



# Iraqi Kurdistan's Inaction Over Kurdish Militants Angers Iran

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## Interview

### U.S. needs Iran's cooperation to fight terror in Afghanistan: ex-UK diplomat

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN – Peter Jenkins, the former UK ambassador to the IAEA, says the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan makes it desirable for Washington to cooperate with Afghanistan's neighbours including Iran.

Jenkins tells the Tehran Times, "It would seem that this makes it desirable for the United States and its allies to have relations with Afghanistan's neighbors, including Iran, that lend themselves to counter-terrorism cooperation."

Many criticize the failure by the U.S. to collaborate with its foes on common issues like fighting terrorism. For example, Iran as a neighbour to Afghanistan, can play an important role in counter-terrorism efforts.

Afghanistan's recent developments and the Taliban takeover and the initiation of a dialogue between Iran and Saudi Arabia may push the Americans to talk with Iran as a regional power that has an undeniable role in restoring stability to the region.

The former British ambassador is also of the opinion that the situation surrounding Afghanistan following the U.S. exit from the Central Asian country coupled with talks between Saudi Arabia with Iran and a new leadership in Tel Aviv may encourage the Biden administration to rethink its conditions for re-entry into the Iran nuclear deal. ▶ Page 5

### "Heroic" jailbreak from Israeli prison celebrated

Palestinians in the occupied West Bank refugee camp of Jenin have taken to the streets to celebrate after six Palestinian inmates broke out of a high-security Israeli prison, People gathered on the streets and handed out sweets in the hometown of one of the escapees. Palestinians in the besieged Gaza Strip have also celebrated the news.

The notorious Gilboa prison where the inmates escaped from is located about four kilometers from the West Bank and is one of the highest-security and heavily guarded prisons for Palestinians in Israel. The facility has been described as a dungeon for Palestinians serving life sentences for "anti-Israeli activities". ▶ Page 5

## Monthly transit of goods via Iran rises 94% yr/yr

TEHRAN- Transit of goods via Iran has risen 94 percent during the fifth month of the current Iranian calendar year (July 23-August 22), as compared to the same month of the past year, the spokesman of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Ruhollah Latifi said that 974,000 tons of goods was transited via the country in the fifth month of this year, while the figure was 501,000 tons in the fifth month of the past year.

Meanwhile, as previously announced by IRICA Head Mehdi Mir-Ashrafi, over 4.727 million tons of goods were transited through Iran in the first five months of the current year (March 21-August 22), registering a 95-percent rise compared to the same period in the previous year.

Latifi has said that 7.532 million tons of commodities

were transited through Iran in the previous Iranian calendar year 1399 despite the restrictions created by the coronavirus pandemic.

According to him, transit of goods via Iran declined only 67 tons or 0.8 percent compared to the preceding year 1398.

The mentioned volume of transit was achieved despite the fact that the figure was expected to fall significantly in the said year.

Iran is one of the countries that has a special status in trade and transit relations due to its strategic location and special geography, as the country is the passage of several important international corridors.

In the south of Iran is the Persian Gulf, which is home to the world's major oil-producing countries. This region is considered as the energy bottleneck

of the world.

In the north of Iran is the Caspian Sea, which is the best bridge between Iran, Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan and can play an important role in trade between these countries.

The country, on the other hand, borders Iraq, Turkey, Pakistan and Afghanistan to the west and east.

In other words, it can be said that Iran communicates with 15 countries through land and water borders, and at the same time it can act as a bridge between these countries (with each other and other parts of the world).

These countries have a large population and high income which can be effective as a factor in the development of transit and trade in the region. ▶ Page 4



## Martyr Soleimani plan assists corona-affected families

A public program aimed at donating food packages to families affected by the coronavirus and helping the medical staff in fighting the coronavirus was held in Tehran on Monday.

Named after General Qassem Soleimani the plan aims at cutting the transmission chain of the disease in cooperation with volunteers, Basij forces and the Red Crescent Society.

## Virus causes \$119 million damage to tourism earnings of Iranian province

TEHRAN – Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari has lost more than five trillion rials (about \$119 million at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) in earnings from tourism as many potential visitors have stayed away from the southwestern Iranian province since the novel coronavirus restrictions began in early 2019.

"The tourism industry of Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari has taken 5,685 billion rials hit from the coronavirus since the disease started spreading (in the country)," the deputy provincial tourism chief said on Tuesday.

"This amount of damage has suffered hotels, apartment hotels, inns, eco-lodges, guesthouses, travel agencies and tour operators, tour guides, roadside restaurants, and recreational centers, as well as tourism educational institutions and centers across the province," Farjam Samiei explained.

Moreover, 521 tourism workers have been unemployed during the COVID-19 era, the official said.

The provincial tourism directorate has made various efforts such as arranging low-interest loans to help compensate the losses, he said

"We hope Iran's tourism industry backs to the normal track as the mass vaccination against the coronavirus makes progress." ▶ Page 6

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## Clean air for blue skies

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN – September 7 has been named World Clean Air Day, and this year's slogan is "Clean Air for Blue Skies", which emphasizes the health aspects of air pollution, especially considering the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 2021 theme for the International Day of Clean Air for blue skies focuses on prioritizing the need for healthy air for all while keeping the conversation broad enough to encompass other critical issues such as climate change, human and planetary health as well as the Sustainable Development Goals.

Air pollution is the single greatest environmental risk to human health and one of the main avoidable causes of death and disease globally, with an estimated 6.5 million premature deaths (2016) across the world attributed to indoor and outdoor air pollution. Particularly in developing countries, air pollution disproportionately affects women, children, and the elderly, especially in low-income populations as they are often exposed to high levels of ambient air pollution and indoor air pollution from cooking and heating with wood fuel and kerosene.

The world's population is now about 7.9 billion, which is projected to increase to over 9 billion by 2050, bringing the proportion of people living in cities from 50 percent to 70 percent; As a result, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) predicts that air pollution deaths in cities will double by 2050 if proper policy changes are not made, and that air pollution will be the world's leading cause of environmental death. Because as the population of cities increases, so does the demand for fuel and transportation, and this exacerbates air pollution.

Air pollution is a global problem with far-reaching impacts owing to its transport over long distances. ▶ Page 7

## Tazieh tools, scripts on view at Tehran exhibition

TEHRAN – An exhibition opened at the Abolfazl Aali Gallery of the Art Bureau on Tuesday showcasing a collection of tools for tazieh performances and scripts.

The collection is composed of 3060 objects dating from the Safavid period in the 16th century until contemporary Iran, the organizers announced.

The exhibition has been set up in four sections, one of which is dedicated to tazieh costumes donned by thespians and musicians during a performance. The objects on display in this section date back to the Safavid period and Qajar period (1789-1925).

The attires, most of which are hand-sewn, represent the great skills of the Iranian artists of the periods.

Equipment such as swords, daggers, armors, shields, helmets, and maces are also on view in a special section. ▶ Page 8



## New Iran FM says Tehran seeks 'wise and solid' talks

*Amir Abdollahian blames U.S. as chief culprit for violating nuclear deal*



TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian said on Monday that Iran seeks “wise and solid negotiations” for reviving the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Abdollahian said Iran welcomes negotiations that guarantee the rights and interests of the Iranian nation.

“We believe in wise and solid negotiations that secure rights of the nation and will actively take measures towards that goal,” Abdollahian said in a meeting with foreign ambassadors and diplomatic missions in Tehran.

The top diplomat added Iran negotiations that only waste time would not be beneficial.

Negotiations for reviving the JCPOA began in April in Vienna. Six rounds of talks were held until June. The talks were intended to bring the U.S., as the violator of the deal, back into compliance.

Though significant progresses were made, the U.S. side, which was participating in the talks indirectly, raised new issues which were not related to the JCPOA. The raising of new issues, including Iran's defensive missile program, led the negotiators fail to restore the agreement.

Since June 20 no talks have been held between Iran, the other remaining parties to the JCPOA – Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China – and the United States. The talks were suspended until the new government in Iran start its work.

In his Monday remarks, Abdollahian elaborated about various aspects of the new Iranian administration's foreign policy. He said the new Iranian government “believes in diplomacy as an effective tool and we will never distance from negotiations.”

He added, “We have a positive approach to negotiations as an opportunity to diplomacy, but believe that negotiations for the sake of negotiations will have no benefit for the Iranian nation and other involved parties,” Press TV reported.

The U.S. under President Trump quit the nuclear deal in 2018 and imposed the harshest sanctions in history against Iran. Trump had the illusion that he can force Iran to give in to his illegal demands through his “maximum pressure” campaign against the Islamic Republic.

The U.S. left the nuclear deal which was endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

The Trump administration imposed a total ban on Iran's oil export. He intended to strangle the Iranian economy.

After Trump abandoned the JCPOA, his top diplomat Mike Pompeo said the U.S. will impose “the strongest sanctions in history” on Iran. Also in November 2018, John Bolton, who was the White House national security advisor at the time, said, “It's our intention to squeeze them (Iranians) very hard... until the pips squeak.”

Former Iranian foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif called U.S. sanctions against Iran as instance of “economic terrorism”.

Despite pleas by international figures, the Trump administration even refused to relax sanctions during the deadly Coronavirus pandemic.

Due to economic and financial sanctions foreign companies even refused to sell medicine and medical equipment to Iran.

Zarif and his deputy Abbas Araqchi said sanctions against amid Iran amid the deadly pandemic is “crime against humanity”.

Also, on Monday Foreign Minister Abdollahian called the U.S. the chief culprit for violating the international nuclear deal.

“The Americans inflicted the worst harm on the JCPOA and not only are they accused [in this regard], but they are also the main culprit in violating the JCPOA,” Abdollahian asserted.

Though bans on Iran for importing medicine have been relaxed in recent months due to attempts by Switzerland, the sanction are still in place despite the fact that current U.S. President Joe Biden had expressed willingness to rejoin the JCPOA.

Abdollahian urged the European troika – France, Germany and Britain – to take action with respect to the JCPOA implementation, saying that the three states were, too, responsible for the U.S. refusal to lift sanctions against Iran and allow the nation to reap the benefits of the JCPOA.

The foreign minister said this issue has been conveyed to the president and foreign minister of France during his recent visit to Iraq and to his other counterparts in the European troika.

“The European troika has the opportunity to review and change its approach to show its firm determination in its interaction with Iran,” Abdollahian pointed out.

New Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and his French counterpart Emanuel Macron have talked on phone two times over the last few weeks. In the last call, which was held on Sunday, Raisi expressed Tehran's readiness for comprehensive cooperation with Europe. Raisi said such interaction could begin with the promotion of economic and trade ties with France.

Raisi's foreign minister conveyed the same message on Monday, saying, “...we welcome [cooperation with] other European countries and are ready to pursue active and dynamic relations with them within the framework of a balanced foreign policy. We will pay attention to all continents and parts of the world in such a relationship.”

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said earlier on Monday that negotiations on the JCPOA revival will continue in essence under the new administration.

“The [Vienna] negotiations will continue in essence. Iran has announced time and again that negotiations will continue to make sure that the United States will return to complete implementation of its obligations under the JCPOA and [UN Security Council] Resolution 2231 [which endorsed the accord],” he added.

The Western media outlets have been trying to demonize Iran's nuclear program despite the fact that Iran is a signatory to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and its nuclear activities are monitored by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Barbara Slavin, an American foreign policy expert, says the American public is “woefully ignorant” about the JCPOA and wrongly believe that Iran has built nuclear arms.

“Most Americans are woefully ignorant about the Iran deal – a majority believes Iran has nuclear weapons,” Slavin tells the Tehran Times.

