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## Opinion

### Managerial conflicts hurt Iranian football clubs

By Masoud Hossein

TEHRAN – Esteghlal and Tractor football teams failed to keep their AFC Champions League dream alive after being defeated by Saudi Arabian teams in Round of 16. Both teams are suffering from repercussions of mismanagement over the past months.

A heavily revamped Esteghlal met Al Hilal, while the side’s top scorer in the group stage Cheick Diabate and talented young playmaker Mehdi Ghaedi had left the team. Esteghlal missed more than 10 players and encountered the Saudi giants with 10 newcomers.

Esteghlal coach Farhad Majidi and the team general manager Ahmad Madadi should have found a way to bury the hatchet with each other in the past months. The quarrel, in my opinion, cost Esteghlal a failure in the prestigious competition.

Esteghlal’s defeat ended their bid for a first Asian club title since 1991.

Esteghlal, as one of the greatest Iranian football teams, have not won a league title since 2013 and their numerous fans are dissatisfied with the way of their club have done during the last years.

There have been a lot of managerial changes in the club since last year and the inconsistency caused the club bidding farewell to the quarter-finals.

Tractor’s situation is almost like Esteghlal. They appointed their coach just days before the important match against Al Nassr. [► Page 3](#)

## Report

### Let’s clean up the world: “We are the first one to be hurt”

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN – Waste production is an integral part of urban life, which is turning into a huge problem that will first and most hurt those who produced them. So that, on World Cleanup Day, let’s rid the planet of trash.

Although urbanization has affected human society and created many problems in both developed and underdeveloped countries, the developed ones have a plan for waste management and recycle a large part of it, and underdeveloped countries leave waste in nature, which will be the detriment of the environment and their health.

Per capita waste production in European countries is 300 to 350 grams, and in Iran, it is 700 grams and sometimes up to one kilogram, which unfortunately a very small part of it is separated and recycled.

With an average per capita of 700 grams to 1 kg, Iranians produce more than 50,000 tons of waste per day, which is basically twice the world standard.

This situation is worse in the capital city of Tehran so that the per capita waste production in [► Page 7](#)

# Nothing Left to Lose



## Iran seriously pursuing legal act against Gen. Soleimani assassination

TEHRAN — A special committee for legal and international investigation into the assassination of Iran’s top General Qassem Soleimani and his entourage was held on Tuesday at the presence of managers and representatives of relevant state and military agencies.

Iran’s Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian hosted the meeting of the follow-up committee related to the martyrdom of General Soleimani at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In the meeting, which was attended by the rep-

resentative of the esteemed family of General Soleimani and the managers and representatives of the relevant judicial, political, security, legal and military organizations, the attendees expressed their views regarding the follow-up of the case and reported on the performance of their respective agencies. They briefed others at the session on the latest developments and progress regarding the issue and its various dimensions and effects.

Amir Abdollahian noted that the memory of General Soleimani must be kept alive as a national and international anti-terrorism hero.

## Interview

### Western experience in Afghanistan was disappointing, Italian expert says

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN – Italian expert Pastori Gianluca is of the view that Western experience in Afghanistan was “disappointing.”

“Overall, the Western experience in Afghanistan was disappointing,” Gianluca tells the Tehran Times.

“The international community faced massive human and financial costs to reach only minimal results, possibly no result at all.”

He adds, “Many of the social and economic benefits gained in the past years will probably get lost in the future.”

Political analysts consider the Afghanistan case as an example of the West’s failure in exporting democracy and nation-building.

“The Afghan experience will probably deliver another fatal blow to the idea that it is somehow possible to export ‘Western-style’ [► Page 5](#)

## Iran to open trade center in Sulaymaniyah

TEHRAN – Iran is going to open a trade and permanent exhibition center in Sulaymaniyah city of Iraqi Kurdistan in the near future, the director-general of Iran’s Trade Promotion Organization (TPO)’s Office of Arabian and African Countries announced.

“The trade center and permanent exhibition of Iranian products and services will be opened and put into operation in the city of Sulaymaniyah in the Iraqi Kurdistan region in the near future, in line with the plans of the Trade Promotion Organization to facilitate the entry of Iranian companies and goods into the Iraqi market,” ILNA quoted Farzad Piltan as saying.

“This center has been established by the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran in collaboration with the Iran National Innovation Fund (INIF),” the official added.

According to Piltan, the Iranian Trade Center in Sulaymaniyah has the possibility of allocating space to Iranian companies and businesses to establish offices and exhibit their products, as well as providing marketing and export services and consulting.

The first floor of the center is dedicated to textiles, clothing, bags, and shoes; [► Page 4](#)

## Interview

### Japan provided Iran with 2.9 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines: Japanese expert

By M. A. Saki

TEHRAN – A senior research fellow at the Institute of Energy and Economics Japan says that Tokyo has collaborated with Iran in fighting COVID-19 by sending vaccines produced in Japan.

“Japan provided Iran with 2.9 million doses of COVID-19 vaccinations manufactured in Japan,” Sachi Sakanashi tells the Tehran Times.

Iran-Japan ties are a deep-rooted one that dates back to 92 years ago but it consolidated when Japan started to import oil from Iran in the 1950s.

As an oil-hungry island nation, Japan’s position on Iran has been fraught with inherent tensions. It has to balance relations with Iran and the United States.

“U.S. sanctions affected the oil trade greatly because the U.S. used it as a weapon to fight against Iran,” Sakanashi notes.

“It was as if the U.S. took Iranian oil as a hostage and demanded foreign banks to pay a ransom if they wanted to get it back.” [► Page 5](#)

## Win-win cooperation between Iran, SCO and obstacles ahead

TEHRAN – The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit is scheduled for September 16-17 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

It seems that one of the important agendas of the meeting is to examine the agreement of the member states to start the process of reviewing Iran’s membership in this important regional organization as a permanent member.

At the invitation of Tajik President Emomali Rakhmon and the current chairman of the SCO, Iranian President Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi scheduled to attend the summit. A political and economic delegation will accompany the president in the official visit to Tajikistan.

The Tajik Foreign Ministry said in an official statement on Tuesday that the Iranian and Tajik presidents would have a special meeting during the three-day visit to the country, which is in fact the first foreign visit by Raisi as the new Iranian president. The two sides would exchange views on a wide range of issues. The meeting will take place with the participation of other officials from the two countries.

