

Iran-Qatar poised to strengthening bilateral economic ties

Islamic Republic of Iran and Qatar are determined to enhance and broaden mutual economic relations.

For this purpose, the Iranian Energy Minister and Chairman of Iran-Qatar Joint Economic Cooperation Commission Reza Ardakanian arrived in the Qatari capital Doha on Monday to discuss the relevant issues.

In this meeting, made for developing and bolstering economic ties, the Iranian energy minister will hold talks with Qatari Minister of Commerce and Industry Ali bin Ahmed Al Kuwari and other senior political and economic officials.

Developing economic relations between Iran and Qatar as well as planning to hold the 7th Iran-Qatar Joint Cooperation Commission in near future are of the main programs of the Iranian energy minister in this visit.

It is scheduled that a joint economic cooperation commission between Iran and Qatar will be held before termination of the current year in 2020.

Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian held talks with the Qatari minister of commerce and industry on Oct. 14 through videoconference. In this meeting, the two sides emphasized on evermore development of bilateral ties between two neighboring countries.

While welcoming the evermore development of trade ties between Iran and Qatar, the two sides also stressed the need to hold mutual talk in order to specify the scope of cooperation and way of operationalization of cooperation.

Trump's sanctions rooted in grudges

against Iran: Minister

Iran's Minister of Petroleum Bijan Zangeneh said on Monday that the US sanctions imposed by US President Donald Trump on the Iranian oil industry officials are due to his sense of revenge and grudges against Iran.

Speaking in the opening ceremony of 181 natural gas projects in Fars Province through video conference, Zangeneh said that on his last days in the White House, Trump has imposed sanctions on managers of Iran's oil industry accusing them of supporting terrorism while Iran is the victim of terrorism. Zangeneh said these sanctions are because of his grudge against Iran.

Referring to the rumors going that a flood of sanctions are on the way, he said there is nothing left to be sanctioned; however, these sanctions have no effects.

He added, "Neither are we afraid of sanctions, nor can they impede our plans. They have made us more determined."

Touching on the issue of South Pars Gas Field, he said seven years ago, extraction of gas from the SPGF was 280 million cubic meters but now it stands at 700 cubic meters.

While under severe sanctions, Iran has constructed 17 refineries, installed 30 platforms, dug hundreds of wells, and implemented thousands of kilometers of piping to reach the gas production level of 1,000 million cubic meters.

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Iran-Italy webinar on tourism to be held on Nov. 20

Chairman of Iran-Italy Joint Chamber of Commerce Ahmad Pourfallah says Iran and Italy will hold a webinar on tourism on November 20 with ambassadors of Italy and Iran as well as EU Commissioner on tourism in presence.



During a meeting on elaborating the details of this international webinar on tourism, Fallahian said that according to the forecasts, tourists

maximum pressure of sanctions had its great impact on tourism industry; Iran visa was questioned and also in coronavirus issue, Iran's chance of curbing it became slim and slimmer because the number of infected patients comparing to our population was high and even in this period, the number of Iranian students' travels dropped.

were to spend some \$2000b in the tourist destinations in 2020 but it did not materialize due to the outbreak of coronavirus. He added that in some countries like Spain, the restrictions were lifted in order that they do not lose their tourism assets. Fallahian further said that Iran is among the top 10 countries with high tourism attractions and they are related to nature, pilgrim, historic, and health but despite such potentials, the country has not been able to allocate one percent of the global tourism revenues. He added that a lack of belief in tourism and reliance on oil revenues as well as sanctions did not let us obtain our share from the global tourism revenues. Fallahian admitted that when the oil revenues are good, officials do not find any reason to bother about



tourism issues and when the government's oil revenues drop, they think of this industry.

He went on to say that maximum pressure of sanctions had its great impact on tourism industry; Iran visa was questioned and also in coronavirus issue, Iran's chance of curbing it became slim and slimmer because the number of infected patients comparing to our population was high and even in this period, the number of Iranian students' travels dropped. He then pointed to the advantages of tourism industry, noting that tourism helps the national forex earnings, adding that every eight tourists mean creation of one job and it can also turn into a propagation media for the country. Fallahian added that Italy is

Iran's sister country in Europe which is one of the tourist destinations in the world. He stated the chamber can take advantage of Italians' experience in tourism sector and in the current condition, the country can keep the tourism issue alive in the virtual space rather than it waits for normalization of the condition. He reiterated the chamber decided to hold this webinar.