She also said, Unfortunately, those who are extremely hawkish about Iran have a loud voice in the U.S. media.”

# Quds force chief: Tehran won't allow developments in Afghanistan to harm Iran

TEHRAN — Quds Force Commander Esmail Qaani has said Iran will not allow the developments in Afghanistan to “harm the security of the country,” a member of the Parliament National Security and Foreign Policy Committee told the Mehr news agency in an interview published on Tuesday.

The remarks by Ebrahim Rezaei comes as the Iranian parliament held a closed-door session on Afghanistan on Monday during which IRGC Quds Force commander briefed the MPs about the developments in the country.

“In this session the commander of the Quds Force of the IRGC insisted that the Islamic Republic of Iran proved the ‘most prudent’ country and adopted good position” due to the “deep view” that the Leader of the Islamic Revolution has toward regional and international developments,” the MP added.

Rezaei said in the parliamentary session, General Qaani elaborated on the damages that the U.S. inflicted on Afghanistan during 20 years of its occupation of the country.

The U.S. spent \$2 trillion dollars in Afghanistan and lost hundreds of soldiers, however, after 20 years it was forced to leave Afghanistan in disgrace and in a chaotic way.

Citing the Quds Force chief, the MP said the cost of the U.S. occupation of Afghanistan was \$300 million per day.

“The U.S. death toll in Afghanistan was more than 10,000, but the Americans did not get any results,” Qaani said, according the MP.

The commander also said that the U.S. deployed 80,000 troops in Afghanistan.

Rezaei added, “The Quds Force chief emphasized that the United States entered Afghanistan to dominate Iran, Russia, China and India, but suffered defeats and eventually fled the country.”

MP Rezaei underscored that according to Qaani the United States also brought ISIS to Afghanistan to use them to achieve its goals.

Quoting the Quds Force commander, Rezaei also said, the Doha talks on Afghanistan proved “fruitless” due to intervention by the United States.

The U.S. military failure in Afghanistan is being compared to its humiliation in Vietnam in the 1970.

Former Iranian foreign minister



Mohammad Javad Zarif said on September 1 that humiliation of the U.S. in Afghanistan proved that it is “high time” for Washington to abdicate the fallacy of “all options on the table”.

Zarif, an academician and career diplomat, said it is a “rule and not exception” that the United States and other invaders have been humiliated in the world.

Zarif cited the ill-fated invasion of Vietnam by the U.S. in 1970s, Afghanistan by the Soviet Union in 1980s, Iran and Kuwait by Saddam Hussein's Iraq in 1980s and 1990 as some examples.

The former chief diplomat went on to say that use of force is “suicidal”.

Speaking about the U.S. intervention in Afghanistan and the hasty pullout, Jack Midgley, who once served in Afghanistan as an advisor to the commander of the International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF), and Gary Morsh, another U.S. veteran with 21-year service history in Vietnam, Kosovo and Iraq, have said the U.S. failure in Afghanistan was “foreseeable,” according to the China Media Group (CMG).

Dominic Tierney, chair of the political science department at Swarthmore, a former contributor at The Atlantic and currently at The Signal, says, “There's no other way to characterize the overall 20-year war as anything other than a failure.”

He says the Taliban has now returned to power and “this has to go

down in history as a major American failure.”

The political scientist notes, “A lot of people are pointing out that the defeat in Afghanistan is not just about 2021, that is a bigger story going back 20 years. And I think that that's an important point.”

But actually, Afghanistan itself, the 20-year war, is part of an even bigger story in American military history that goes back to World War II. Before World War II, the United States won nearly all the major wars that it fought. And since World War II, the United States has barely won any major wars. The (Persian) Gulf War in 1991 was arguably a success, although far from the clean and decisive triumph that some people remember it as.

Korea was a really tough stalemate. And since Korea, we have had Vietnam—America's most infamous defeat—and Iraq, another major failure. And you can even add other conflicts like Libya, like Somalia.”

On why have the U.S. has not figured out how to navigate the shift in nature of wars, the political expert says, “There are a few things going on. The U.S. military—and maybe arguably American society—much prefers planning for these classic, conventional wars, like World War II. In some fundamental way, World War II is what Americans think war ought to look like: with a fairly clear enemy, we make progress on the battlefield

## General Qaani says Iran proved the 'most prudent' country toward developments in Afghanistan

## Italian expert: Reviving EU army formation proposal mirrors EU's weakness

TEHRAN (MNA) – Referring to the revival of debates over the formation of the EU army following U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, Pastorini Gianluca touched on the bloc's weakness, saying Josep Borrell's proposal faces political and financial difficulties.

Once again, the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan has raised many debates about the necessity of forming a European army for more strategic autonomy of the bloc.

‘Strategic autonomy’ means greater potential for independence, self-reliance, and resilience in a wide range of fields including defense, trade, economic and monetary policy. A series of events in recent years have attached importance to the issue more than ever.

The latest development that once again reminded the Europeans of the importance of more strategic autonomy was the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. European countries had no option but to pull out of Afghanistan along with the U.S. despite their desire to keep their troops in Afghanistan in order not to let the country fall into the Taliban's hands.

U.S. unilateral actions in recent years including Donald Trump's unilateral withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA) despite EU opposition have also highlighted the importance of the issue.

Some believe that series of U.S. unilateral actions both by democratic president Joe Biden and former republican Donald Trump implicitly have indicated that the U.S. priorities are different from the Eu-

ropeans so Europe should take necessary steps for more autonomy, while others don't think so.

In an interview the issue was discussed with Gianluca, political science associate professor of Milan Catholic University of the Sacred Heart.

Following are his comments:

“The debate on European strategic autonomy is an old one, dating back to the end of the Cold War. Since the 1990s, many efforts have been made to create a ‘European army’, and the issue has been repeatedly raised at the EU level and from several member states. During Donald Trump's presidency, the topic received special attention in the light of what seemed to be the decline of U.S. commitment to NATO and European security. After the U.S. hastily withdrawal from Afghanistan, the EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, relaunched the idea of establishing a ‘European army’, adding to the project a new sense of urgency.

Outside this long-term perspective, Borrell's proposal can sound intriguing. However, it faces the same difficulties that other similar proposals faced in the past. At the political level, the contrasting visions existing among the EU members make it difficult to find an agreement on who, in the new structure, should play the leading role(s). Moreover, a sizeable part of the members still prefers to retain a strong bond with the U.S. because they see it as an essential political partner or the best guarantor of their military security. Finally, on the financial side,

no country is ready to ‘pay the bill’ of greater European autonomy while at the same time remaining in NATO.

This is a central aspect. For one reason or the other, no European country is ready to leave NATO, and any ‘European army’ must be conceived in a context where NATO is – and will remain – dominant. Currently, the EU can perform its military missions using NATO's assets within the so-called ‘Berlin Plus’ framework (2002). This state of things is not entirely satisfactory and configures only limited EU's strategic autonomy. However, the EU's own capabilities are limited, and there is no perspective to overcome such a limit in the short-to-medium term, especially when more pressing needs conjure against any significant increase in military spending.

Finally, there is the point of what should be the tasks of this possible ‘European army’. The idea of a large-scale European military presence in Afghanistan instead of the U.S. seems – at best – overambitious, especially given the country's current politico-military situation. On this background, Borrell's proposal mirrors the greatest weakness of the EU's military ambitions, viz their essentially ‘emotional’ character. The call for greater European strategic autonomy regularly emerges only in times of crisis: an element that affects the definition of credible long-term policies and negatively impacts the chances to place EU-U.S. relations on a sounder and more equitable basis.”

## Ball is in America's court, expert says

TEHRAN – An expert on international affairs says the Biden administration has come to the conclusion that the continuation of the policy of pressure on Tehran does not hinder the development of Iran's nuclear program and they should pursue a policy of compromise.

In an interview with ISNA published on Tuesday, Seyyed Reza Mirtaher said, “But in this route they want to give the minimum concessions to Iran and they want to make a condition in giving these minimum concessions, and this shows that the United States has not changed its approach vis-à-vis Iran.”

Speaking in the first live TV interview with the people on Saturday night, President Ebrahim Raisi noted, “We will not hesitate to talk and negotiate in any way, but what Westerners and Americans want, that is, dialogue under pressure; does that mean dialogue? If pressure is to be on the side of dialogue, what kind of dialogue is this?”

The president stated, “Negotiations is an option as a diplomacy tool, but negotiation under pressure and threats is not acceptable at all. This has been tested already and does not work. Americans and Europeans have experienced that dialogue with pressure does not work.”

The issue of nuclear talks is on the agenda, but negotiations must be fruitful, he said, adding, “The focus of our talks is the interests of the Iranian people and the complete lifting of sanctions, from which we will not take a step back.”

The West, including the European sides, is asking Iran to return to the Vienna talks to revive the nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). For example, on Sunday French President Emmanuel Macron called on Raisi that Iran to resume the stalled nuclear talks in Vienna. It was the second time that France was calling on Iran to restart the talks. French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le



Drian, German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas and European foreign policy chief Josep Borrell had talked to Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian on the need to return to the Vienna talks.

Mirtaher, referring to Raisi's position on the nuclear talks, said: “The first point about the president's remarks on Saturday was that his administration is ready to return to the JCPOA talks.”

“The second point was that the talks should not be under pressure from the West and the United States; that is, the continuation of the current U.S. approach, which seeks maximum sanctions and is in line with the campaign of ‘maximum pressure’ against Iran under Trump, with indirect European support cannot be considered a positive point regarding the JCPOA,” the expert stated.

The third point, Mirtaher added, is that from Raisi's point of view the aim of the negotiations should be to lift the sanctions and to remove the unilateral sanctions that the United States has imposed on Iran since 2018, which has created many difficulties for the Iranian people.

In general, the tone and content of Raisi's remarks showed Tehran's readiness for a positive interaction with the P4+1 and indirectly with the United States, which would eventually lead to a settlement of the nuclear issue and a win-win game, the analyst went on to say.

The remaining signatories to the JCPOA are Iran, Russia, China, France and Britain – the four permanent members of the UN Security Council – plus Germany.

The expert on international affairs pointed out that the West's excuses and extravagance in the issues beyond the JCPOA had led the Vienna talks to revive the JCPOA not

to yield the expected results.

“Favorable conditions are now in place so that, given the history of previous negotiations, the two sides can quickly reach a new agreement, but the content of this agreement should include the lifting of U.S. sanctions against Iran,” he added.

In retaliation for the abrogation of the nuclear deal by the U.S. and inaction by the other parties, particularly Europeans, to honor their commitments under the JCPOA, Iran started to gradually remove limits on its nuclear program. Iran took this retaliatory measure one year after the U.S. left the deal. It was based on paragraph 36 of the JCPOA.

Paragraph 36 has provided a mechanism to resolve disputes and allows one side, under certain circumstances, to stop complying with the deal if the other side is out of compliance.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))



# Iraqi Kurdistan’s inaction over Kurdish militants angers Iran

TEHRAN – In the latest indication that Iraqi Kurdistan’s regional government has not sufficiently heeded Iran’s earlier warnings over the activism of dissident groups, a senior Iranian general starkly warned the Iraqi Kurdish authorities to rein in the activities of these groups.

Brigadier General Mohammad Pakpour, the commander of Iran’s Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Ground Forces, warned Iraq’s Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) against allowing terrorist groups to use its territory to pose threats against the security of the Islamic Republic.

Underlining that Iran has repeatedly warned the KRG authorities about the activities of terrorist and militant groups but they did not take action to prevent these activities, the Iranian general said terrorist and anti-revolutionary groups affiliated with foreign intelligence services have been using the KRG territories to disrupt security in Iran’s border regions.