At the end of the meeting, the two sides are expected to sign a joint statement on bilateral relations and a package of new cooperation documents, the Tajik Foreign Ministry added.

According to the plan, the president of Iran will probably meet and

consult with some of the participating presidents on the sidelines of the summit.

### Iran and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

The SCO was established in 2001 by the leaders of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan with the aim of balancing multilateral security, economic and cultural cooperation aiming at balancing U.S. and NATO influence in the region.

Mongolia joined the organization as an observer member in 2004 and a year later Iran, Pakistan, India and Afghanistan and Belarus joined the SCO as observers. [► Page 3](#)

## Report

TEHRAN – The U.S. chaotic and disorderly withdrawal from Afghanistan has created seismic effects mostly felt by the Saudis along with other U.S. allies in the region who are now deeply concerned about being abandoned by their unreliable American friends.

Former U.S. President Donald Trump, who had initiated the process of U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, took a jab at President Joe Biden on Friday. After inveighing against the way Biden handled the Afghan withdrawal, Trump warned of the U.S. ceasing to exist in the next few years.

In an interview with Newsmax, Trump said, “Our country has gone really downhill in the last eight months like nobody’s ever seen before.”

Trump went so far as to say that the U.S. existence would be at risk if Biden remained president.

“And you go to these elections coming up in ‘22 and ‘24 — we’re not going to have a country left,” Trump said. “The election was rigged, and we’re not going to have a country left in three years, I’ll tell you that.”

This may seem a little bit exaggerated for the Americans, but not for the U.S. allies in the region who seem to think that the American era is over.

The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan has sent these allies scrambling to find new security guarantors after concluding that America is no longer a reliable security partner.

A senior Persian Gulf Arab official voiced these concerns in remarks to Reuters on Monday that were widely circulated by Saudi and Emirati media, reflecting a sense of unease among Arab monarchies of the geopolitically important region.

“Afghanistan is an earthquake, a shattering, shattering earthquake and this is going to stay with us for a very, very long time,” the Arab official said on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the diplomacy.

“Can we really depend on an American security umbrella for the next 20 years? I think this is very problematic right now – really very problematic,” he added.

Persian Gulf Arab allies of the United States find the way that U.S. foreign policy appears to oscillate with “180-degree shifts” problematic and fears that militants will gain a foothold in Afghanistan, the official said.

The statements come days after the cancellation of the visit of U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin to Riyadh, which confirms the tense relations between the United States and Saudi Arabia, according to Al-Arab, a London-based newspaper close to the United Arab Emirates. [► Page 3](#)

[STAY UPDATED #AmericanDecline](#)



## Iran: JCPOA-related cameras are inactive

TEHRAN — Iran's new nuclear chief said on Wednesday that he had briefed MPs sitting on the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy about IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi's visit to Tehran.

Mohammad Eslami stressed that Iran's peaceful nuclear program should advance quite transparently with an observation of the parliamentary Strategic Action law.

"We should not allow ourselves to be accused of secrecy in the world," Eslami told reporters.

Eslami also said that the Westerners were obliged to provide technical assistance to Iran in nuclear industry under the 2015 nuclear deal (JCPOA), but this commitment was not fulfilled.

Under the JCPOA, Iran agreed to put limits on its nuclear activities in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions as well as technical assistance in the nuclear field. Based on the agreement, Iran also agreed to implement the additional protocol which allows intensive inspections.

"What Iran has been achieved in the field of nuclear technology is based on domestic research and development, and no one can stop this," emphasized Eslami, a graduate of civil engineering.

He emphasized that one of the important goals that is on the agenda under the leadership of the president is to increase production of nuclear electricity to 8,000 MW in an "immediate plan", so that people can see the benefits of the nuclear program and this must be done in the areas of health, environment and agriculture as well.

Noting that it is important for the International Atomic Energy Agency to act in accordance with the rules and regulations, the nuclear chief added, "The parliament emphasizes the implementation of the law on Strategic Action, so there is a room for negotiations and future meetings."

He also said that the main concern of the MPs was that the Atomic Energy Organization should show determination to advance the nuclear plans and that the realization of these plans should not be delayed under the influence of commotion launched by dissidents.

Eslami also said MPs insist that the AEOL must make efforts to use the capacity of in-



ternational organizations.

He added, "We must also create conditions for the parliament to ensure that the law is being implemented and that the advancement of nuclear programs affected by the harassment of others will not be stopped."

The AEOL director also said he rules of the IAEA and Safeguards entail monitoring of nuclear sites by the IAEA cameras.

He said the IAEA is monitoring the nuclear activities of all countries that signed the NPT.

"This continuity of awareness of the nuclear procedure is done all over the world, in addition to the obligations that Iran owes under the Safeguards. We must be transparent," Eslami pointed out.

According to the AEOL chief, during the recent terrorist operations, a number of the IAEA cameras were damaged and this issue led to two extremely "harsh" and "destructive" reports by the IAEA.

In order to clear up the ambiguities, he said, a meeting was held with the IAEA director general and "firstly, we are sure that with the achievements of this meeting, there are no ambiguities regarding Iran's peaceful nuclear program for the IAEA."

"Secondly," he added, "We will not continue the JCPOA obligations, which according to the law of the parliament should not continue."

According to the Strategic Action plan passed by the parliament in December 2020 the AEOL is obliged to expedite nuclear activities such as installing advanced centrifuges, increase the level of nuclear enrichment to 20 percent, don't allow inspections beyond Safeguards agreement, etc.

Eslami confirmed that the General Assembly of the IAEA will be held next week and he will participate in it.

TEHRAN — Speaking at the seasonal meeting of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Iran's envoy to the Vienna-based IAEA elaborated on Iran's position on Wednesday.

Below is the full text of Kazem Gharibabadi's speech at the board meeting:

Let me begin, Madam Chair, with thanking you, the Director General and his team in the Secretariat whose efforts made it possible for us to hold this meeting in a hybrid format.

Madam Chair,

The United States initially violated UNSCR 2231, by unilaterally withdrawing from the JCPOA and adopting the failed "maximum pressure" policy and re-imposing sanctions to directly and adversely affect the normalization of trade and economic relations with Iran, thus, made it impossible for Islamic Republic of Iran to continue to implement its commitments under the JCPOA. Lifting of sanctions effectively, constitute the essential basis of Iran's consent to be bound by the provisions of the deal and thus the violations of the US rendered those parts of the deal void and effectively futile.