Meanwhile, secretary of the chamber Mr. Shokrvand in the meetings said that 85 percent of the world tourism industry declined in the Coronavirus era and in order to prevent from a complete collapse of this industry, countries like the U.S., France, Britain, and Italy opened their domestic tourism spaces.

He said that tourism revenues account for 11 percent of

Spain's and 13.4 percent of Italy's GDP while the tourism revenues of Iran in 2018 when it had the highest tourism revenues were only 2.8 percent of its GDP.

Shokrvand went on to say that in 2019, Middle East hosted some 64m tourists and Dubai had the most share of the tourism revenues with \$20b. Touching upon the Iran-Italy webinar, he said that it is aimed at getting familiar with Iran and having specialized writing regarding the modern tourism in Iran and Italy.

He said the webinar will be held on November 20 where ambassadors of both countries, as well as EU Commissioner on tourism, are to attend.

Shokrvand said that the meeting will not cost too much because there is no need to travel or book rooms.

Sweets, chocolates export of \$1b targeted, but production faces challenges

The confectionery and chocolate industry is one of the oldest food industries in Iran, and it is now the second-largest exporter in the country's food sector after the dairy industry.

About 100 percent of the investment in this industry belongs

to the private sector and most of its products are competitive globally.

The advantage of the confectionery and chocolate industry is the supply of its raw materials inside the country. With this advantage, any investment will bring profit to this industry.

As a result of supporting domestic producers and products and banning the import of foreign products in this sector, Iranian producers are now able to meet the needs of the domestic market and are welcomed by domestic consumers. This industry is also targeted to boost export to different

markets all around the world. Iran exports sweets and chocolates to 66 countries and the annual export of \$1 billion has been planned for this industry. The latest data in terms of exports show that Iran has exported \$250 million of sweets and chocolates during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-September 21). Neighboring countries, Persian Gulf littoral states, Commonwealth of Independence States, and Europe have been the major export destinations of these products in the mentioned period of time. The Chairman of the Association

of Iranian Confectionery Manufacturing Companies Jamshid Maghazei says that the country's annual export of sweets and chocolates is estimated to reach \$550 million-\$600 million this year. While the industry is trying to materialize the objective of surge in production and also boost export, it is facing some challenges especially in terms of production, as the production costs are increasing. Meanwhile, the sanctions and coronavirus pandemic have made access to global markets difficult, and domestic demand has also declined.

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News

Energy minister carries message from President Rouhani to Qatar

Iranian Minister of Energy Reza Ardakanian arrived in Doha on Monday carrying a message from President Hassan Rouhani for Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani. Ardakanian, also co-

chair of Iran-Qatar Joint Economic Commission, is scheduled to meet with his Qatari counterpart and a number of Qatari political and economic officials as well. During his stay in Doha, the Iranian minister is due to make the necessary planning for the upcoming seventh Joint Commission of the two countries. Ardakanian had a video call with the Qatari Minister of commerce and industry on October 14 in which they urged the need to promote cooperation.

اخبار اصفهان
ISFAHAN NEWS

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Tuesday, November 10, 2020, No. 639

اخبار اصفهان
ISFAHAN NEWS
What's News
economy

Neighboring countries hold 60% share of Iran's non-oil exports

Combating the U.S. sanctions on its oil exports, Iran is determined to boost the export of non-oil products, and has defined a number of strategies to materialize this target.

According to Mohammad-Baqer Nobakht, the head of Iran's Planning and Budget Organization (PBO), the country has been deprived of around \$50 billion a year in oil sales income and non-oil exports should compensate for that loss. "Based on the targets set, we (have to) bring the non-oil exports to \$48 billion from the \$24-billion that we currently have," Nobakht had said last year.

While increasing non-oil exports is one of the major plans that Iranian government is pursuing, the neighboring countries come under the spotlight as some major export destinations.

Last year, the PBO head had said that the government was seeking to double the value of non-oil exports to the neighboring countries in this Iranian calendar year, which started on March 20. Iran shares border with fifteen countries, namely the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Russia, Oman, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kuwait, Qatar, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia.