“Terrorist and counterrevolutionary groups affiliated with the global arrogance and foreign espionage services have been using the territory of northern Iraq for many years to undermine security and peace in border areas of the Islamic Republic of Iran and harass the inhabitants of these regions,” the commander of the IRGC’s Ground Force said.

“In this regard, the Iraqi government and the officials of the northern region of Iraq have been given the necessary warnings,” he continued.

He made the remarks on Monday in reaction to recent moves by anti-Iran armed terrorists in the northwestern border areas of the country as he was inspecting military units and border posts in that region.



General Pakpour stressed that the Iraqi government and the Kurdistan Region should not allow terrorists to roam and set up headquarters in the KRG to threaten and create insecurity against Iran.

“We consider any negligence and dereliction [of duty] in this regard to be contrary to good neighborliness and good relations between the two countries,” he cautioned.

General Pakpour even threatened to attack the headquarters of the KRG-based anti-revolutionary groups and advised people residing near these groups to stay away.

“Given the situation in the [northern Iraqi] region and the possibility of [giving] a firm and crushing response by the Islamic Republic of Iran to terrorist groups, which are affiliated with the sworn enemies of the [Islamic] Revolution and the Islamic Establishment, and are holed up in the northern Iraqi territory, we request the inhabitants of this region to distance themselves from terrorists’ bases, so that no harm would come to

them,” he warned.

Rahmatullah Firouzpour, an Iranian lawmaker, echoed the same warning, saying that Iran will not tolerate that some militant groups enter Iran from border areas.

According to the lawmaker, Iran has repeatedly warned the KRG officials and Baghdad about the movements of terrorist groups based in the region against Iran, so if this practice continues, Iran will take the necessary and serious action.

“What is certain is that Iran, despite its complete independence and non-interference in the security issues of the countries, does not tolerate that some people want to enter the territory and borders of the Islamic Republic and will certainly deal with them,” he told Iranian Diplomacy.

“If those attacks are to take place from inside Iraq, the Iraqi government is responsible and should not allow some people in their territory as an opposition group to try to create problems for the neighboring countries,” Firouzpour said.

The Iranian warnings came nearly a month after Iran’s Supreme National Security Council Secretary Admiral Ali Shamkhani demanded that Iraq expel these groups from the KRG so that Iran would not be forced to take “preemptive” measures.

In a meeting with Iraqi Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein in Tehran, Shamkhani told the Iraqi diplomat that “some militant anti-Iran terrorist groups” have holed up in the Kurdistan region and that the Iraqi government should move to expel them. “We ask the Iraqi government to take more serious measures to expel these groups from Iraq’s Kurdistan so that Iran would not be forced to take preemptive action in order to prevent the continuation of the evil of armed terrorists in Iraqi Kurdistan,” Shamkhani told Hussein.

Nearly two weeks ago, the KRG’s Ministry of Interior requested the Kurdish opposition parties from neighboring countries not to use the territory of the Kurdistan region as a base for their operations and to spare the KRG the involvement in regional conflicts. But this request seems to have been insufficient as Iranian media outlets reported that the KRG-based anti-Iran groups have made new movements.

Iraqi Kurdistan Region has been used for a long time by such anti-Iran terror groups as the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) and its offshoot, PJAK, which are active in Iraq and Turkey, to launch occasional attacks against the positions of Iranian border guards and border areas in northwestern parts of the country, Press TV reported, adding that the attacks have been invariably faced with crushing responses from Iran’s border guards and other military units deployed in those areas.

## Iran FM meets members of Iran Chamber of Commerce

TEHRAN – The first consultation forum of the Foreign Ministry and Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Mines was held on Monday with Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian, his deputy for economic diplomacy and directors general of the ministry playing host.

The meeting, held at the foreign ministry, had as guests head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Mines Gholam Hossein Shafei as well as members of joint chambers of commerce with neighboring countries and joint chambers with key trade partners of Iran, the Iranian foreign ministry said in a statement.

Shafei thanked the foreign minister for holding the meeting, saying the consultation forum is the first initiative and meeting held by a ministry of the 13th government [President Ebrahim Raisi’s government] with the private sector. He described the meeting as significant and as a show of how bold the foreign ministry considers the activities of the private sector. Shafei also called for such meetings to be held regularly in the coming months.

The private sector economic operators of Iran elaborated on their viewpoints on the expansion of trade ties with other countries, especially neighboring nations and major trade partners of Iran, and called on the Foreign Ministry to increase its support for the private sector’s role in the promotion of economic exchanges with other countries, especially during joint commissions.

During the meeting, the Foreign Ministry’s deputy for economic diplomacy and the ministry’s regional directors general also answered questions raised by the economic operators of the private sector.

The foreign minister later concluded the meeting with economic operators and officials of the Iran chamber, saying the private sector is the propellant engine of ties with other countries. Abdollahian added that trade and economic links help a stable foreign policy and strengthen it, reiterating the foreign ministry’s determination to support the role and participation of the private sector in exchanges with other countries.

Abdollahian also said securing supplies of Covid-19 vaccines is a top priority of the foreign ministry and briefed the participants on the ministry’s steps, over the past days, to help speed up the supply of the vaccine doses needed in the country. He said the ministry welcomes the cooperation of the private sector in this field.

Some of the other topics discussed during the conclusion of the meeting by Foreign Minister Hossein Abdollahian were the formation of a joint committee



among the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade and Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Mines; recognizing the real place of the private sector in joint commissions on economic cooperation; continuation of such consultative meetings; participation of the head of the Iran chamber in the meetings of the Foreign Ministry’s Council of Deputies, with respect to the economic topics raised, and prioritization of topics related to organizing border terminals and strengthening the country’s infrastructure when they promote exports.

Also on Monday, the Iranian foreign minister held his first session with foreign ambassadors to Tehran. The meeting happened at the Foreign Ministry’s Shaheed Soleimani Building of the Political and International Studies Compound.

In the meeting, Abdollahian rolled out Iran’s foreign policy and main priorities under President Ebrahim Raisi. He described the new Iranian administration’s foreign policy as balanced, active, dynamic and smart. Abdollahian said, “We insist on sending a message to the world that our foreign policy will be balanced. Accordingly, a major priority for us will be our neighbors. There are no exceptions in this regard,” according to a separate statement by the Iranian foreign ministry.

He went on to say that another priority for Iran will be Asia, saying the continent has a special standing in the 21st century and the emerging economic powers have created new opportunities for Asia and the whole world.

He stressed that Iran has many friends and allies among its neighbors and in Asia, and “We pay special attention to these two axes in our foreign policy priorities. However, as Iran’s 13th government’s foreign policy agenda suggests, our priority over neighbors and Asia does not mean ignoring the rest of the world, and focusing on Arab and Islamic countries, African countries, Latin America, and Europe and the West will be a component of our active and

dynamic foreign policy.”

The foreign minister named the Coronavirus pandemic as one of the thematic priorities of President Ebrahim Raisi’s administration, adding, “Apart from paying attention to the maximum production of domestic vaccines, we at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the cooperation of esteemed foreign ambassadors, succeeded in supplying large quantities of Covid vaccines. Also, due to the special and worrying situation in Afghanistan, we have not even neglected to pay attention to the more than 4 million refugees in our country, and we are pursuing the vaccination program of these Afghan guests in Iran.”

The Iranian foreign minister explained Iran’s position on the nuclear talks. He said, “The Iranian government considers negotiation as an effective tool of diplomacy and we will not distance ourselves from negotiations in any way. As I emphasized in my meeting with Mr. Erike Mora, we believe in negotiations and positively view them as an opportunity for diplomacy, but we believe that negotiations for negotiations’ sake will not benefit the Iranian nation and other sides.”

He added, “The US inflicted the main damage on the JCPAO [nuclear deal] and they are not only the accused, but also the main culprit in violating the agreement.” While emphasizing that Iran welcomes any negotiation that guarantees the rights and interests of the Iranian people, the foreign minister added, “We believe in wise and firm talks which would ensure the rights of the nation and we work actively in this regard.” Abdollahian noted that Iran does not view inconclusive and time-consuming talks as useful for Iranians.

Abdollahian also referred to the misunderstandings in bilateral relations with a few countries that have hampered smooth mobility and favorable diplomatic relations. He stressed the importance of dialogue, saying, “We view dialogue with regional nations as a principle and consider regional talks as a serious way out of the current situation in the region.” Noting that his first foreign trip as a minister was to attend a meeting in Baghdad, he said, “While we believe that foreign interference and efforts to resolve regional issues through military means are detrimental to the region, we also support any format that encourages intra-regional dialogue and whose outcome is in the interest of peace, stability and development in the region.”

He then turned to relations with Europe, emphasizing the opportunities for Europe and the West in the new Iranian government’s balanced foreign policy. Abdollahian noted that Europe is not just the troika.

diplomats of Afghanistan’s neighbors, proposed to be held on Wednesday September 8th. He expressed hope that the foreign ministers send a clear and strong message, reaffirming their support for the formation of an inclusive government in Afghanistan.

In a Monday meeting with Tehran-based foreign ambassadors, Abdollahian touched on developments in Afghanistan. The meeting took place at the Foreign Ministry’s Shaheed Soleimani Building of the Political and International Studies Compound. During the meeting, Iran’s top diplomat spoke of the situation in Afghanistan. He said Iran is in touch with all countries involved and wants a broad-based government to be formed in Afghanistan

## IRAN IN FOCUS

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Straight Truth  
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## SPORTS

### Iranian athletes better than expected in Tokyo: Khosravi Vafa

TEHRAN – President of Iran Paralympic Committee, Mahmoud Khosravi Vafa, says that the Iranian athletes showed better than expected in the 2020 Paralympic Games.

Iran finished in 13th place in the 2020 Paralympic Games.

The Iranian para athletes won historic 12 gold medals as well as 11 silvers and one bronze.

Iran sent 62 athletes to Tokyo in 10 sports.

The Persians had finished 15th in 2016 with 24 medals after winning eight golds, nine silvers and seven bronzes.

“We sent smaller team to Tokyo but got the better results. Our athletes performed better than expected in the Games,” Khosravi Vafa said.

“I believe that we can be better in the future. We will continue our policy to send the quality players to the Paralympics,” he added.

Iran sent 110 athletes to Rio 2016 and finished 15th in the medal table in with 24 medals after winning eight golds, nine silvers and seven bronzes.

“We made history in Tokyo. We had participated to win 11 gold medals but claimed one more gold. In general, I have to say the results were very satisfying,” Khosravi Vafa concluded.

### Majid Sadri named Persepolis interim GM

TEHRAN – Majid Sadri was named as interim general manager of Persepolis football club.

He replaced Jafar Samiei in the Iranian top-flight football club.

Sadri was a member of Persepolis’ board of directors.

Samiei stepped down as Persepolis GM last week after 10 months.

Persepolis are owned by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

### China’s Cangzhou parts company with Iranian coach Ghotbi

TEHRAN – Former Iran coach Afshin Ghotbi has parted company with Chinese Super League (CSL) team Cangzhou Mighty Lions, the club said on social media on Monday.

Ghotbi had led the team to just two wins in the league this season to leave Cangzhou seventh in the CSL’s eight-team Guangzhou-based Group A.

Cangzhou will now feature in the relegation rounds of the league when it resumes at the start of December.

The 57-year-old was appointed in late 2019 when the club was known as Shijiazhuang Ever Bright and oversaw their relegation to China League One last year.

However, the collapse of champions Jiangsu FC earned the club a reprieve and they were reinstated into the CSL for the 2021 campaign.