Unfortunately these concerns were not addressed meaningfully by EU/E3. They neither complied with their commitments nor provided practical solutions in order to rectify the violation of the deal. Now, more than three years have passed since the illegal withdrawal of U.S from the deal, and only in December 2020, the Parliament of the Islamic Republic of Iran passed a law which required the Government to stop the implementation of all verification and monitoring activities beyond Iran's Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement (CSA), including the provisional implementation of the Additional Protocol (AP). The requirements envisaged in the law were not met in the appropriate time frame and as a result, the government of Iran was obliged to implement the law and the remedial measures therein.

Madam Chair,

I note with regret and consternation the statements of some JCPOA participants and European states. It is as if they misremember the fact that it was Iran who fully complied with its commitments under the deal while, due to the U.S outlaw behavior and actions and EU/E3's miserable negligence, was not and still is not benefiting from it. Apparently, they intend to displace the victim with the outlaw perpetrator. It is regrettable that European states are still unwilling to condemn the illegal unilateral withdrawal of U.S

## Envoy: Iran does not want 'negotiations for negotiations'



and re-imposition of its sanctions, which are the sole cause of all these problems, and to urge U.S to resume implementing its commitments and lift its sanctions imposed against Iranian nation, yet, presumptuously request Iran to implement its commitments under the deal.

I would like to re-emphasize on this point that until the sanctions on Iran are not removed, no one should expect more forbearance from Iran. Our nuclear activities, including enrichment at different levels and production of metallic based uranium fuel are completely peaceful, in line with our rights under the NPT, and are under the safeguards monitoring and verification of the Agency. I sincerely advise these countries to abandon scapegoating and start rectifying their failure in implementing their commitments. Iran has fulfilled completely, in past 3 years, its share of prudence and constructiveness.

Madam Chair,

Iran has engaged seriously and meaningfully in negotiations with the JCPOA participants to address the issues resulting from the U.S withdrawal. In this framework, as it is stated by our president and minister of foreign affairs, Iran is of the view that the negotiations should be result oriented. It is important that the outcome of these efforts ensure that all sanctions are lifted in an effective and verifiable man-

ner, we do not want to face, once again, the catastrophe in which the US withdraws from the agreement or abuses the mechanisms in the JCPOA and violates all of its commitments therein while Iran is in full compliance with the provisions of the deal.

While the former U.S administration unlawfully sacrificed well-established principle of international law, namely Pacta Sunt Servanda, on the altar of its self-righteousness, the new administration has not yet rectified this irresponsible behavior in order to alleviate its destructive outcomes.

It is yet to be observed whether the current U.S administration is serious enough and ready to abandon the United States' addiction to use unilateral coercive measures, respect international law, implement its sanctions lifting commitments in a full and effective manner and take all necessary decisions that this might entail. It is crucial that the US stop violating its obligations under the deal and the UNSC Resolution 2231 without further delay and any pre-conditions.

Needless to say, that Iran's commitments under the deal are beyond its obligations and therefore, implementation of remedial measures by Islamic Republic of Iran under its rights enshrined in the deal, is not hampering those obligations. In this vein, Director General's report that

the Agency's verification and monitoring activities have been seriously undermined, should be seen in its appropriate context that is related to the obligations beyond CSA.

In this context, it should be noted that the Director General's statement in his report regarding "Iran's failure to respond to the Agency's requests for access to its monitoring equipment is seriously compromising the Agency's technical capability to maintain continuity of knowledge" and requesting Iran to rectify the situation, is not related to the safeguards obligations, since it is in the realm of implementation of the JCPOA which Iran suspended it based on its rights under paragraphs 26 and 36 of the deal. Furthermore, data recording was a political decision by Iran to facilitate, including inter alia, the political talks and to help its success and should not be considered as Iran's obligation in relation with the Agency. Continuation or discontinuation of recordings have nothing to do with Iran's Safeguards obligations. Undoubtedly any decision to be taken by Iran in this regard would only be based on its political considerations and the Agency cannot and should not consider it as one of its entitlements.

In the same vein, while one of the Agency's equipment have been destroyed in a sabotage act in one of the AEOL workshops, it is regrettable and puzzling that the Agency is requesting Iran to locate its remnants and to provide additional information as to the reasons for their absence, without setting out its position regarding acts of sabotage, as it is required to do so by many General Conference and General Assembly resolutions. The Agency should, alongside taking care of its inspectors, equipment and verification activities, fulfill its responsibilities and obligations with respect to terrorist sabotage acts against civilian and peaceful nuclear facilities of its member states. It is imperative to address this issue in the discussions on nuclear security so as to find effective measures in order to tackle the problem of sabotages in nuclear facilities, and the Agency should decide to resolve this paradoxical approach and take clear position in this regard.

Nevertheless, I would like to inform the Board that due to Iran's goodwill during the Director General's visit on September 12, 2021, to Tehran and meeting with Vice-President of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Head of AEOL, the two sides agreed that the IAEA's inspectors will service the identified equipment and replace their storage media, which will be kept under joint IAEA and AEOL seals in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

## Parliament Article 90 Committee reviewing new cooperation agreement with IAEA: MP

TEHRAN - The Article 90 Committee of Parliament plans to hold a meeting with the new chief of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOL) in regard to the parliamentary approval on lifting sanctions, the committee spokesman has said.

Ali Khezrian said it was important for the parliament to take action in line with the parliamentary law, ISNA reported on Wednesday.

In December 2020 the Parliament ratified a bill called "Strategic Action Plan to Lift Sanctions and Protect Iranian Nation's Interests". The legislation was a response to the violation of the 2015 nuclear deal by the West.

The bill, endorsed by the Guardian Council, tasked the government to limit the IAEA inspections, increase the purity of nuclear enrichment and install advanced centrifuges.

Khezrian said that the law to lift sanctions was an important measure by the parliament regarding the 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"Since the beginning of the implementation of the law, the Article 90 Committee has seriously monitored the implementation of this law and is still determined to pursue it," Khezrian emphasized.

The MP noted that the Rouhani administration did not take the right approach to the nuclear case.

"Unfortunately, due to the mistakes made by the previous administration regarding the possible military dimensions (PMD), the political atmosphere against Iran has intensified," the MP remarked.

The parliamentarian went on to say that the Rouhani administration failed to close the PMD case despite extensive nuclear concessions and numerous claims, so one of the topics of discussion with new AEOL chief Mohammad Eslami in the committee would be the issue of the PMD.