According to the recent data released by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration, neighboring countries were the destinations for more than 60 percent of Iran's non-oil exports during the first seven months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-October 21). The IRICA data indicate that Iran has exported 41.818 million tons of commodities worth \$11.522 billion to its neighbors, which constituted 63 percent of the value and 64 percent of the weight of its total non-oil exports during the mentioned period of time.

No Place for Trial and Error in Iran's Sky, General Warns Karabakh Warring Sides

A ranking Iranian commander warned the northwestern neighbors engaged in armed clashes over the Nagorno-Karabakh region that Iran would not tolerate any violation of its airspace.

Speaking to reporters on Monday, Deputy Commander of Khatam al-Anbia Air Defense Base Brigadier General Qader Rahimzadeh said the warring sides in Nagorno-Karabakh must be mindful that the Iranian airspace is no place for trial and error.

He also assured the northwestern border residents that the Iranian military forces are monitoring the boundaries round the clock to ensure full security along the frontiers.

"We will deal with the violators harshly and seriously," the commander stressed, urging the neighbors to heed Iran's warnings and avoid any harm to the security of Iran's airspace.

Last week, the commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps said the Republic of Azerbaijan and Armenia have been given warnings about the presence of terrorists near the Iranian border amid the escalation of fighting between the two neighbors over Nagorno-Karabakh.

Major General Hossein Salami also said Iran has deployed various military units to the northwestern border areas.

Iran rejects possibility of 'renegotiations' over JCPOA

The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman said that the 2015 nuclear deal with world powers is a signed deal, which cannot be renegotiated. Speaking in his weekly press briefing on Monday, Khatibzadeh answered reporters' questions on a variety of topics. JCPOA cannot be negotiated again.

Referring to the remarks of one of Biden's advisers and setting conditions for Iran in relation to the JCPOA, Khatibzadeh said, "What his advisor said about the JCPOA is not a criterion for us."

"What Iran has stated is that the JCPOA has been the result of long-standing talks between Iran and the five permanent members

of the Security Council and Germany," he added, "saying, "It is a joint comprehensive plan of action mandated by a United Nations resolution."

Stating that these words are a sign of simplicity that this signed agreement can be negotiated again, he said.

"The United States has violated Resolution 2231 and has withdrawn from the JCPOA, causing great damage to the Iranian people. Therefore, the United States must respond," Khatibzadeh said.

The message of US election to regional countries

Referring to the Iranian Foreign Minister's remarks, he said, "The US election has an important message for the region. Iran extends its hand to its neighbors for dialog to resolve differences."

Earlier, Mohammad Javad Zarif had said, "Betting on outsiders to provide security is never a good gamble. We extend our hand to our

neighbors for dialog to resolve differences. Only together can we build a better future for all."

No call from Biden's team

Answering the question of whether the American team had any call with Iran before or after Joe Biden's victory, he said,

"No, basically, we will not be in contact with anyone outside of the issues completely related to the JCPOA,

especially since the government has not yet taken office."



Gen. Soleimani's assassination White House strategic mistake

- Stating that Martyr Soleimani played a major role in the security of the region and the world, Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said that his assassination by the US was a strategic mistake of the White House.



Iranian Parliament Speaker's Special Aide for International Affairs Hossein Amir-

Abdollahian made the remarks in his meeting with UK ambassador to Tehran Rob Macaire.

Criticizing the arbitrary actions and violations of peace and security by the United States and some of its allies, Amir-Abdollahian cited the use of terrorism as a tool and attempts to divide Muslim countries in the region as factors that violate the process of world peace and energy security. Referring to Iran's important role in helping Syria and Iraq to fight against terrorism, he said, "Lt. Gen. Soleimani was an international hero in the fight against terrorism who played a major role in the security of the region and the world."

"His assassination by the US was a strategic mistake of the White House," he added. Emphasizing the need for peace and security in the region, including Yemen, he noted, "Given the continuing killing of the oppressed and defenseless people of Yemen, establishing



a ceasefire and ending this deplorable situation and stopping the sale of weapons in the Yemeni war is a necessity."

He also stressed the need for a political solution in all critical countries in the region, citing systematic human rights abuses in Bahrain.

Elsewhere in his remark, Amir-Abdollahian praised the continuation of the commission talks between the two countries' parliaments but criticized the slow pace of cooperation, including Britain's delay in implementing its commitments.