Ghotbi, who was an assistant to Guus Hiddink when South Korea reached the semi-finals of the 2002 World Cup, was Iran’s head coach at the Asian Cup in Qatar in 2011.

### Roma intent on bringing Zenit’s Azmoun in June 2022

TEHRAN – Sardar Azmoun is a player that Mourinho rates a lot, and one of the many names on Pinto’s radar for this past summer transfer window.

The Iranian international recently confirmed Roma’s interest in him. However, Zenit was reluctant in letting him go.

According to Corriere dello Sport, Roma is intent on bringing Azmoun to the Italian capital in the summer of 2022. Azmoun’s contract is set to expire then and thus could join the capital club on a free transfer.

The Iranian striker is reportedly still in touch with General Manager Tiago Pinto.

The player would fit Mourinho’s preferred line-up of three strikers, once Borja Mayoral’s two-year loan comes to an end, along with Tammy Abraham and Eldor Shomurodov.

### Hiroyuki Kimura to officiate Istiklol v Persepolis in ACL Round of 16

TEHRAN – Hiroyuki Kimura was chosen to officiate the match between Tajikistan’s Istiklol and Persepolis of Iran.

The match will be held in Dushanbe’s Central State Stadium in AFC Champions League (ACL) Round of 16.

Kimura is a 39-year-old referee who has already officiated in the AFC Champions League.

### Pourmousavi appointed Naft Masjed Soleyman coach

TEHRAN – Sirous Pourmousavi was appointed as new head coach of Naft Masjed Soleyman.

He replaced Mahmoud Fekri in the Iranian top-flight football club.

Pourmousavi led Sanat Naft last season but parted company with the Abadan based team at the end of the season.

Naft Masjed Soleyman finished in 13th in Iran Professional League (IPL) last season.

Iran’s Football League Organization announced that the 2021/22 Iran Professional League (IPL) season will kick off on Oct. 19

## Afghanistan FM holds talks with Iranian counterpart

TEHRAN – Afghan Foreign Minister Mohammad Hanif Atmar has congratulated his Iranian counterpart Hossein Amir Abdollahian on winning Parliament’s endorsement to become Iran’s foreign minister.

The top Afghan diplomat expressed confidence that Amir Abdollahian’s appointment to the post will pave the road for further expansion of relations between the two brotherly and friendly nations of Iran and Afghanistan and will boost regional and international cooperation based on mutual interests, the Iranian foreign ministry said in a statement.

The talks came after a recent phone conversation between Abdollahian and Head

of Afghanistan’s High Council for National Reconciliation Abdulah Abdulah who congratulated Abdollahian on his appointment as the Islamic Republic’s top diplomat.

In a phone call, Abdullah Abdullah thanked Iran for defending the Afghan people.

Abdullah also spoke of the dire situation in Afghanistan and called on Iran to send humanitarian aid to his country.

The two sides agreed on the need to fight the heinous phenomenon of terrorism. They also discussed the formation of an inclusive government with the participation of all Afghan ethnic groups and factions. They also reaffirmed their position that it’s only up to the Afghan people to determine their country’s future.

Earlier this week, Afghanistan’s neighbors held talks over the situation in the country during a teleconference.

Mohammad Ebrahim Taherian, an advisor to Iran’s foreign minister and the country’s special envoy for Afghanistan told his counterparts from other neighbors of the war-torn country that peace can only be achieved there through the formation of an inclusive government with the participation of al Afghan groups.

Taherian underlined the need to end the ordeal of the Afghan people.

Taherian also referred to the three-way phone conversation between the foreign ministers of Iran, Russia and China over the upcoming virtual meeting involving the top

issue of Afghanistan is important for Iran from different aspects, and in terms of the connection between the two nations of Iran and Afghanistan, we can not be indifferent to these developments,” he said, according to Iran’s state news agency IRNA.

“In this meeting, General Qaani spoke accurately, strongly in a documented way about Afghanistan, and a number of representatives also expressed their views,” the spokesman said, adding, “Given the relations that exist between the two countries, we pay due attention to these developments, and it is not that our foreign policy, security, and defense apparatuses have been surprised by the current developments.”



## Monthly transit of goods via Iran rises 94% yr/yr



From page 1 ► The connection of Central Asian countries with the Persian Gulf, as well as the establishment of trade relations between East Asia and European countries through Iran, is very cost-effective, so that many of these countries seek to establish such relations through Iran.

This status has provided the country with many opportunities that making optimal use of them through the expansion of the transportation network and reliable and efficient communication, Iran can achieve foreign currency earnings and economic growth, and make transit revenue a suitable alternative to oil export, while improving its strategic position in the region.

## Tehran hosts conference on advanced industries



The Secretary of Iran's National Conference on Advanced Industries Sina Sanjari (1st L)

TEHRAN – Focusing on the role of knowledge-based companies in the industrial development of Iran, the country's National Conference of Advanced Industries was held in Tehran on Monday, IRIB reported.

The conference was attended by officials, scholars, experts and representatives of the country's knowledge-based companies.

Speaking to the press on the sidelines of the event, the Conference Secretary Sina Sanjari criticized the lack of communication and coordination among the entities active in the field of knowledge and technology in the country.

"Although institutions and organizations such as the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, the Center for Progress and Development of Iran, the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, and the Iranian Research

Considering its geographical location, Iran can play a significant role in the transit of goods in the region and benefit a lot from its status in this due. To take full advantage of its location for transit, the country has many plans underway and, on the agenda, to boost its transit capacity.

Some of these plans include developing Shahid Rajaei Port, Iran's largest and most-equipped container port in the south, and also Chabahar Port in the southeast of the country, connecting the ports to the railway network, development of transit via railway, and also some customs measures such as improving transit procedures in the customs offices.

Organization for Science and Technology are active in development of new technologies, but they are not aware of each other's achievements and sometimes work in parallel," Sanjari said.

"In order to make the best use of the existing technological knowledge in the country and to inform the responsible institutions about each other's achievements, we try to have the representatives of each of the mentioned institutions and organizations in the Policy Council of Technological and Advanced Industries of Iran," the official added.

Sanjari further stressed the need to use modern technologies in competition with the world and stated that identifying the technological capabilities of the country's industrial companies in the private, semi-governmental and governmental sectors is one of the goals of Iran's technological and advanced industries.

"Our priority is to develop technologies that are needed for the development of the important areas such as automobiles, petrochemicals and steel, so this conference is intended to be a forum to introduce the achievements of researchers and domestic companies in these areas," he explained.

Knowledge-based companies and creative startups have grown over the past five years, and Iran has risen 45 places in the Global Innovation Index, according to the UNESCO 2021 Report.

The Global Innovation Index in Iran from 2015 to 2019 has risen from 106 to 61 with continuous improvement, showing 45 steps growth.

Currently, many knowledge-based companies are active in different fields, ranging from information and communication technology to health, agriculture, and energy.

# Gas refineries fully ready for sustained supply in winter

TEHRAN – Head of National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC)'s Production Coordination and Supervision Directorate has said the country's natural gas refineries are completely ready for the sustained supply of gas in the cold season, Shana reported.

Masoud Zardovian said the annual overhaul program of the country's refineries is progressed over 65 percent, explaining: "During the first seven months of the year, an intensive overhaul program is defined and implemented at a specific schedule for the 18 gas refineries that are now operational so

that we can get through the winter smoothly."

"By implementing this program, which aims to maintain the system in efficient condition, the reliability of the refineries will increase, and in this way, we can maximize the amount of processing and ensure that clean, safe and efficient gas is supplied to various sectors," he added.

Stating that the overhaul of gas refineries began in the first Iranian calendar month of Farvardin (started on March 21) and will continue until the end of the seventh calendar month of Mehr (October



22), Zardovian said: "Obviously, timely repairs will be promising for sustainable gas production in winter."

"Due to the preparations, risk assessments and technical inspections using the latest equipment, the overhaul time has been continuously improving in recent years, and now we are able to allocate the least possible time to such operations in order to be able to have the maximum amount of production," the official explained.

He noted that out of the country's total 18 gas refineries (12 South Pars gas refineries and six

gas refining companies), the overhaul operations of 10 refineries have been completed and the repairs of the other five are also underway and will be completed by the beginning of the cold season.

"We have made the necessary arrangements and made the necessary predictions. All our colleagues in the production, processing and distribution sectors are ready to deliver this clean, safe, stable and sustainable energy to all people, even in remote rural areas, so that we do not see pressure drops or gas outages at any point," Zardovian said.

## Stock market trades to follow an upward trend this year: analyst

TEHRAN – A capital market analyst has said the trades at the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE) are going to follow an upward trend in the remaining months of the current Iranian calendar year (ends in March 2022).

"Based on the forecasts, it seems that the stock market trading will experience a positive trend and be upward by the end of this year due to the current inflation in the country's economy," Soheil Kolahchi told IRNA on Monday.

Emphasizing the parameters affecting stock market transactions, he said: "A few days of correction in the market paved the way for the return of the upward trend in stock trading, in this regard, the future of this market in the medium term can be considered as upward."

"Another issue that can affect the stock market in the near future is the nuclear deal and the outcome of the negotiations, which can to some extent affect the trading process in this market," the expert added.

Kolahchi further stressed the need to change some of the regulations in the stock market and said: "Issues such as the base volume and the amplitude in the market are among the topics whose change has been discussed many times."

Back in July, Market Analyst Mehdi Bayat-Manesh had said that TEDPIX, the TSE's main in-



dex, is going to improve in the second half of the current Iranian calendar year.

Bayat-Manesh noted that considering the current trend of capital inflow into the market TEDPIX is expected to rise in the mentioned period.

According to Bayat-Manesh, the government policies for supporting the upward trend of the market should continue in the coming months in order to ensure this upward trend.

"It is also better for the managers of Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) to also take the necessary measures for supporting the market so that the stock market index can once again reach more than two million points, which

takes at least a few months to happen."

He pointed to the continuous increase in inflation rate in recent months and its effect on capital market transactions and added: "Shareholders' fears and worries about investing in the market will be eliminated by increasing government support and will increase their willingness to invest in this market."

Following the supportive measures taken by the government, the Iranian stock market has been gradually getting back on track and experts believe that the market is regaining people's trust.

In early July, Market Expert Reza Alavi said that the inflow of liquidity into the market and the increase in the value of transactions indicate that people are once again trusting the capital market.

"At present, other markets such as gold, foreign currency, and cars are not attractive enough for investors, and the stock market is still a good place for people's investments," Alavi said.

"After the [presidential] election debates, people have come to the conclusion that the stock market is one of the priorities of the new government, and for this reason, they have re-trusted this market, and as a result, the inflow of new capital into the market has increased," he noted.

## Nearly \$620m paid for agricultural mechanization since late-Mar.

TEHRAN – The head of Iran's Agricultural Mechanization Development Center said the government has paid 26 trillion rials (about \$619.04 million) of the allocated budget for agricultural mechanization since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21), IRNA reported.

According to Kambiz Abbasi, the mentioned figure which is equal to 87 percent of the total budget allocated to a credit line for agricultural mechanization has been used to supply agricultural machinery, tools and equipment in various fields including horticulture, livestock, poultry, and aquaculture.

This allocation will ensure



achieving the production goals of the Agriculture Ministry at the beginning of the new crop year, Abbasi said.

It is estimated that more than 86 percent of the country's wheat,

barley and rapeseed fields will be fully mechanized in the current Iranian calendar year, the official added.

The agriculture ministry has been allocating a separate credit line for the mechanization of the agriculture sector every year, so that since the Iranian calendar year of 1392 (started on March 21, 2013) so far, eight credit lines have been opened for this sector.

