also wounded in the attack. At least 10 mortar rounds have been fired into Israel since the Tel Aviv regime began its new phase of bombing Gaza on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the Israeli army said on Thursday that they found a tunnel along the border. Gazans have been using the tunnels to bring in basic needs into the besieged enclave.

The Ezzedine Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas, warned the Israeli regime to stop the attacks.

The group accused Israeli forces of encroaching on the Palestinian territory and voiced readiness to retaliate.

Israel continues to carry out attacks on the besieged territory of about 1.8 million people from time to time.

In early July 2014, the regime launched a 50-day offensive against Gaza, killing nearly 2,200 Palestinians, including 577 children, and injuring Over 11,100 others. The recent flare-up has raised concerns over the fate of an Egypt-brokered truce deal between Hamas and Tel Aviv that put an end to the 2014 Israeli military campaign, and has since been largely holding.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was to convene his security cabinet Friday morning to discuss the latest developments, public radio reported.

(Source: agencies)

Syria will accept nothing short of final victory: Assad

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad says his country will accept nothing less than "final victory" over the foreign-backed militants and the terrorists in Syria.

In a telegram sent to Russian President Vladimir Putin, Assad said the Syrian army would not accept anything less than "attaining final victory" and "crushing the aggression" in its fight against militants in the city of Aleppo and elsewhere in the country.

In his telegram, Assad also thanked Putin for the Russian aerial campaign that has been going on in Syria since September 2015 upon Damascus' request.

(Source: Press TV)

Is Assad the problem?

➡ The remarks by the French diplomat not so vaguely refer to the negligible role played by the U.S. in Syria as compared to that of Russia. Kerry keeps highlighting the importance of a cooperative Russia. But, can he say anything else? Secretary Kerry is well cognizant of the fact that Russians' reading of the U.S. role borders almost on that of allies already annoyed by Obama's passive foreign policy.

Some Russian media outlets have quoted from Kremlin's representative in Syrian talks Vitaly Naumkin as saying: "Kremlin, considering its understanding of President Obama's policies, is not so reluctant to strike a deal with the U.S. But in a clear and bothering diplomatic paradox, the successful and shaky negotiations which brought about the February 26th ceasefire or the agreement to continue the ceasefire in Aleppo and ending the war in it are more based on diplomatic agreements and procedures rather than binding and definitive agreements. The problem is the murky future not Obama's goodwill or wish."

It should be admitted that a binding agreement with the outgoing Obama administration does not seem logical neither for Moscow nor for U.S. regional allies. Whoever and with whatsoever attitude the next U.S. president is, it certainly won't be another Obama. Irrespective of whether this is the right interpretation, all players in the Syrian game believe so. Even De Mistura is well aware of this but does his utmost to keep alive the February 26th ceasefire. He may make it or not. For the time being, the future looms large and Saudis are beating the war drum.

Just as sitting in the San Diego-bound-to Redwood City stagecoach was once chillingly dangerous, making the cheap trip so worthless, so is uniting with President Obama.

Disappointed, but perhaps De Mitsura, among other diplomats, is the only one we should keep our fingers crossed for his success. Amen!

Saudi, Qatar, Turkey support terrorists to serve own interests: Syria

Syria has complained to the United Nations about the Saudi, Qatari and Turkish continued support for terrorists fighting in Syria, and condemned persistent violations of truce in Aleppo by militants as an attempt to thwart peace talks.

The Syrian Foreign Ministry said in two identical letters to the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and the head of the UN Security Council (UNSC) on Thursday that the violation of truce in Aleppo and terrorist attacks on residential areas in Aleppo and Homs Province aim to undermine peace efforts and prove that Qatar, Riyadh and Ankara defy the UNSC resolutions in their own interests.

The ministry added that the international communi-

ty could not depend on those countries to find a solution to the Syrian crisis.

On Wednesday, Russia and the United States agreed on extending a shaky ceasefire they had brokered in February to Aleppo province. The two-day truce took effect at 1 am local time on Thursday.

The letters highlighted the terrorist attacks against several residential areas of Aleppo that left at least three people dead and several others injured. The ministry also referred to the terrorist attacks in al-Mukharrem in Homs killed 12 people and injured 40 others.

The foreign ministry also noted that the government

IMIDRO, POSCO DAEWOO sign MoU on establishment of Parsian port

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iranian Mines & Mining Industries Development & Renovation, (IMIDRO) and POSCO DAEWOO signed a Memorandum of Understanding on construction and development of Parsian Energy Intensive Industrial Special Economic Zone (PEIIEZ) port, IMIDRO's office of public relations reported.

According to this report, this MoU was signed by Mehdi Karbasian, Chairman of the board of IMIDRO, and Young Sang Kim, Chairman of POSCO DAEWOO on the sideline of visit of South Korea's president to Tehran.

Based on the MoU which worth €220 million and will be in form of investment, POSCO will establish Parsian port in Parsian town (Hurmozgan province) and the company warrants to provide knowledge, resources and required technology for development of Parsian port.

They will also provide engineering services, procurement and supply of equipment, construction, installation and startup of establishment and development of Parsian port project.

As one of the IMIDRO's subsidiaries, PEIIEZ is located in west of Hurmozgan Province in an area of over 9800 hectares. This zone has been created for the development of energy intensive industries such as steel, petrochemicals, etc., and export of such products.

BMI hosts KEB Hana, Korea's biggest bank

ECONOMY TEHRAN — On the sidelines of Korean president visit to Iran, Ham Young Joo, KEB Hana Bank's CEO met with Dr. Abdolnaser Hemmati, chairman and CEO of Bank Melli Iran (BMI).

In this meeting, referring to Korea's plans for investment and expanding trade ties with Iran, the CEO expressed KEB Hana's interest to cooperate with BMI in joint banking services.

Dr. Hemmati, for his part underlined the significance of ongoing agreements between the two governments and expressed hope that reactivating the broker relations between the two banks through their branches in Dubai and Germany would pave the way for expansion of trade and financial relationship between the two countries.

Further in the event, Ham Young Joo mentioned his country's plans for investment and expanding economic relations with Iran and said that he hopes after Korean president visit to Iran the relations between the two banks become operational as soon as possible.

It is worth mentioning that KEB Hana Bank, South Korea's largest bank with assets worth \$ 284 billion, was founded by the merger of Hana and KEB banks in September 2015.

Bank Pasargad and Woori Bank ink MoU

ECONOMY TEHRAN — With the establishment of a representative office in Tehran, Woori Bank of Korea signed a memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Iran's Bank Pasargad.

According to Bank Pasargad office of public relations, this agreement aims to expand banking cooperation to increase exchanges and trade relations between the two countries.

Based on this MOU the two sides agreed to the collaborate in order to identify the market potentials of the two countries, enhance bilateral cooperation, strengthen brokerage relations, provide consulting services to clients, enhance communication between Iranian and Korean companies and facilitate commercial activities between the two sides.

The report said that considering the implication of JCPOA, the conclusion of this agreement will have a significant effect on the further development of economic and trade cooperation between the two countries.

It is worth mentioning that in order to enhance its capability to create added value for the clients, Bank Pasargad constantly tries to develop and increase its brokerage relations with other foreign banks.