He called the opening of the banking channel and the flow of commercial transactions part of London's commitments, saying, "The fact that some officials in London

not only do not fulfill their obligations to Iran but also attribute baseless accusations to the Islamic Republic of Iran, is considered unconstructive behavior in the course of relations between the two countries."

"There are good capacities in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United Kingdom that can help strengthen cooperation as well as accelerate and facilitate relations between the two countries," he noted referring to the readiness of businessmen of the two countries to increase the level of cooperation.

Rob Macaire, for his part, said that the British Embassy in Tehran will make every effort to strengthen the friendly relations between the two countries' parliaments. Referring to US unilateral

withdrawal from the JCPOA, he added, "We are in a complicated situation after the withdrawal of the United States from the JCPOA, but nevertheless, Britain has always declared its support for the nuclear deal."

He referred to the Yemen crisis, saying, "We support a political solution in Yemen, and the Islamic Republic of Iran can play a role in creating peace and security in the region."

Rob Macaire stressed the need for Iran to negotiate and adhere to the JCPOA but Amir-Abdollahian said that Iran's unilateral adherence to the JCPOA is not sustainable and acceptable. "Tehran has always considered diplomatic negotiations a useful way, but negotiations to negotiate a repetitive game is fruitless," Amir-Abdollahian noted.

Elsewhere in his remark, Amir-Abdollahian praised the continuation of the commission talks between the two countries' parliaments but criticized the slow pace of cooperation, including Britain's delay in implementing its commitments.

American expert: Mentally-ill Trump can do more harm to US in remaining days

An American scholar says while US President Donald Trump is likely to accept the election results, he can do more damage to the US during his remaining days at the White House.

Joe Biden has been elected as the 46th president of the United States after garnering over 270

electoral votes needed to win the White House and defeat Trump.

However, with Trump's refusal to accept Biden's victory in the presidential election, concerns grow that he might drag the US military into his political fight.

To have better insight toward the issue, we reached out to Marvin Zonis, Professor of international political economy, and leadership at the University of Chicago.

The professor noted that while Trump has been defeated in the race, the problem will remain till

the end of his tenure.

"I believe that Trump will accept the verdict of the American voters."

However, he noted, "The main problem is that he will remain President of the United States until January 20, 2021."

Professor Zonis added, "Since he [Trump] is mentally ill, he has plenty of opportunities now until January to do even more damage to the United States."

"We know that he strikes out when he has lost. He has just lost badly," he concluded.

News

Biden Campaign Urges Federal Agency to Approve Official Transition

US President-elect Joe Biden's campaign on Sunday urged the Trump political appointee who heads the US General Services Administration to approve an official transition of power despite President Donald Trump's refusal to concede.

The Biden campaign warned that US national security and economic interests depended on a clear signal the country would engage in a "smooth and peaceful transfer of power."

Biden was declared the winner of the Nov. 3 election by US television networks on Saturday, but Trump and his allies have made clear he does not plan to concede anytime soon.

GSA Administrator Emily Murphy, appointed to the job by Trump in 2017, has not yet determined that "a winner is clear," a spokeswoman said, delaying the Biden team's access to millions of dollars in federal funding and the ability to meet with officials

at intelligence agencies and other departments.

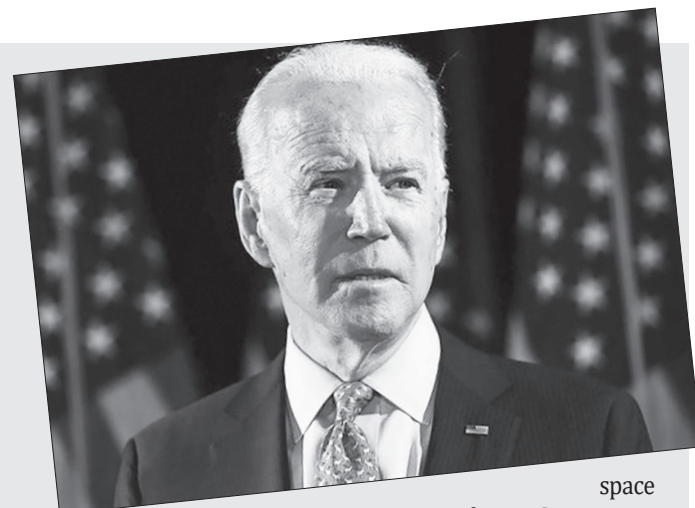
The spokeswoman declined to say when a decision could be made. US Representative Gerry Connolly, who heads the House Subcommittee on Government Operations, said Murphy should start the process without delay.