According to Abbasi since over 95 percent of the technology and knowledge in this area is domestic, despite the U.S. sanctions most of the goals in the mechanization of various agriculture sectors will be achieved without any

problems.

In the past forty years, since the Islamic Revolution, Iran has witnessed a remarkable improvement in various sectors and the agriculture industry has been one of the areas in which the country has undergone huge development.

Iran's agricultural mechanization coefficient has currently reached 1.65 horsepower per hectare and this figure is set to increase to 2.1 horsepower.

Implementing billions of dollars worth of development, research, and educational projects across the country is an indication of the significant improvements in this sector.

## TEDPIX down 15,400 points on Tuesday

TEHRAN– TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), lost 15,401 points to 1.523 million on Tuesday.

Over 9.84 billion securities worth 80.181 trillion rials (about \$1909 billion) were traded at the TSE on Tuesday.

The first market's index lost 16,621 points, and the second market's index drops 14,336 points.

Iran's new Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs Ehsan Khandouzi has previously underlined the capital market as one of the major priorities of his ministry during his tenure.

Increasing the role of the capital market in financing production companies and projects, diversifying financial instruments in the capital market, eliminating unnecessary regulations and barriers, facilitating the entry of companies into the stock market, reducing the cost of issuing bonds by facilitating relevant regulations, canceling monopolies and facilitating licensing for stock market-related services such as portfolio management, marketing, and brokerage, reforming corporate governance to manage conflict of interest between major and minor stakeholders and finally providing incentives for people to invest indirectly in the capital market have been mentioned as the major programs that the economy ministry is going to pursue in order to improve the capital market.

According to Khandouzi, the stock market is one of the most important pillars of the economy as it will play a significant role in financing government projects and supporting economic growth.

The market analysts say that Khandouzi's plans for the stock market have sent positive signals to the market.

One of the signals that have been received by the capital market is that the new government is strongly opposed to regulatory pricing and believes that supply and demand should determine the stock prices, Market Analyst Rouzbeh Shariati told ISNA.

## Exports from Astara port increases 13% in 5 months on year

TEHRAN– The value of exports from Iran's Astara port has risen 13 percent during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21–August 22), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, the director-general of Astara Customs Department announced.

Karim Rasouli said that 336,000 tons of commodities worth \$201.718 million has been exported from the port in the mentioned period.

The official also stated that 92,000 tons of goods valued at \$45.449 million has been imported to the port in the five-month period of this year, showing 47 percent fall in terms of worth as compared to the same time span of the previous year.

Astara port is 60 hectares and it is the first port of the private sector in Iran. It is the closest and the most cost-effective way for trade and transport between Asia, Africa, and Europe. It has been designed for loading and unloading 2,500-ton freighters.

Located by the Caspian Sea, Astara has sea, land, and railway borders points with the Azerbaijan Republic.

Even during the coronavirus outbreak, the port is considered one of the main points for Iran's export and import.

Managing Director of Khazar Shipping Company has recently said that Astara Port, located by the Caspian Sea, has become a new hub for container shipping in the region following the launch of new shipping services from this port.



lowing the launch of new shipping services from this port.

Mentioning the establishment of regular container transportation services from Astara port to Aktau port of Kazakhstan and Astrakhan in Russia, Davood Tafti said: "According to the plans, two regular transportation services will operate on this route weekly, one service from Astara to Aktau port and the other service is done from Anzali– Astara route to Aktau port."

Emphasizing that the launch of these regular services has created a competitive environment between road and sea transport, Tafti continued: "One of the most important effects of launching a regular container shipping service between Astara and the ports of Aktau and Astrakhan is reducing land transportation rates and breaking the monopoly of land transportation so that as soon as the news of

the activation of these regular container shipping services was announced, the road transportation rate in the region decreased to one thousand dollars."

"Breaking the monopoly means reducing costs and increasing the options of traders, exporters and cargo owners," he added.

As announced by the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the value of Iran's non-oil trade rose 38 percent during the first five months of the current year, as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

Mehdi Mir-Ashrafi said that Iran has traded 59.3 million tons of non-oil products worth \$34 billion with other countries in the mentioned period, which indicates also 14 percent growth in terms of weight on an annual basis.

The official put the five-month non-oil exports at 45.5 million tons valued at \$17.661 billion, with a 63 percent rise in value and 20 percent growth in weight.

The IRICA head mentioned methanol, natural gas, polyethylene, semi-finished iron products, iron ingots, gasoline, liquefied propane, iron rods, urea, and bitumen as the main exported products in the said time span.

He said major export destinations of the Iranian non-oil goods were China with about 12.3 million tons worth \$5.9 billion, Iraq with

12 million tons worth \$3.163 billion, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with five million tons worth \$1.9 billion, Turkey with 1.375 million tons worth \$1.1 billion, and Afghanistan with 2.165 million tons worth \$885 million.

The official further announced that Iran has imported 13.8 million tons of non-oil commodities worth \$16.631 billion in the first five months of the present year, with a 21 percent growth in value and a 0.5 percent fall in weight on year.

According to the official, the country's trade balance was over \$1 billion positive in the mentioned five months.

Mir-Ashrafi named cell-phones, livestock corn, sunflower oil, barley, meal, wheat, soybeans, sugar, and rice as the main imported commodities.

The United Arab Emirates with 4.436 million tons of goods worth \$5.391 billion was the top exporter to Iran in the said period, followed by China with 1.1 million tons of goods worth \$3.6 billion, Turkey with 1.578 million tons worth \$1.8 billion, Germany with 431,000 tons worth \$668 million, and Switzerland with 692,000 tons worth \$572 million, the official stated.

The official also noted that over 4.727 million tons of goods were transited through Iran in the said period, registering a 95-percent rise compared to the same period in the previous year.

## Astara port is the first port of the private sector in Iran.



# U.S. needs Iran’s cooperation to fight terror in Afghanistan: ex-UK diplomat

From page 1 ► According to some leaks from the Vienna talks, the American side has been setting conditions for the U.S. return to the pact.

Jenkins says “these conditions include an Iranian commitment to engage in subsequent talks on its missile program and on its regional policies and practices, which the United States likes to characterize as ‘malign’”

Following is the text of the interview:

**Given the United States’ withdrawal from of the 2015 nuclear pact under the Trump administration, who is to blame for undermining the deal? Why does nobody talk about punishment for the violating party or any compensation mechanism?**

Of course, the United States is to blame for undermining the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA in 2018 lacked any rational justification. The goals that the Trump administration proclaimed when withdrawing were totally unrealistic. At the time Iran was in full compliance with the commitments it had made when it entered into the JCPOA in 2015.

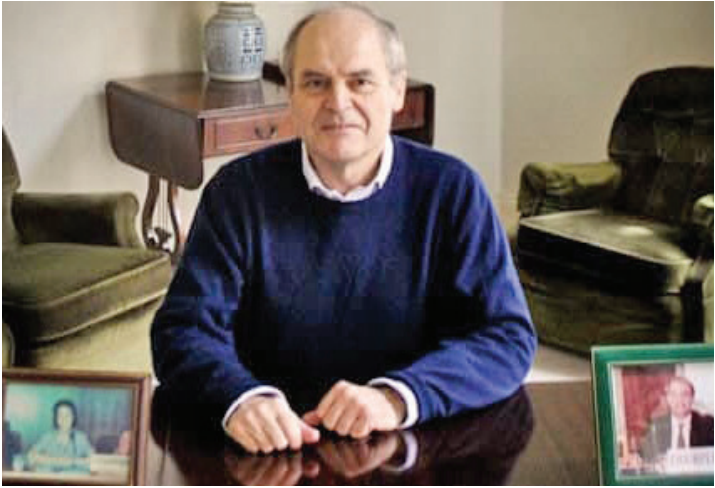
That said, the United States was entitled to withdraw. It is questionable, therefore, whether

it deserves punishment for doing so – beyond the loss of soft power that has resulted from the damage to U.S. prestige that unjustified withdrawal has caused. In any case, the international community lacks the will to punish a state whose military power has been unrivalled for the last 30 years. That’s Realpolitik.

**Apparently the U.S. is trying to embed new conditions into the nuclear deal including Iran’s missile program. Don’t you think such an effort may derail the course of nuclear talks?**

Many nuclear non-proliferation experts, valuing the JCPOA, are critical of the Biden administration for having failed simply to take the United States back into the JCPOA and do whatever was needed to bring about full U.S. compliance.

Instead, as you imply, leaks from the talks in Vienna suggest that the U.S. negotiators have been setting conditions for U.S. re-entry into the agreement. These conditions include an Iranian commitment to



engage in subsequent talks on its missile program and on its regional policies and practices, which the United States likes to characterize as “malign”. The U.S. negotiators may also be insisting that Iran concede an extension of some of the JCPOA’s provisions and they may be quibbling about the sanctions that must be lifted to comply with the JCPOA.

Personally, I cannot imagine the JCPOA being revived in the absence of U.S. willingness to compromise on those points. Is that likely? I’m in no position to judge, but I wonder whether three recent developments could

have an influence on U.S. thinking. The first is the initiation of a dialogue between Iran and Saudi Arabia: perhaps this could lead to reduced Saudi pressure on the United States to insist on Iran conceding missile and regional talks. The second is the departure of Netanyahu, who refused to listen to Israeli experts who advised that the JCPOA serves Israeli interests. The third is the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan: it would seem that this makes it desirable

for the United States and its allies to have relations with Afghanistan’s neighbors, including Iran, that lend themselves to counter-terrorism cooperation.

**Why isn’t there any control or investigation when it comes to Israeli nuclear arsenals?**

The formal position is that Israel neither confirms nor denies that it possesses nuclear weapons. This makes it possible for the United States and its allies to pretend that they do not know whether Israel has a nuclear arsenal. This profession of ignorance would be enough to justify U.S., UK and French vetoes if ever a member or members of the UN Security Council were to propose a UN investigation into alleged Israeli possession of nuclear weapons.

In addition, Israel, like India and Pakistan, has taken care never to become a party to the 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Consequently, it has never assumed an international legal obligation to refrain from manufacturing nuclear weapons or to conclude a comprehensive safeguards (inspection) agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). So, legal justification, in the form of an alleged breach of a legal obligation, for international action is lacking.

## “Heroic” jailbreak from Israeli prison celebrated

From page 1 ► A Palestinian prisoner’s organization says four of the men were serving life sentences adding that the resistance members on the run range in age from 26 to 49 years old, with one of them detained by Tel Aviv since 1996.

Among the six former inmates is also Zakaria Zubeidi, 46, who had been jailed since 2019 and was a former commander of the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades in the West Bank town of Jenin during the second Palestinian uprising, which began in September 2000.

The Israeli regime’s military and other forces have started a search for the six Palestinians. The Israeli Prisons Service says five of the inmates belong to the Islamic Jihad resistance movement and one is a former commander of a resistance group affiliated with the mainstream Fatah party. It was not immediately clear whether they had help from outside to orchestrate the operation.

Islamic Jihad called the breakout “a heroic act that will shock the Zionist defense system.” The group commended them in a statement for “snatching their freedom with their fingertips from under the eyes and ears of the occupier.”

Several other Palestinian factions hailed the jailbreak as a slap in the face of the Israeli regime. The Qassam Brigades, the military wing of the Gaza-based Palestinian resistance movement Hamas, hailed the escape as “heroic”. Lebanon’s Hezbollah also extended its congratulations to the Palestinian people and resistance groups on the success of the prison break describing it as one of a kind.

The mother of one of the prisoners, Umm Mahmoud Al-Arada, said that she doesn’t know where her son is, but hopes he has traveled to another country.