Regarding the recent consensus between the AEOL and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Khezrian explained: "This agreement has been made within the framework of the ratification of the Supreme National Security Council, and the parliament will monitor the agreement based on the law on Strategic Action to Lift Sanctions."

Khezrian was referring to a joint statement

issued by the AEOL and the IAEA on Sunday in which the two sides "reaffirmed the spirit of cooperation and mutual trust".

Part of the joint statement says, "IAEA's inspectors are permitted to service the identified equipment and replace their storage media which will be kept under the joint IAEA and AEOL seals in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The way and the timing are agreed by the two sides."

Khezrian said the Article 90 Committee was following the interactions between Iran and the international nuclear watchdog with sensitivity.

"The committee will soon have a meeting with the new chief of the Atomic Energy Organization, and one of the topics of the meeting will be the organization's plan for interaction with the Agency and the recent agreement."

Khezrian said that the Raisi administration should make every effort for the full and accurate implementation of the parliamentary law.

Acting in accordance with the law was important for the parliament and the committee does not make a differentiation between administrations.

## Rouhani administration did not take the right approach to the nuclear case

Speaker of the Parliament Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf communicated the law to the administration for implementation on the same day, December 2, 2020.

What follows is the full text of the law:

Article 1 – In order to meet the nine key conditions, set by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution regarding the nuclear deal, the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran is obliged to produce and store at least 120 kilograms of enriched uranium with a 20-percent purity level every year for peaceful purposes, and start the process immediately after the ratification of this law. The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran is also required to fulfill, in full and without any delay, the country's demand for uranium enriched above 20% for peaceful purposes.

Article 2 – In order to implement Article 3 of the "Proportional and Reciprocal Action Plan for the Implementation of the JCPOA" passed on October 13, 2015, and to achieve the targeted capacity of 190,000 separative work units (SWUs), the Atomic Energy Orga-



nization of Iran is obliged to, immediately after the ratification of this law, start increasing the country's monthly enriched uranium output and enrichment capacity with different purity levels required for various peaceful purposes by at least 500 kg, and store and stockpile the enriched materials inside the country.

Article 3 – In order to accomplish the objective stipulated in the Article 29, the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran is obliged to start the operation of installing, injecting (uranium) gas, enrichment and stockpiling

of materials up to the purity level needed, with at least 1,000 advanced second-generation centrifuge machines (IR-2M), within a maximum of three months after the ratification of this law. Within the same period of time, the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran is also required to start enrichment and Research and Development activities with at least 164 IR-6 centrifuges and increase the number of centrifuge machines to 1,000 within one year after the ratification of this law.

*Note: The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran is obliged to obtain and implement the standards of the Passive Defense Organization of Iran when it comes to choosing and determining the location of installing and deploying the aforementioned machines.*

Article 4 – The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran is obliged to inaugurate the metallic uranium factory in Isfahan within 5 months after the ratification of this law.

Article 5 – In line with the Article 4 of the "Proportional and Reciprocal Action Plan for the Implementation of the JCPOA", the

Atomic Energy Organization of Iran is obliged to optimize and bring into operation a 40-Megawatts heavy-water reactor in Arak's Khondab, and at the same time design a new 40-Megawatts heavy-water reactor within a timetable with the aim of producing the radioisotopes used in hospitals. The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran must provide the Parliament with the timeframe within a month after the ratification of this law.

Article 6 – Two months after the enactment of this law in the Parliament, the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran will be obliged to stop allowing inspections beyond the Safeguards Agreement, including the voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol if the other signatories to the JCPOA – including the P4+1 group of countries (Germany, France, the UK, China, and Russia) – fail to fully deliver on their commitments toward Iran and banking relations are not normalized and obstacles to exports and Iran's sale of oil products are not fully removed and forex proceeds from sales are not immediately and fully returned to the country.

*Note: In this article, "Administration" means the Executive branch of power, the cabinet ministers, and all relevant executive bodies.*

Article 7 – If the other signatories to the JCPOA – including the P4+1 group of countries (France, the UK, China, Russia and Germany) – implement their commitments and fully remove the anti-Iran sanctions, including those related to the Islamic Republic's nuclear and military programs, human rights situation and the like, the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran is obliged to provide the Parliament with an accurate report of the measures taken. The National Security and Foreign Policy Committee as well as the Energy Committee of the Parliament will present their assessments of the government's report to the Parliament.

Article 8 – The president, officials, and managers of the relevant executive bodies are responsible for the precise and full implementation of this law.

Article 9 – Those who refuse to implement this law shall be penalized for second- to a fifth-degree felony, depending on the way they have refused to implement the law or prevented it from being implemented, in accordance with the Islamic Penal Code adopted on April 21, 2013.

## Bagheri Kani replaces Araqchi as deputy FM



Fathali

Bagheri Kani

Safari

TEHRAN — In separate decrees, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has appointed three new deputies.

Amir Abdollahian has appointed Ali Bagheri Kani as deputy foreign minister for political affairs, replacing Abbas Araqchi, who led the Iranian diplomatic team in the Vienna nuclear talks.

In other decrees, Mehdi Safari, former Iranian ambassador to China, was appointed as deputy foreign minister for economic affairs, replacing Mohajer who acted as head of the economic diplomacy headquarters.

Mohammad Fathali was also appointed as deputy foreign minister for financial and administrative affairs.

## Intelligence Ministry demolishes terrorist team

TEHRAN — A terrorist team affiliated with the spy services of the foes was identified and demolished, according to the public relations office of the Iranian Intelligence Ministry.

The statement, issued by the ministry on Wednesday, said that the terrorist team, that was trying to carry out attritional and terrorist acts against some vital centers of the country, was dismantled by the ministry's forces.

The ministry's public relations office said additional information will be released to the people of Iran in the near future.



# Nothing left to lose

## U.S. Afghan withdrawal sparks crisis of confidence in U.S. credibility

From Page 1 ► The newspaper also suggested that the official was a Saudi.

The presumed Saudi official's statements came after Riyadh asked Washington to keep an advanced missile defense system in Saudi Arabia. Former Saudi intelligence chief Prince Turki al-Faisal called on Washington not to withdraw the THAAD missile defense system, which is capable of detecting, tracking and shooting down ballistic missiles.

This call was another Saudi confirmation that the U.S. has withdrawn some of its air defense systems from the oil-rich kingdom.