"The Administrator plays a critical role in the peaceful transfer of power and ensuring vital government services are not disrupted. This is all the more important amid a deadly pandemic," he said, Reuters reported.

The United States has seen other narrowly decided elections - notably in 1876 and 2000 - but this election was "not historically close," said William Antholis, a former White House official during Democrat Bill Clinton's administration who now heads the University of Virginia's Miller Center think tank.

Trump has little chance of flipping tens of thousands of votes through recounts, Antholis said. Legal experts said the cases the Trump campaign is bringing also are unlikely to change the outcome of the election.

The Biden transition team already has access to federal office



space at the Commerce Department, as guaranteed by the Presidential Transitions Act, but cannot access funds for salaries, consultants and travel until the GSA acts, said Martha Joynt Kumar, director of the White House Transition Project and author of a 2015 book on earlier transitions.

Yemen hails Iran's anti-war stances

In a meeting with Iran's Envoy to Yemen, the Yemeni Member of the Supreme Political Council hailed the Islamic Republic's anti-war and anti-siege stances.

In his meeting with Hassan Irloo, Sultan al-Sami'i appreciated the stances of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which call for an end to the war and the siege against Yemen.

The Yemeni people appreciate Iran's stances, al-Sami'i said.

As reported, during the meeting held on Sunday, bilateral relations and ways to strengthen them in the interests of the two countries were discussed.

The Yemeni official stressed that the Supreme Political Council of Yemen will provide the necessary facilities to fulfill the duties of the Iranian ambassador in order to promote the distinctive relations between the two brotherly countries of Iran and Yemen.

The Iranian ambassador, for his turn, said Iran will spare no effort to achieve peace in Yemen and put an end to the suffering of its people.

Iran's newly-appointed ambassador to Yemen Hassan Irloo submitted a copy of his credentials to the Chairman of Yemen's Supreme Political Council Mahdi al-Mashat on November 5.

Saudi Arabia Finally Congratulates Biden on His Win

Saudi Arabia finally congratulated Joe Biden over his election victory, more than 24 hours after he defeated Donald Trump, who had close personal ties with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

The former US vice president pledged in his campaign to reassess ties with the kingdom, demanding more accountability over the killing of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi in Riyadh's Istanbul consulate and calling for an end to US support for the war on Yemen.

As other Arab states raced to applaud the Democrat challenger, the kingdom's de facto ruler Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman remained silent on the US vote even as he sent warm words to the president of Tanzania on his re-election.

At 1932 GMT on Sunday, Saudi Arabia's king Salman and his son, the crown prince, congratulated Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris on winning the presidential election, Reuters reported.

King Salman praised the distinguished, historic and close relations between the two "friendly countries and their people which everyone looks to strengthen and develop at all levels."

Prince Mohammed's relationship with Trump had provided a buffer against international criticism over Riyadh's rights record sparked by Khashoggi's murder, Riyadh's role in Yemen's war and the detention of women activists. Those areas may now become points of friction between Biden and Saudi Arabia, a major oil exporter and buyer of US arms.

"The only thing worse than COVID-19 would be BIDEN-20," wrote Saudi Twitter user Dr Muna, while many other Saudi users of the social media platform simply ignored the result in the initial hours after US networks called the election for Biden.

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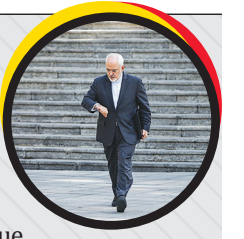
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Zarif stresses negotiations as key to end tensions

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif in a message undermined reliance on foreigners for bringing security and called for holding talks to end tensions. Trump is gone, and we and our neighbors will stay. Betting on foreigners does not bring security, Zarif wrote in his Twitter account on Sunday. We extend our hands to our neighbors to cooperate in achieving the common interests of our peoples and countries, he added. We call on everyone to hold dialogue as the only way to end the differences and tensions. Together to build a better future for our region, Zarif noted. Earlier in a separate message, Zarif said: "The American people have spoken. And the world is watching whether the new leaders will abandon disastrous lawless bullying of the outgoing regime—and accept multilateralism, cooperation & respect for law." "Deeds matter most Iran's record: dignity, interest & responsible diplomacy," he added.