Israeli media have cited Israeli authorities as saying they are planning to move 400 other inmates to other prisons to avoid any other embarrassing jailbreaks for the regime.

Arik Yaacov, the service’s northern commander, claims



the escapees appeared to have opened a hole from their prison cell toilet floor to access passages formed by the prison’s construction. Reports say they fled via an underground tunnel that the inmates are believed to have spent months digging. Photos have circulated in Israeli media of a hole in the ground outside the prison, purporting to show the end of the escape route.

Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett’s office says the premier has spoken with Israeli security officials and emphasized that this is a “grave incident” that requires an across-the-board effort by the regime’s forces to hunt down the escapees.

A military spokesman says Israeli forces believe the freed Palestinians might try to reach the occupied West Bank, where the Palestinian Authority exercises limited self-rule in some area, or the Jordanian border some 14 km to the east.

Israeli security forces have launched a manhunt for the Palestinian prisoners. Regime forces have been deployed in large numbers, setting up roadblocks after the rare jailbreak from the prison in northern Israel. Security forces are patrolling streets in the north and the occupied West Bank, as helicopters are flying above.

## Taliban name caretaker cabinet

The Taliban on Tuesday afternoon released the names of the caretaker government.

Mullah Mohammad Hassan, the little-known head of the Taliban’s leadership council, was named as acting prime minister, spokesman Zabihullah Mujahed said at a press conference in Kabul. Taliban co-founder Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, the main public face of the group who signed a peace deal with the Trump administration last year, will serve as his deputy, according to Bloomberg.

Sirajuddin Haqqani, leader of the Haqqani Network, will serve as acting interior minister.

Mujahed made no mention of Taliban Supreme Commander Haibatullah Akhundzada, who hasn’t been seen in public since becoming the group’s leader in 2016. Mohammad Yaqoob, the son of former supreme leader Mullah Mohammad Omar -- who refused to give up Osama bin Laden to the U.S. before the 2001 invasion -- became acting defense minister.

There was no evidence of non-Taliban in the lineup, a big demand of the international community.

Mujahid, when announcing the cabinet, said the appointments were for an interim government. He did not elaborate on how long they would serve and

what would be the catalyst for a change.

So far, the Taliban have shown no indications that they will hold elections.

The announcement of cabinet appointments by Mujahid came hours after Taliban fired into the air to disperse protesters and arrested several journalists, the second time in less than a week the group used heavy-handed tactics to break up a demonstration in the Afghan capital of Kabul, the Washington Post reported.

The demonstrators had gathered outside the Pakistan embassy to accuse Islamabad of aiding the Taliban’s assault on northern Panjshir province. The Taliban said Monday they seized the province -- the last not in their control -- after their blitz through Afghanistan last month.

The Taliban want good relations with all countries in the world, including the U.S., Mujahed told reporters. He called the cabinet a “diverse group” that included a variety of ethnicities and backgrounds, although no women were chosen.

“We’re not a tribal force,” Mujahed said, adding that the group wanted good relations with the U.S. despite the war. “We hope all countries in the world will recognize the legitimacy of our government and our Islamic regime.”

## Over 400 militants lay down arms in Dara’a after truce deal with Syrian army: military source

More than 400 militants holed up in Syria’s southwestern province of Dara’a have accepted to lay down weapons and renounce violence following breaches of a truce agreement they reached with the national army last month.

A Syrian military source, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Russia’s Sputnik news agency on Monday that a total of 430 militants, who had violated the truce in Dara’a al-Balad neighborhood, accepted to regulate their status and handed over 105 pieces of weaponry at a reconciliation center in the area.

The militants began to arrive at the reconciliation center from 10:00 a.m. local time (0700 GMT) as the deadline set by Syrian government authorities for militants to accept the ceasefire conditions was

expiring.

The Syrian army had pledged to resume its counter-terrorism military operations following the deadline.

Under the truce deal, reached on August 14, the militants were obliged to hand over their weapons, and government forces were due to install checkpoints in nine districts of Dara’a al-Balad.

All militants who refused to lay down weapons were to depart for the north of Syria or Jordan by buses provided by government authorities.

Back in 2018, Syrian army troops, backed by Russian and Iran, managed to establish control over Dara’a Province, which is bordered by Jordan to the south and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights to the west.

## We now feel the consequences of marginalizing the Taliban

By Hujjatullah Zia

As the world is coming to grips with the sudden change of regime in Afghanistan, it is important to reflect on what led to this point. So far analyses have focused on the corruption and weakness of the Afghan state set up after the U.S.-NATO invasion of the country in 2001 and on the disarray in the Afghan armed forces.

But it is important to consider another aspect of the story -- the Taliban’s refusal to negotiate with the Afghan government, which it saw as illegitimate and its determination to wipe it out. Why was the group so relentless on this?

Much of it has to do with decisions that were made mainly by the invading Western forces and their Afghan allies in the 2000s to exclude the Taliban from the nation-building experiment they launched.

In December 2001, a few weeks after the Western forces and their Afghan allies took Kabul from the Taliban, a conference was held in Bonn, Germany to set up the new Afghan government. Attendees included the Northern Alliance, which fought alongside the Western allies, the Peshawar Group of Pakistan-exiled Afghans Pashtuns, the Rome Group of royalists, and the Cyprus Group of Afghans with ties to Iran.

The Taliban, however, was not invited and decisions about the first steps of building the Afghan state were taken without it.

Then in 2002, an emergency Loya Jirga (Grand National assembly) was convened, where a transitional government led by Hamid Karzai was elected. The Taliban once again was not invited.

In 2003, a Constitutional Commission was set up to start the constitution drafting process, including public consultations, but again the Taliban was excluded from these

proceedings. The constitution was passed by a Loya Jirga in 2004, with its provisions guaranteeing women’s fundamental rights and liberties, reflecting democratic principles and expressing the commitment of the new government to the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The consequences of the Taliban’s exclusion from the post-2001 power arrangement have been significant.

The Taliban could neither tolerate this marginalization from the social and political decision-making in Kabul, nor reconcile its headline ideology with constitutional rights and liberties.

Feeling sidelined at the national and international level, the Taliban regrouped and relaunched offensive attacks

against the Afghan government and its Western allies. In the following years, the Taliban inflicted heavy casualties and unnecessary pain and suffering on the Afghan people. It showed no signs of moderating its headline position on religion.

One could argue that the inclusion of the Taliban in the Bonn Conference would have been problematic and the Northern Alliance would have sought to block it, while families of Taliban victims would have protested it.

Taliban presence in the Loya Jirga deliberating the constitution could also have been a barrier to approving the provisions granting women their rights and liberties and protecting human rights in general.

Nonetheless, it is possible that the inclusion of the Taliban in the 2001 administration in some form would

have been viable and that would have had a positive impact. The U.S. and its NATO allies could have pressured the Northern Alliance to accept it, conditioning their financial support on the establishment of an inclusive government -- the way they are doing now with the Taliban.

The Taliban could also have been consulted in the constitution-drafting process. In fact, their representatives would not have stood out that much in the Loya Jirga that passed the constitution since there were a number of conservative figures and religious clerics, including Abdul Rab Rasul Sayyaf, Burhanuddin Rabbani, and Skeikh Asif Mohsini in attendances, who were also insisting on their conservative interpretations of Islamic law.

In their defeat, the Taliban leaders may have been more likely to be flexible on certain issues and more likely to engage in dialogue to resolve disagreements. The whole inclusion process may have moderated their religious views and politics and made their stance less stringent. It may also have reflected on their supporters within the Afghan population, which would not have felt as excluded and marginalized by the new Afghan administration.

Some officials have already expressed regret for not making the Taliban part of the political transition in Afghanistan. As Zalmay Khalilzad, the U.S. special envoy for Afghanistan, wrote in his book, The Envoy: “The delegates represented Afghanistan’s diversity, but the Taliban were not present. In retrospect, some have suggested that we erred in not encouraging the Taliban to participate in the Emergency Loya

Jirga.”

Unfortunately, no serious efforts were made to reach out to the Taliban until it was too late. Having made spectacular territorial gains in the past five years, the Taliban negotiated from the position of strength, not of weakness in the US-Taliban and intra-Afghan talks, and its leadership was, therefore, much more uncompromising.

After returning triumphant to Kabul 20 years after being expelled by a foreign force, the Taliban is now approaching other factions from the position of power. One of the Taliban’s main negotiators is Anas Haqqani, a leader of the Haqqani Network, which is still on the US list of terrorist groups. Haqqani is a headline figure and is unlikely to make compromises on the application of a conservative interpretation of Islamic law.

Apart from the hardliners in the leadership, who are pressing for Islamic law, the group’s rank and file, as well as supporters among the civilian population, are also expecting a religiously conservative regime to be established. Not doing so would risk alienating a lot of these people, which is not something the Taliban leadership can afford to do at the onset of its government in Afghanistan.

The only course of action left for the US and its Western allies is to try to pressure the Taliban by withholding international recognition or financial assistance. How successful that would be remains to be seen. However, it is for now clear that women’s and minority rights as well as democratic principles will suffer a setback in Afghanistan.

Afghans have paid a heavy price for the miscalculations and failed policies pursued by Kabul and Washington in the past two decades. This is the sad outcome of the Taliban’s exclusion from the post-2001 administration.

(Source: Aljazeera)

## U.S. airstrikes killed nearly ‘50,000 civilians’ in ‘war on terror’

Most of the civilian deaths happened during the U.S.-led occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq. The figure by a war monitoring group only refers to civilians killed by warplanes and drones.

At least 22,000 civilians have been killed by U.S.-led airstrikes in a number of countries in West Asia as well as Africa over the last two decades of the “forever wars” according to research conducted by a conflict monitor.

According to Airwars, since 2001, when the U.S.-led the so-called war on terror after the attacks in New York and Washington DC, U.S. airstrikes likely killed at least 22,679 civilians, but the number could be as many as 48,308.

Ahead of the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, the London-based organization, Airwars released its estimate of civilian

deaths. Airwars has warned that the real figure could be as high as nearly 50,000 civilians.

The statistics take into account civilians that had been killed during the occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq, in addition to bombing campaigns against alleged Daesh targets in Iraq and Syria. The figure also includes airstrikes in Libya, Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen.

The deadliest year, when looking at the minimum total death toll, was 2003 when at least 5,529 civilians were reported to have been killed by alleged U.S. strikes, almost all during the invasion of Iraq.

The next deadliest year was 2017, during Donald Trump’s first year as U.S. President when at least 4,931 civilians were likely killed, the vast majority in alleged American-led coalition bombing of Iraq and Syria. During Trump’s four-year term



in office, he loosed the restrictions on conducting airstrikes, giving the option to conduct airstrikes to lower personnel in the military chain of command, who chose when out more attacks without the need for permission from senior commanders.

Trump has revoked a policy requiring U.S. intelligence officials to publish the number of civilians killed in drone strikes outside of war zones.

2017 saw deadliest year with the

maximum possible death toll. Airwars said that as many as 19,623 civilians were killed by U.S. or coalition strikes that year against alleged Daesh targets.

The first seven months of the Trump administration resulted in more civilian deaths than under the entire previous eight years. Researchers at the time pointed to an alarming pattern with the “frequent killing of entire families”. During that period war monitoring groups were deeply concerned about the fatality numbers and publicly warned the increasing trend of civilian casualties was unlikely to diminish.

The vast majority of civilian harm, 97 percent, occurred during the occupation of Iraq between 2003 and 2009, the 20-year-long occupation of Afghanistan, and the bombing campaign against alleged Daesh targets.