The Associated Press, analyzing satellites photos, reported that the U.S. has removed its most advanced missile defense system and Patriot batteries from Saudi Arabia in recent weeks.

The redeployment of the defenses from Prince Sultan Air Base outside of Riyadh came as America's Persian Gulf Arab allies nervously watched the chaotic withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan, including their last-minute evacuations from Kabul's besieged international airport, the Associated Press said, adding that Persian Gulf Arab nations worry about the U.S.'s future plans as its military perceives a growing threat in Asia that requires those missile defenses.

Kristian Ulrichsen, a research fellow at the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy at Rice University, told the American news agency that "the perception is very clear that the U.S. is not as committed to the [Persian] Gulf as it used to be in the views of many people in decision-making authority in the region."

The expert added, "From the Saudi point of view, they now see Obama, Trump and Biden — three successive



presidents — taking decisions that signify to some extent an abandonment."

There are a growing number of indications that Saudi Arabia, feeling a sense of abandonment by the U.S., is taking precautionary measures to boost its homegrown military capabilities after it became increasingly frustrated over securing a longstanding American commitment to preserving its security.

On Tuesday, the Kingdom established a body called the General Authority for Defense Development to specialize in research and innovation in the fields of technology and defense systems, after the United States withdrew its equipment.

During a cabinet meeting chaired by King Salman bin Abdulaziz on

Tuesday, Saudi Arabia approved the establishment of the new body, with the aim of developing defense systems.

The authority aims to "identify the objectives of research, development and innovation activities related to the fields of technology and defense systems, and to set their policies and strategies."

The Saudi press has hailed the establishment of the institution as a step toward qualitative development of defense systems in Saudi Arabia.

Al-Bilad newspaper said in its editorial that the authority, which enjoys legal entity and financial and administrative independence, is linked to the head of the Saudi Council of Ministers.

The newspaper further added that the approval represents a qualitative

step to enhance the qualitative development of the defense system in Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia's goal of developing the defense system is witnessing practical achievements to localize the military industries, their latest technologies and expertise, as this vital sector contributes to further strengthening defense capabilities and the national economy, as well as providing strong investment opportunities for the private sector in the local defense industry in order to localize 50 percent of the Kingdom's spending on military equipment and services and create hundreds of thousands of job opportunities for Saudis, the daily said, according to the official Saudi Press Agency.

In addition, Saudi Arabia has hinted at purchasing defense systems from sources other than the United States. Prince Turki said that his country preferred U.S. assistance, but hinted that Riyadh had requested "other support" to strengthen its air defenses.

The Saudi prince did not provide details about the sources of this other support. But reports from Israel have claimed that Saudi Arabia has reached out to Israel about the possibility of procuring Israeli-made missile defense systems.

Quoting Israeli sources, Breaking Defense has reported that Saudi Arabia is seriously considering alternatives for American THAAD and Patriot batteries from China, Russia and, Israel. The Saudis are considering either the Iron Dome, produced by Rafael, or the Barak ER, produced by IAI, which is designed to intercept cruise missiles. One source told Breaking Defense that Saudi "interest in the Israeli systems has reached a very practical phase."

## "Afghanistan is an earthquake."

## Win-win cooperation between Iran, SCO and obstacles ahead

From Page 1 ► India and Pakistan also became permanent members of the organization in 2017. Thus, the SCO currently has eight permanent members, namely China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. And four countries of Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia are observer members. Six countries of Azerbaijan, Armenia, the Kingdom of Cambodia, Nepal, Turkey and Sri Lanka are also its negotiating partners.

The SCO permanent and non-permanent members are the world's largest producers and consumers of energy, with an area of about a quarter of the earth's land surface and about half of the world's population, with strong potential to balance power in a multipolar world, ISNA said in a commentary on Wednesday.

Reviewing the latest developments in Afghanistan as an observer member seems to be one of the most important agendas of the summit, although Afghanistan has no representative in the summit and it is unlikely that the Taliban have been invited to participate in the meeting.

What distinguishes this summit from the previous ones is the beginning of the study of Iran's permanent membership at the SCO.

According to the published news, 8 permanent member countries are expected to comment on Iran's full membership and start the process of Iran's membership if all permanent members agree on it. The process may take some years. The process of accepting India and Pakistan started in 2014 and it took about three years for the two countries to become permanent members.

Therefore, it should be noted that the admission process in this organization is not a one-step process and a special procedure has been foreseen in the SCO documents in this regard. In fact, a yes vote by all members means the beginning of the negotiation process for an agreement on the documents according to which Iran will join the legal and contractual framework of the organization.

During consultations, Iran seems to have been able to obtain the consent of member states, especially the influential countries. Ali Shamkhani, the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council of Iran, recently announced that the



political obstacles to Iran's membership in the SCO have been removed and Iran's membership will be finalized through technical formalities.

"Political obstacles to Iran's membership in the Shanghai Agreement have been removed and Iran's membership will be finalized through technical formalities," Shamkhani tweeted last month after talks with Russian Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev.

Russia's ambassador to Iran, Levon Dzhangaryan, recently told RIA Novosti that Moscow supports Iran's application for membership in the Shanghai organization because the positions of Iran and Russia are close on some regional and international issues.

Bkhtyvr Khakimov, special representative of the President of Russia in the SCO, also has said Moscow expects that the leaders of the organization take decision on beginning the process of accepting Tehran at the organization's summit in Dushanbe.

Unlike 2017, the government of Tajikistan, which has been chairing the SCO since 2020, seems to have a positive view of Iran's membership.

In June, Nizamuddin Zahedi, the ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan to Tehran, said, "The president of Tajikistan is one of the first presidents of the member states to propose Iran's main membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2012, 2013 and 2014, but the acceptance of these cases and decisions in the organization are done with the coordination of other countries and with the consent of all member states."

He pointed out: "The principle of admission in the Shanghai organization is general consent.

Therefore, this issue is present in the programs of the organization, i.e. Iran joining as a main member, and if other member states of the organization are ready to accept Iran, Tajikistan will support the general consent in this issue."

Also, Tajik Foreign Minister Sirajuddin Mehraldin recently told a news conference in Dushanbe that his country would support Iran's membership in the SCO.

"Tajikistan is ready to support Iran's decision to join the organization with the agreement of the member states," Mehraddin said.

### Win-win cooperation

Considering the extensive potential of the SCO members in political, security, economic, trade, monetary, banking, energy and cultural fields, it will definitely provide a more suitable space for Iran's international interactions given the determination of the Raisi administration in the "look to the East".