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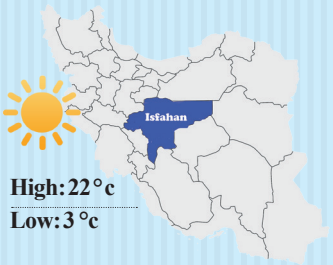
CALL TO PRAYER TIME IN ISFAHAN

Morning call to prayer:
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Noon call to prayer:
11:47:17

Evening call to prayer:
17:23:45

WEATHER



Next US president should remove all anti-Iran sanctions

The secretary of Iran's Expediency Discernment Council urged the next US president to remove all unilateral sanctions that have been imposed against the Iranian nation. "The US' president-elect should remove all the sanctions as soon as possible and apologize to the Iranian nation for Washington's past actions," Mohsen Rezaei tweeted on Sunday. "The optimism of previous [Iranian] governments towards the United States and Europe has hurt the Iranian nation many times," he said, adding, "The 40-year series of sanctions policy and the optimism of some Iranian officials have destroyed many opportunities which were ahead of our national economy."

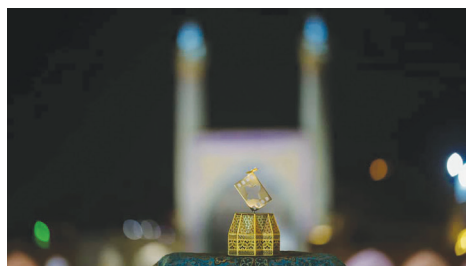


Trump's sanctions rooted in grudges against Iran: Minister

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Virtual Isfahan Tourism: A Gift by the Festival to the Audience

This year, for the first time, no guests traveled to Isfahan to attend the Isfahan International Film Festival for Children and youth. Instead, Isfahan hosted its national and international audience.



The Tourism and Urban Marketing Committee of the 33rd Festival, led by Nafise Hajati, a specialist journalist in the field of heritage and tourism, produced videos introducing the lesser-known attractions of Isfahan. During these video narrations, the relationship between Isfahan and the Festival was shown to local, national, and international audiences.

The 380-year-old Hasht Behesht Palace which is less visited by tourists but especially attractive because of its gold chamber, the Ashraf Hall which is usually open only to ambassadors and high-ranking foreign guests, the Rakibkhaneh Building with its great tower and fine Qajar decorations, the house of Amin al-Tojjar which may be called the Museum of Iranian Architecture, all were among the selected locations the Festival audience was able to experience a virtual trip to. Of course, Chaharbagh, an important 400-year-old passage of Isfahan and the nostalgic route of the Festival, was also of the main videos presented to the audience in this project.

Especially in the four periods of being capital, Isfahan was known as a multinational city in which citizens of different religions, ethnicities, and nations lived: from Switzerland, Portugal, and Spain to Armenia,

Georgia, USA, Austria, and Poland. In the video collection of the Tourism Committee, Armenian-Iranian and Georgian-Iranian children and adolescents are also present, introducing the heritage of nations in Isfahan. The produced films were also sent to the cultural advisers of the Iranian embassies in cooperation with the International Committee of the Festival so that this cinematic-tourist invitation could reach different countries.

The idea of virtual tourism and the introduction and branding of the event and origin were implemented for the first time in the 33rd Isfahan International Film Festival for Children and youth, and it can be claimed that none of the similar festivals had ever worked in this field.

All videos are in two to three languages. Various people, including Hadi Allayari, Masih Nekouie, the Persian Tanin team, Mir Saeid Hadian, Amirhossein mir Moeini, Karim Dermardiroosian, etc., worked hard to produce these narratives, with Marjan Doras in charge of translating the subtitles from Persian to English.

It is the beginning of a new way and chapter in content production for one of the main international festivals in Iran.

The idea of virtual tourism and the introduction and branding of the event and origin were implemented for the first time in the 33rd Isfahan International Film Festival for Children and youth, and it can be claimed that none of the similar festivals had ever worked in this field.