The U.S. Department of Defense refuses

to publish the full counts of civilian casualties. The report from Airwars cited data from several sources; these include the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, Bureau of Investigative Journalism, The Nation, and the volunteer project Iraq Body Count.

In recent days, officials have claimed that the U.S. military goes to great lengths to avoid civilian casualties during operations. Military experts say U.S. airstrikes by warplanes or drones rarely strike terrorists but rather tend to kill civilians instead. Analysts say terrorists such as Daesh cannot be wiped out from the skies and can only be defeated by ground troops on the battlefield.

When asked about obtaining data for the report, an official with U.S. Central Command told Airwars that “the information you request is not immediately on-hand in our office as it spans between

multiple operations/campaigns within a span of between 18 and 20 years”.

Critics argue the result of civilian casualties from U.S. airstrikes only radicalizes the local population. In effect having the opposite purpose of killing terrorists, locals join terror extremist groups.

U.S. President Joe Biden has vowed in recent days that just because U.S. ground troops have withdrawn from Afghanistan, it does not mean that America has ceased pursuing Daesh and other terrorist groups, leaving open the possibility of more airstrikes and the devastation that typically follows.

Iran’s President Ebrahim Raësi recently said the United States must be held accountable for supporting terrorism fomented by the Daesh Takfiri group and other new forms of terrorism.



## Virus causes \$119 million damage to tourism earnings of Iranian province



From page 1 ► Late in July, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts announced Iran's tourism industry had suffered a loss of some 320 trillion rials (\$7.6 billion at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The pandemic has also ruined more than 44,000 jobs in the once budding travel sector of the country," the ministry said in a press release.

"As a result of the outbreak of the coronavirus in Iran and the subsequent unemployment and financial losses, accommodation centers suffered the most. These statistics cover the period between February 2020 and the spring of 2021."

Over the mentioned time, Iran's accommodation centers took some 280 trillion rials (\$6.6 billion) hit from the virus, while over 21,000 workers in these centers lost their jobs. Moreover, tourism agencies suffered over 10 trillion rials (\$238 million) of damage with 6,000 people getting unemployed people since the outbreak.

In terms of employment and financial losses, tourism complexes, eco-lodges, and tour guides are also among the most affected groups in the tourism industry, according to data provided by the ministry of tourism.

### Government care and support packages

Last October, the deputy tourism chief, Vali Teymouri, announced that a new support package was approved to pay loans to businesses affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

Depending on the type and activity of the businesses, they could benefit from at least 160 million rials (\$3,800 at the official rate of 42,000 rials) to nine billion rials (\$214,000) of bank loans with a 12-percent interest rate, he said.

The loans would be allocated to tourist guides, travel agencies, tourism transport companies, tourism educational institutions, eco-lodges and traditional accommodations, hotels, apartment hotels, motels, and guesthouses as well as traditional accommodation centers, tourism complexes, and recreational centers, the official explained.

Teymouri in September pointed to the 1.3 million tourism workers in the country, who are facing several issues due to the coronavirus crisis and said "This number, in addition to their households, includes a significant population that makes a living through tourism, who are needed to be considered in ministry's decisions."

Back in August, Teymouri announced that the tourism ministry had approved a total budget of 4,920 billion rials (over \$117 million) to support corona-affected tourism businesses, covering as much as 36,000 people working in the tourism sector.

### Tourism industry in a critical situation

Former tourism minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan in October warned that Iran's cultural heritage and tourism would be in a critical situation if the crises caused by the outbreak of the coronavirus continue.

Last August, the tourism minister said that the coronavirus pandemic should not bring traveling to a complete standstill. "Corona is a fact, but can the virus stop tourism? Certainly not. For us, the coronavirus is a new experience in dealing with crises that teaches tourism experts around the world how to deal with such a disaster, and thankfully governments are turning this into an opportunity for better planning."

Optimistic forecasts, however, expect Iran to achieve a tourism boom after coronavirus contained, believing its impact would be temporary and short-lived for a country that ranked the third fastest-growing tourism destination in 2019.

## The provincial tourism directorate has made various efforts such as arranging low-interest loans to help compensate the losses.

## Ganjali Khan complex evokes everyday life in Safavid-era Iran

TEHRAN - With its lavishly decorated structures and abundant wax dummies clad in indigenous outfits, the historical Ganjali Khan complex evokes traditions, culture, and everyday life in Iran during the Safavid era.

Located in Kerman, southern Iran, the complex is composed of a madrasa, a mosque, a caravanserai, a bathhouse, or hammam, a water reservoir, and a labyrinth bazaar, all centered on a large public square.

Covering an area of 11,000 square meters, the compound was built upon the order of Ganjali Khan who governed Kerman and some neighboring areas during the late 16th to early 17th centuries under Safavid Shah Abbas I (r. 1571-1629).

With an entrance at the northeastern corner of the square, the mosque though is small in size enjoys elaborate tilework and arabesque designs. It boasts a gilt-pattern inner dome and honeycomb windows.

The hammam has been repurposed into an anthropology-like museum in which wax dummies illustrate the workings of a traditional bathhouse. There is also a display case of antique washing utensils.

The bazaar is ornamented with exquisite plasterwork and wall paintings that are well-preserved although they are roughly 400 years old.

The caravanserai is based on the four-ivan typology, with guest rooms constructed around a courtyard. Shah Abbas I (1571-1629) is credited with building a network of caravanserais across Iran during the much later Safavid dynasty.

### Under tourists' eyes:

Here is a selection of comments that visitors to the complex have posted to TripAdvisor, one of the most popular travel websites in the world:

### must see'

One of the biggest and most beautiful Bathhouses in Iran with multi rooms, hot room, chill room, VIP room that was reserved for the governor at the time, toilettries, Hejamat, and dressing room. All displayed very nicely.

(Shadgerami from Nikolaevsk-na-Amure, Russia)

### 'Hive of activity'

The main bazaar for the city of Kerman the complex houses shops & stalls selling all kinds of wares from exotic spices through copper works, a host of antiques, knock-off goods of every shape & size, and even knives & knuckledusters!

For a break from the crowds pop into the restored bathhouse where travelers stopped for much-needed cleansing after a hard day on the Silk Road. Recently



opened too is the women's bathhouse behind with displays of the colorful costumes sported by the women that congregated here from all over the Persian Empire. (Paula Griffin from London)

### 'Interesting waxworks, fascinating tiles'

The waxworks clearly illustrate the activities which took place in the old hammam: including a rather chubby chap being cleaned! However, the tiles are beautiful and surprisingly include figures of both men and women. (Jane 9758 from the UK)

### '17th century complex, well preserved'

Within the bazaar, it contains a caravanserai and a hammam. Beautifully preserved, the hammam shows through life-size mannequins the life in a bath in Safavid times. Recommended. (Stefano M. from Malaysia)



jade, black stone, etc. In the field of arts, next to reliefs of Persepolis and engravings such as Naqsh-e Rostam, Taq-e Bostan, stone carving has mostly been applied to make utensils.

From seven thousand years ago until today, kinds of stone such as Mica have been used to make cooking utensils such as pot, etc. Mica stone containing high levels of iron compo-

nents is very soft and easily cut into desired shapes. Another characteristic of Mica stone is that the more it is heated, the stronger and more durable it gets. By the art of stone carving, kinds of utensils, lamp stands, photo frames, chess pieces, vases, sugar cube holders, and other applicable and decorative objects can be made. Important centers of stone carving of Iran are Mashhad, Shahr-e Rey, Qom, and Kerman. Today carvers use raw stones and cut them into desired pieces. The extra parts are cut away by chisel and hammer. Then the piece is cut by smaller chisels. Then the piece is polished first by a file, and later by an electric grinding machine that works faster. In Mashhad, the utensils are polished with oil and painted almost in black. Then motifs like

TEHRAN - If you're drawn to places where echoes of ancient civilizations resonate down through the ages, Iran could be your thing.

Furthermore, the country is the jewel in Islam's crown, combining glorious architecture with a warm-hearted welcome.

Here are eight reasons to help you overcome your doubts!

### Amazing hospitality

There is a Persian saying which goes: "A guest is loved by God". As a tourist, you will sense the kindness of Iranian people toward foreigners.

The nation loves to receive you warmly in their country and you will constantly get invited to people's houses while traveling in Iran!

### Safe journey

Unlike what some media outlets are trying to portray, Iran is among the safest countries for travelers and it is not just an empty claim.

Almost any tourist who travels to Iran is astonished by the safety of this country.

The 2019 Travel Risk Map launched by global risk experts International SOS in collaboration with Control Risks, named Iran is as safe as a majority of European countries when it comes to travel security.

### Highly affordable prices

Whether you want to travel to Iran economically or lavishly, there will be limitless options. You can either accommodate in a 300-year-old luxurious palace or you can try backpacking and hitchhiking.

# Eight strong reasons to visit Iran



There is a Persian saying which goes: "A guest is loved by God".

In both cases, you will spend a lesser amount of money in comparison to other similar destinations.

### Time travel is possible!

The ancient land has always been intertwined with very ancient his-

tory and its historical sites, myths, and legends excite any traveler.

Experts believe from the magnificent Persepolis to the oldest human settlements, all sites in Iran will bring you a sense of awe.

## Laser-cleaning utilized as pilot project by Iranian archaeologists



"Utilization of this technology along with other common cleaning methods plays an important role in completing and improving metal protection operations, and this method can be used in treatment to prevent further crushing due to not imposing external mechanical pressure on very brittle and modified objects."

Laser cleaning is an eco-friendly process used to remove rust, paint, oxide, and other contaminants from metal surfaces. Because of its efficiency, it is being used in an increasing number of applications.

Known in classical times as Ecbatana, Hamedan was one of the ancient world's greatest cities. Pitifully little remains from antiquity, but significant parts of the city center are given over to excavations. Ecbatana was the capital of Media and subsequently a summer residence of the Achaemenian kings who ruled Persia from 553 to 330 BC.

About 1220, Hamedan was captured by the sweeping army of Mongol invaders. In 1386 it was sacked by Timur (Tamerlane), a Turkic conqueror, and the inhabitants were massacred. It was partly restored in the 17th century and subsequently changed hands often between Iranian ruling houses and the Ottomans.

## Intl. conference to explore excavations in southeastern Iran

TEHRAN - An online conference focusing on the history and archaeological sites of Iran's Sistan-Baluchestan province will be held from December 13 to 15.

Organized by the University of Zabol, the event titled "The 3rd International Conference on Archaeology of Southeastern Iran" is scheduled to bring together tens of archaeologists, historians, academia, and researchers from the Islamic republic and across the globe, CHTN reported on Tuesday.

The event will be addressing survey reports, regional and cross-regional interactions, history of arts, technology, and trade, multidisciplinary sciences, and archaeology in the Persian Gulf, according to organizers.

Sistan-Baluchestan is home to several distinctive archaeological sites and natural attractions, including two UNESCO World Heritage sites, namely Shahr-



e-Soukhteh (Burnt City) and Lut desert.

In ancient times, according to Encyclopedia Britannica, the Baluchistan region provided a land route to the Indus Valley and the Babylonian civilizations. The armies of Alexander the Great marched through Baluchistan in 326 BC on their way to the Hindu Kush and their return march in 325 experienced great hardships in the region's bar-

ren wastes.

For decades, Sistan-Baluchestan used to be shunned by potential foreign travelers. For mainstream Iranians, the name of Sistan-Baluchestan was conjuring up stories of drought, desiccated wetlands, and dust storms. On the international scale, foreigners may consider it reminiscent of the big red blot on the Iran safety map.