And Iran, due to its rich energy resources such as oil and gas, will naturally be an important powerhouse in the SCO. Also, an increased cooperation will be useful for all parties as some refer to it as a win-win partnership.

### Obstacles ahead

As mentioned, an agreement by key members to start considering Iran's permanent membership in this regional organization in line with the Raisi administration's special view to the East can be a diplomatic success.

But there are obstacles to tap this great potential in view of the U.S. economic terrorism against Iran, refusal by some SCO members to have extensive economic ties with Iran for fear of secondary U.S. sanctions, Iran's non-accession to the FATF are among the serious obstacles facing Iran in the field of monetary and banking exchanges.

In this context, some experts believe that in domestic arena, along with issues such as the Vienna talks to revive the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and lifting of sanctions, smart decisions should be made to lift the sanctions in order to accelerate the process of Iran's membership in the organization and Iran can better use this opportunity for its own economic and political interests.



Islamic Republic of Iran, saying Tehran is ready to provide for the needs of Lebanon in various fields. Abdullah Safioddin, the representative of the Lebanese Hezbollah movement also congratulated Amir Abdollahian on his appointment as Iran's foreign minister. He said the Lebanese people are grateful to Iran for its support of Lebanon in times of difficulty.

Safioddin also thanked Iran for selling much-needed fuel to Lebanon.

Hezbollah's representative expressed hope the Islamic Republic of Iran would go through stages of growth and prosperity in all fields.

## The Iranian foreign minister underlined that the new Iranian government will continue to support the resistance front..

need to expand relations between the Lebanese people and government and the

Lebanese people would be resolved as soon as possible and that the aspirations of the Lebanese people would be realized, according to a statement by the Iranian foreign ministry.

Amir Abdollahian stated that the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, headed by President Ebrahim Raisi, cares for and supports the resistance.

He also called the dignified resistance of the Lebanese people against the Zionist and Takfiri enemies a source of honor and pride for all the nations of the region and the freedom seekers.

Amir Abdollahian emphasized the

TEHRAN — Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah's representative in Iran Abdullah Safioddin has met with Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian.

Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah's representative in Iran Abdullah Safioddin has met with Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian.

In this meeting, the Iranian foreign minister congratulated the Lebanese people and government on the formation of a new government in the country, and expressed hope that the problems of the

## IRAN IN FOCUS

SEPTEMBER 16, 2021

Straight Truth  
TEHRAN TIMES

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## SPORTS

### Iran futsal should think of podium: expert

By Farrokh Hesabi

TEHRAN – Iran started the 2021 FIFA Futsal World Cup with a hard-fought win against Serbia in Group F on Tuesday. Reza Naseri, Iranian former futsal player and current coach, commented on the performance of the Iran national futsal team in their first game in Lithuania.

Iran defeated Serbia in Group F 3-2 Tuesday night.

"The first matches in big tournaments are always tricky and difficult. I think Iran did a good job in their first step despite being a little bit confused during the game," said the former goalkeeper of the Iran futsal team.



"We've been drawn in a difficult group and must face with the defending champions Argentina. I believe that it is a good draw for us to play with one of the best teams of the world on the group stage," Naseri added.

The top two teams in each four-team group will advance to the Round of 16, as will the four best third-place teams.

"It is good news that three teams have the chance to qualify for the next round. I think the win against Serbia was enough for Iran to qualify for the next round. However, we should never think of anything besides being the top team in the group stage and finishing the tournament with a podium place.

"Against Serbia, we had some weaknesses in our defensive tactics, but I believe the most important issue for our team is to keep their calmness and peace of mind.

"Getting three yellow cards and one red card in the first match is a negative point for us. I again emphasize that with mental composure, we can overcome all our weaknesses because we have a great team with great potential," Naseri concluded.

Iran are competing in their eighth straight Futsal World Cup, more than any other Asian nation. This year, Iran were nominated to participate in the World Cup by the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) after the original qualifying tournament was canceled.

### Iran lose to Japan at 2021 Asian Women's Handball C'ship

TEHRAN – Iran were defeated against Japan 23-20 at the 2021 Asian Women's Handball Championship on Wednesday. The Persians are scheduled to meet Kuwait on Thursday in Group B.

Jordan, Palestine and Syria also are in the group.

Group A consists of South Korea, Singapore, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Hong Kong.

The 2021 Asian Women's Handball Championship is being held from Sept. 15 to 25 in Amman, Jordan under the aegis of Asian Handball Federation.

It is the third time in history that the championship is organized by the Jordan Handball Federation.

It also acts as the qualification tournament for the 2021 World Women's Handball Championship, with the top six teams from the championship directly qualifying for the event to be held in Spain.

On 9 Aug. 2020, the AHF decided to postpone the championship due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Previously, the championship was scheduled to take place from 10 to 22 December 2020.

On 3 Aug. 2021, the AHF announced to move the event from South Korea to Jordan due to the pandemic.

### AEK Athens eye Milad Mohammadi

TEHRAN – Greek football giants AEK are approaching the acquisition of Milad Mohammadi.

The international Iranian left back, who has been released from Belgian club Gent, is in negotiations with AEK. In fact, the two sides are close to an agreement and everything shows that the 27-year-old extreme player will wear the yellow and black from this season and for the next ones.

Mohammadi had been linked with a move to AEK in the summer but his case had not progressed. However, he is now free after terminating his contract with Gent, in which he played for the last two years, and the way is open for his acquisition. He started his career with Rah Ahan of Iran and played at Russian club Akhmat Grozny, before moving to Belgium in the summer of 2019.

He has also made 42 matches for Iran national football team.

### Persepolis' Golmohammadi satisfied with his team's performance against Istiklol

TEHRAN – Persepolis head coach Yahya Golmohammadi praised his players after defeating Tajik champions Istiklol in the 2021 AFC Champions League Round of 16 on Tuesday.

Persepolis defeated Istiklol 1-0 at the near-full Central Republican Stadium thanks to Mahdi Torabi's late goal.

"This is a happy victory for all our fans, but we won the game thanks to the presence of our fans and the efforts of our players. Without them we would have been in trouble" the head coach said, referring to a small knot of Tajikistan-based Persepolis fans who cheered his side on.

"Overall, I think it was a good game for us. We controlled the game and the movement of the ball, with the exception of free-kicks, we did not give many opportunities to our opponent and we defended well," Golmohammadi added.