Trump maximum pressure on Iran failed

A Venezuelan analyst says he believes that the Iranian nation withstood Donald Trump's maximum pressure making it fail.

Gustavo Borges Revilla, analyst and head of Samuel Robinson Institute in Venezuela, has talked of the US policy and

the recent travel of the Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif to three Latin American states, including Venezuela.

In Venezuela, Zarif attended a joint meeting at Samuel Robinson Institute. About his visit to the Institute, Zarif tweeted "Lectured today at the Samuel Robinson Institute on US/Western terror tactics in attempts to halt the course of

history toward a post-Western world." Speaking about Zarif's visit to the Venezuelan institute, Revilla told IRNA that travel of the Iranian foreign minister was a symbol of cordial relations between Caracas and Tehran. Although Venezuela and Iran enjoy longstanding ties, the two countries have witnessed deep cooperation in recent five years, Revilla added.

Iran to Pompeo: Maximum Pressure Policy, Outlaw Charlatans behind It Failed

Iran's foreign ministry spokesman said the Trump administration's "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran and "the outlaw charlatans behind it" have failed and proud Iranians stand tall.

Following the declaration, Trump said he refuses to concede defeat, insisting that he will carry on with his legal challenges.

"Fully understandable that @SecPompeo is furious about having to leave Foggy Bottom after 2.5 yrs of one embarrassing failure after the other: 'Max pressure' failed, & so have the outlaw charlatans behind it. Soon he'll be on ash heap of history, as proud Iranian people stand tall," Saeed Khatibzadeh said.

Khatibzadeh made the remarks in a Sunday tweet in response to an offensive tweet by US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in which he had insulted the Iranian nation by describing elections in Iran as "a joke" and claiming that Iranian people are starving as a result of the pressures caused by US sanctions.

Pompeo's tweet came after the office of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei posted a tweet in which it described the chaotic situation in the United

States following the recent presidential vote as a spectacle.

"This is an example of the ugly face of liberal democracy in the US," the office's tweet said.

On Saturday, Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden was declared the winner of the highly controversial US election after he surpassed the 270 electoral votes he needed to oust President Donald Trump.

Following the declaration, Trump said he refuses to concede defeat, insisting that he will carry on with his legal challenges.

Trump, a hawkish critic of the landmark 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and six world powers, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), unilaterally withdrew Washington from the agreement in May 2018, and unleashed the "toughest ever" sanctions against the Islamic Republic in defiance of global criticism.

The US unleashed the so-called maximum pressure campaign and targeted the Iranian nation with draconian restrictive measures in order to bring it to its knees, but Iran's economy keeps humming and is getting back on its feet.

Biden win opens door for improved predictability in China-U.S. relations

Chinese state media struck an optimistic tone in Monday editorials reacting to Democrat Joe Biden's win of the U.S. presidential elections, saying relations could be restored to a state of greater predictability and could start with trade.

While acknowledging the United States was unlikely ease pressure on China on issues such as Xinjiang and Hong Kong, state-backed newspaper Global Times said Beijing should work to communicate with the Biden team as thoroughly as it can.

The Trump administration had deliberately created tensions in China-

U.S. relations, especially after adopting a campaign strategy of pressuring China, which led to "bubbles" occurring in U.S.-China policy, it said.

"We believe it is possible to pop those bubbles," it said. "It's in the common interests of people from both countries and of international community that China-U.S. relations become eased and controllable."

The Global Times is a tabloid published by the People's Daily, the official newspaper of China's ruling Communist Party, but does not speak on behalf of the party and government. The China Daily newspaper said in a separate editorial it was "obvious" improving ties with China could start from trade, and reviving trade talks was critical to restore some understanding and trust in China-U.S. relations.

"It is one of the last threads linking the two sides. It is notable that neither Beijing nor Washington has ventured to scrap the hard-earned so-called phase one deal they negotiated," said the China Daily, the country's official English language newspaper.

Tensions between the world's two largest economies have intensified over the past year, shaking up technology supply chains and trade relations, and stoking fears that a financial war between the two countries could be brewing.

The U.S. pressure, along with the global pandemic, have set China on a mission to reduce its reliance on overseas markets and technology for its economic development, as part of a new "dual circulation" model of growth to steer its economy.