## Historical bridge, madrasa, fortress added to Iran national heritage list



TEHRAN - Seven historical structures including a bridge, madrasa, and a fortress, situated in Iran's Semnan province, have recently been added to the national list for cultural heritage.

Two hammams (public bathhouses), a kiln, and an oil workshop are other properties added to the prestigious list in a decree issued to the governor-general of the north-central

province by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, CHTN reported on Monday.

Experts say hammams in Iran were not only places for bathing and cleaning up. They had a social concept for people who gathered at these places weekly. It was a place where people talked with each other about their daily life and shared humor and news. There are still functional bathhouses in various Iranian cities but they do not have their social function anymore since most people have bathrooms in their homes due to the modern lifestyle.

Semnan is well placed to give swift access to both the Alborz Mountains and the vast Dasht-e Kavir desert, while still being an easy some 200km drive by expressway from Tehran. Since Sassanian times it has been a key stop on the Silk Road, attracting wealth and regular destruction in equal measure.



# 'End of coronavirus' in Iran by mid-Feb. next year

TEHRAN- The Iranian health minister has said public vaccination against the coronavirus will be completed by mid-February next year.

"God willing, injecting two doses of the vaccine and also the booster dose will be implemented by the Ten-Day Fajr (February 1-11, marking the victory anniversary of the 1979 Islamic Revolution)," Health Minister Bahram Einollahi said on Tuesday, Khabaronline reported.

In his August 11 televised address, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei suggested that containing the rapidly increasing wave of the Coronavirus is the first and foremost issue of the country.

Placing great emphasis on the fulfillment of duties and the implementation of decisions regarding the Coronavirus pandemic, Ayatollah



Khamenei said "the vaccine, whether imported or domestically produced, must be provided with double effort and in any way possible made available to all people."

"Fortunately, with the production of the domestic vaccine, its foreign import route is also paved, while before that, despite the payment for the vaccine, foreign sellers

failed to fulfill their commitments," the Leader said, urging officials to take importation and production of vaccine seriously.

Public vaccination against COVID-19 started in the country on February 9.

According to the Food and Drug Administration, 14 vaccines are being domestically developed in the country which are in different study phases.

Meanwhile, President Ebrahim Raisi has confirmed that 30 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine will be imported.

"All public and private sectors, real and legal persons, and individuals must be coordinated and unanimous to control the spread of this dangerous virus," Raisi said on August 14.

## Govt. supports private sector to establish innovation houses abroad

TEHRAN – The Vice Presidency for Science and Technology supports the establishment of innovation houses in other countries to develop the export of knowledge-based products, IRNA reported on Sunday.

Exporting technological products of Iranian knowledge-based companies is one of the important and key programs of the vice presidency for science and technology, and in this regard, three houses of innovation and technology were inaugurated in Kenya, China and Syria.

And countries like Turkey, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan are set to host the innovation houses in near future.

By supporting innovative ideas, holding technological and innovative events, the centers will be a platform for the development and promotion of Iranian knowledge-based companies, startups, and creative industries.

The centers are mainly formed with the investment and support of the private sector to provide the necessary infrastructure for their exports through the innovation houses.

In each center, the products of more than 50 knowledge-based and creative companies are presented, such as health and medicine, information technology, machinery, and equipment.

To this end, the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology supports 50 percent of operating costs in the first three years to pave the way for companies to establish innovation centers.



Since the private sector is tasked with the management of these houses, two main services are provided to the companies located in the centers; as well as hardware services, workspace and software services, or marketing and market research.

The houses also host business meetings to accelerate international export activities and ultimately create new export markets for knowledge-based products.

Mehdi Ghalehnoei, an official with the vice presidency for science and technology, said in February that last year, knowledge-based companies gained about \$800 million in revenue from export, and next year (March 21), it seems to reach up to \$2 billion.

Africa, neighboring countries, Southeast Asia and Eurasia are our export target priorities, and we hope to create Iranian innovation and technology in all these areas, he added.

## Houses of innovation and technology have so far been inaugurated in Kenya, China and Syria.



From page 1 ► In the absence of aggressive intervention, the number of premature deaths resulting from ambient air pollution is estimated to be on track to increase by more than 50 percent by 2050.

Society bears a high cost of air pollution due to the negative impacts on the economy, work productivity, healthcare costs, and tourism, among others. Hence, the economic benefits of investing in air pollution control cannot be overestimated, and it must be understood that there

is also an economic rationale to act and that cost-effective solutions exist to address air pollution.

Poor air quality is a challenge in the context of sustainable development for all countries, in particular in cities and urban areas in developing countries, with levels of air pollution that are higher than the limits set out in the World Health Organization air quality guidelines.

Some air pollutants, such as black carbon, methane, and ground-level ozone, are also short-lived climate pollutants

and are responsible for a significant portion of air pollution-related deaths, as well as impacts on crops and hence food security, so their reduction has co-benefits for the climate.

When we talk about air pollution and its adverse effects on human health, the main factor to blame is particulate matter less than 2.5 microns, which are produced from carbon fuel, which is caused by burning coal, gasoline and diesel, due to the cars and widespread fires, according to the World Health Organization, particulate matter is responsible for more than 85 percent of air pollution-related deaths, so the best way to reduce air pollution is to eliminate these factors.

A series of measures were then identified and recommended to reduce air pollution, including replacing gasoline and diesel vehicles with electric vehicles, eliminating uncontrolled diesel engines, preventing the burning of crops and farms, and moving to renewable energy.

Some countries have largely succeeded in reducing air pollution in their cities

## Innovation in Iran developed rapidly in 5 years

Knowledge-based companies and creative startups have grown over the past five years, and Iran has risen 45 places in the Global Innovation Index, according to the UNESCO 2021 Report.

The Global Innovation Index in Iran from 2015 to 2019 has risen from 106 to 61 with continuous improvement, showing 45 steps growth.

The development of accelerators and innovation centers over the last five years has led to a rapid increase in startups and knowledge-based companies.

Between 2014 and 2017, exports of knowledge-based goods grew by a factor of five, before slumping in 2018 after the U.S. withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), commonly referred to as the nuclear deal, and re-imposed sanctions.

The report states that innovation in Iran has developed rapidly over the past five years, and by the end of last year, 49 accelerators and 113 innovation centers had provided services to start-ups with the participation of the private sector.

## Knowledge-based companies

Despite sanctions putting pressure on the country, a unique opportunity was provided for business development and the activity of knowledge-based companies in the country.

Currently, over 7,000 knowledge-based companies are active in the country, manufacturing diverse products to meet the needs of the domestic market while saving large amounts of foreign currency.

The fields of aircraft maintenance, steel, pharmaceuticals, and medical equipment, oil, and gas are among the sectors that researchers in technology companies have engaged in, leading to import reduction.

## Clean air for blue skies

by applying these recommendations. The city of Shenzhen, China, for example, switched its public transportation using diesel fuel to a fleet of electric buses, which reduced carbon dioxide and PM 2.5 emissions by 48 percent.

Iran, along with other countries, tried to address air pollution, especially in metropolitan areas. Accordingly, the Clean Air Law was approved by the Majlis (Iranian parliament) in 2017.

Masoud Tajrishi, deputy head of the Department of Environment (DOE), has said that 50 percent of diesel production is standardized when sulfur is less than 50 PPM, and the other 50 percent is non-standard, the sulfur content is over 5,000 PPM, so less fuel production causes less air pollution.

Another cause of air pollution in a metropolis like Tehran is the high con-

sumption of gas in houses, which causes them to use fuel oil or diesel for the power plants and industries. According to Tajrishi, each house consumes about 500-kilowatt hours of energy per square meter, while Europeans consume 200-kilowatt hours, and their policy is to decrease this to 50 kilowatts by 2025.

The clean air law clearly shows the ways out of this problem, but unfortunately, it is not implemented. The DOE opposes the burning of fuel oil and has repeatedly stated that he stated, but the implementation of the Clean Air Law is the duty of the Ministry of Interior.

The problem is that the implementation of the Clean Air Law is not the priority of the responsible bodies, he lamented.

## Pollution choking Tehran

According to the statistics published by Air Quality Control Company, the Teh-

## Clean Air Law was approved by the Majlis (Iranian parliament) in 2017.

# SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER 8, 2021

Straight Truth  
TEHRAN TIMES

7

## IRCS to vaccinate refugees residing in Iran



TEHRAN – The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) will vaccinate refugees residing in the country against coronavirus soon.

Following the correspondence, UNICEF would provide us with a million doses of vaccines to immunize foreign nationals residing in Iran, Karim Hemmati, head of IRCS said.

The Red Crescent will also consider different resources for vaccinating foreign nationals, he announced, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

The Red Crescent Society has imported 18 shipments of vaccines so far, and the last (18th) consignment, containing five million doses, was imported through Imam Khomeini Airport on Sunday.

## UN appreciates Iran for vaccinating foreign nationals

On May 24, Indrika Ratwatte, Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), said that Iran has generously considered refugees over the age of 75 for vaccination against coronavirus, appreciating Iran for over four decades of hosting refugees.

## Iran hosting world's fourth-largest refugee community

Iran is hosting the world's fourth-largest refugee community. The country has generously hosted approximately 1 million refugees for the past 30 years. The majority, which mainly came from Afghanistan and Iraq, live in urban areas.

Approximately 31,000 of the most vulnerable refugees living in 20 settlements located throughout the country.

Based on the latest statistics, over 3 million Afghans are living in Iran – some 780,000 Afghan refugees, over 2 million undocumented Afghans, and another 600,000 Afghan passport-holders with Iranian visas.

However, in light of the pandemic, all refugees, even those undocumented, benefited from access to free primary health services and free COVID-19 related testing, treatment, and hospitalization, just like Iranian nationals.

The same happened for the vaccination when the country has generously considered refugees over the age of 75 for vaccination against coronavirus.

In order to support the refugees living in the country, the seventh phase of the health insurance plan will cover 120,000 vulnerable refugees through a memorandum of understanding signed between the Health Insurance Organization and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

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

## UNHCR has appreciated Iran for generously hosting refugees for the past four decades.

## COVID-19 UPDATES ON SEPTEMBER 7

New cases	27,138
New deaths	635
Total cases	5,184,124
Total deaths	111,892
New hospitalized patients	3,914
Patients in critical condition	7,606
Total recovered patients	4,422,740
Diagnostic tests conducted	29,677,880
Doses of vaccine injected	30,338,254

## ENGLISH IN USE

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## 3 million Iranians have organ donor cards

Some three million Iranians have organ donor cards and some 10 percent have signed online consent forms for organ donation, Farahnaz Sadeq-Beigi, head of organ procurement program in Masih Dane-shvari Hospital, a national research institute for tuberculosis and lung diseases, has said.

Traffic accidents are the main reasons of brain deaths in Iran, she said, lamenting that out of 4,000 brain deaths reported by forensics only 1,000 donate their organs.

## ۳ میلیون نفر در کشور کارت اهدا عضو دریافت کردند

فرحناز صادق بیگی مسئول واحد فراهم آوری اعضا بیمارستان مسیح دانشوری اظهارداشت: تاکنون ۳ میلیون نفر از افراد کشور کارت اهداء عضو دریافت کرده اند و ۱۰ درصد از افراد کشور در سامانه های مختلفی که در جهت اعلام رضایت در زمینه اهدای عضو راه اندازی شده ثبت نام کرده اند.

وی تصادفات رانندگی را شایع ترین علت مرگ مغزی دانست و گفت: سالیانه ۴ هزار مورد مرگ مغزی در کشور ثبت می شود که سال گذشته تنها ۱۰۰۰ نفر از این افراد قابلیت اهدای عضو را داشته اند.