### Tractor coach Karimi dissatisfied with lack of preparation

TEHRAN – Tractor football team head coach Firouz Karimi is dissatisfied with his team's lack of preparation.

The Iranian team lost to Saudi Arabia's Al-Nassr in the 2021 AFC Champions League Round of 16.

"We went into this game suffering from a lack of preparation," said Karimi.

"We lost a number of players, did not make any new signings, and played this game with a young squad, some players were as young as 17 or 18 years old but we did a lot better than expected.

"Al Nassr on the other hand has an extremely good squad, with high value players who are big stars. Under the circumstances, we did well," Karimi added

### Managerial conflicts hurt Iranian football clubs

From Page 1 ► Tractor wanted to achieve a quarter-final finish to better their previous best in the competition, but they showed a poor performance against the Saudi Arabian team and were knocked out of the competition.

Wholesale changes took place at Tractor since the group stage, with over a dozen players out the door including Ashkan Dejagah and Masoud Shojaei, as well as coach Rasoul Khatibi who was replaced by Firouz Karimi. No new signings were made with all three additions to the squad being promoted from the U21s.

Persepolis are the only Iranian team who booked their place in the next round courtesy of their experience and friendly environment within their team.

The Reds have had managerial changes as well over the past years but they have managed the transformation to stay a top team. Persepolis have won Iran league for five successive year and registered a record.

Each team need friendship and peace to go ahead, otherwise they will suffer setback.



## Iran to open trade center in Sulaymaniyah



From page 1 ► the second floor is dedicated to construction products, industrial, electrical and electronic, and food products, while the third

floor is allocated to knowledge-based products, he said.

Heavy industrial machinery, road construction, agricultural implements, automobiles are located in the open space of the center, the official added.

The center is aimed to provide various services to Iranian companies and businesses such as consulting, marketing, legal services, registering the brand and logo of companies in Iraq, advertising services, allocating exhibition and office space and holding business events, allocating warehouse, advising on banking services, assisting in concluding commercial contracts, transportation logistics services, insurance, and accommodation.

## Liquidity rises over 12.8%

TEHRAN - Iran's liquidity reached 39.214 quadrillion rials (about \$933.6 billion) in the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-August 22), to register a 12.8-percent growth from the figure for the end of the past year.

According to the Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Akbar Komeijani, the country's liquidity registered 39.1 percent growth in the 12-month period ended on August 22, IRNA reported.

"Banks need to take the liquidity management and growth control of their balance sheets seriously; since it affects macro-economic variables such as liquidity and inflation in the long run," Komeijani said in a meeting with the managing directors of the country's banks.

He called for serious measures to be taken by the banking system to manage liquidity and control overdrafts, noting that if the banking system does not have the necessary control over its overdrafts, the CBI will have to take precautionary and regulatory measures.

Komeijani stated that so far, the government has offered Islamic financial bonds in 17 stages, and specified: "during these offerings, a total of 322 trillion rials (about \$3.14 billion) worth of such bonds have been sold by the Central Bank brokerage."

In this regard, the necessary adjustments have been made regarding the bond yield rates, in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, he added.



Komeijani had previously said the CBI was going to take all the necessary measures for preventing liquidity growth which will consequently lead to inflation.

Speaking in a meeting with the managers of the country's banking system in early August, the CBI governor had pointed to the sanctions and the budget deficit as the main reasons for the liquidity growth in the country, saying that liquidity growth would lead to inflation and the decline in the value of the national currency which will, in turn, affect major medium- and long-term economic decisions in the country.

The official had put the country's liquidity growth in the 12-month period to June 21, at 39.4 percent, which shows an increase of 5.2 percent compared to the growth in the same period last year.

# Steel products export rises 88% in 5 months on year



TEHRAN- Iran's export of steel products increased 88 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.

Based on the data released by the Iranian Steel Producers Association (ISPA), 1,399 million tons of steel products was exported in the five-month period of this year, while the figure was 774,000 tons in the same time span of the previous year, Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) reported.

Iran's import of the steel products has risen one percent to 338,000 tons in the first five months of the present year from 336,000 tons of the past year's same period.

In early May, Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry issued a three-month waiver for some approved steel pro-

duction units to be able to export steel products especially long sections.

The ministry had restricted the exports of steel products and obliged all steel producers to offer their products at Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME).

Iran's export of steel during the previous Iranian calendar year 1399 (ended on March 20) declined 13.1 percent compared to the figure for the preceding year, data released by the Iranian Steel Producers Association showed.

Based on the mentioned data, over 2,839 million tons of steel products were exported in the mentioned year, registering an 18-percent decline year on year.

As ISPA data indicated, the exports

of steel products, intermediate steel, and sponge iron all declined last year, and despite significant output growth and the demand decline in the domestic construction sector, the exports of the mentioned products did not increase due to the pandemic.

Iran is currently the tenth largest steel-maker in the world and is estimated to climb to seventh place by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 2025).

According to the latest data released by the World Steel Association (WSA), production of crude steel in Iran reached 17.8 million tons during January-July, 2021 to register a 9.9 percent growth year on year.

Iran's monthly crude steel output stood at 2.6 million tons in July 2021,

rising nine percent compared to the figure for July 2020.

The WSA's previous report had put Iran at the world's tenth place in terms of steel production in the first three-month of 2021.

According to the association's data, Iran produced 7.5 million tons of crude steel in Q1 2021, registering a 10.7 percent growth compared to the same period in 2020.

The Islamic Republic's steel output stood at 2.6 million tons in March, indicating a 10.7 percent rise year on year.

The Iranian Steel industry has been constantly developing over the past years against all the pressures and obstacles created by outside forces like the U.S. sanctions and the coronavirus outbreak that has severely affected the performance of the world's top producers.

## Thermal power plants' output increases 9% since late Mar.

TEHRAN - Iran's thermal power plants generated over 173 million megawatt-hours of electricity since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21) up to September 15, registering a nine-percent rise compared to the previous year's same period.

According to the data provided by the Thermal Power Plants Holding (TPPH), currently, 538 thermal units are active in 129 power plants across the country, IIRB reported.

The total capacity of the country's thermal power plants currently stands at 69,000 megawatts (MW), of which 46,476 MW or 67 percent is operated by the private sector and the government is in charge of the other 33 percent.

At present, the installed capacity of all power plants in the country, including thermal, hydropower, nuclear, distributed generation, renewable, and diesel, has reached 85,559 MW, of which about 81 percent is accounted by thermal power plants.

Combined cycle units with a capacity of 31,179 MW account for 36.4 percent of the total capacity of the country's thermal power plants while gas units with a capacity of 21,992 MW have a 25.7 share, and the share of steam units is 18.5 percent with a total capacity of 15,829



MW.

Back in July, Esmail Namazi, the director-general of TPPH Research and Construction had mentioned the inactivity of hydropower plants due to drought, the rising temperature, and the increase in electricity demand, as well as the inactivity of the country's nuclear power plants on some days as reasons for the increase in electricity generation by thermal power plants.

"Thermal power plants have tried to stay active for more hours by shortening the time of their periodic repairs and fixing occasional

problems in the power plant units, to compensate the electricity generation deficit in the country," Namazi said.

He further noted that all thermal power plants across the country are currently operating at maximum capacity, and the employees of the country's electricity industry are doing their best to keep the power plants in the grid despite the new wave of coronavirus pandemic and the extreme heat.

In the past decade, constant temperature rising and the significant decrease of rainfalls across Iran have put the country in a hard situation regarding electricity supply during peak consumption periods.

This year, however, new deteriorating factors like severe drought and the decline in the country's water resources as well as a new wave of illegal cryptocurrency mining across the country have also worsened the situation.

Iran's Power Generation, Distribution, and Transmission Company (known as Tavanir) has previously announced that the company is implementing over 40 different programs for managing the situation and to prevent blackouts in the country, however, so far these programs do not seem to be working as expected.

## 50 km of highways to be inaugurated in Sistan-Baluchestan by next March

TEHRAN- As announced by a provincial official, 50 kilometers of highways will be inaugurated in Iran's southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan province by the end of current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2022).

Ataollah Akbari, the director-general of the province's Transport and Urban Development Department, said, "With rare events in the last two years, we have witnessed a leap in the construction of highways in the province, so that 147 km of highways are currently under construction in the area covered by this department, 50 km of which will be operational by the end of this year."

Saying that more than 3,000 people work in 25 road construction workshops in Sistan-Baluchestan, the official stated that the construction of communication

routes, especially highways, is one of the most important indicators of the development of different regions and improves economic and trade relations along with increasing the safety of passenger traffic.

He further announced that construction of 90 kilometers of highways in the province is planned for the next Iranian calendar year.

Back in May, Deputy Transport and Urban Development Minister Kheirollah Khademi had said that 440 kilometers (km) of freeways and 1,200 km of highways will be added to the country's road network by the end of the current Iranian calendar year.

Kheirollah Khademi, who is also the managing director of Iran's Construction and Development of Transportation Infrastructures Company (CDTIC), noted that the ministry prioritized the completion of nine major freeway projects which would have the



biggest impact on the country's transportation and transit operations over the past two years and these projects have had average progress of more than 70 percent so far.

He stressed that the completion of 221 km of freeways in the previous year was achieved despite the fact that the annual freeway construction in the country has been

80 km.

Meanwhile on August 2, the former Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami had announced that the country's length of freeway network would be increased to 3,100 kilometers in the coming weeks.

As announced by the deputy minister, there is currently 20,000 kilometers of highways and 2,500

kilometers of freeways across the country.

In mid-July, Khademi had said that over 12,500 kilometers of highways are needed to be constructed across the country to meet the country's current transportation demands.

Noting that 90 percent of the country's freight and passenger traffic is carried out through the highways network, he said: "In order to be able to balance the needs [with the current infrastructure], we must have 35,000 kilometers of highways across the country."

According to Khademi, the construction of the mentioned ways requires 1.2 quadrillion rials (about \$28.5 billion) of investment.

The official noted that if about 850 to 1000 kilometers of highways or freeways are constructed every year, it will take 12 to 13 years for the mentioned goal to be realized.

He called on the government to accelerate the completion of transportation projects across the country.

## Alireza Peyman-Pak appointed as new TPO head



TEHRAN - Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Minister on Tuesday appointed Alireza Peyman-Pak as the new head of the country's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), Mehr News Agency reported.

Peyman-Pak has replaced Hamid Zadboum who was the head of the mentioned organization since September 2019.

Zadboum, who was previously a deputy at the TPO, was promoted to be the official head of TPO and a deputy industry minister, On September 25, 2019.

## TEDPIX drops 8,600 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN - TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), lost 8,664 points to 1,488 million on Wednesday.

As reported, over 7.28 billion securities worth 55.74 trillion rials (about \$13.27 billion) were traded at the TSE on Wednesday.

The first market's index lost 6,936 points, and the second market's index dropped 15,618 points.

TEDPIX gained 6,000 points to 1.526 million in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday, September 10).

During the past week, the indices of Bandar Abbas Oil Refinery, Mobarakeh Steel Company, State Retirement Fund, Social Security Investment Company, Isfahan Oil Refinery, and Barekat Pharmaceutical Group were the most

widely followed indices.

A capital market analyst has said the trades at the Tehran Stock Exchange 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 last week.

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."

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 compa-

nies 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.



# Western experience in Afghanistan was disappointing, Italian expert says

From page 1 ► democracy' through military intervention and state-building strategies. This was probably the main reason for the failure," Gianluca notes.

"A mission started with limited aims (hitting al-Qaeda and the Taliban regime supporting it and avoiding new attacks against the United States) creepingly evolved into a state-building effort without clear targets and an open deadline that proved unsustainable."

Following is the text of the interview:

**How do you describe Afghanistan's situation after the U.S. withdrawal?**

For sure, it is a complex one. I am not sure that the Taliban's grip on power is as firm as it appears. Islamic State – Khorasan Province (ISKP) is a credible threat, the status of the Panjshir valley remains unclear, and an anti-Taliban resistance front (NRF – National Resistance Front) seems to coalesce, enjoying some degree of international favor.

On the contrary, the Kabul government faces a problem of international recognition. Currently, no country has officially recognized the Taliban government, although many of them are dealing with it in one way or the other. Moreover, Afghanistan is badly in need of international assistance, and the best way to access it is through better foreign relations; something that the Taliban still have to establish and that will probably prove quite troublesome.

**How do you evaluate U.S. performance in Afghanistan after two decades of war? What were the reasons for the U.S. failure in Afghanistan?**

Overall, the Western experience in Afghanistan was disappointing. The international community faced massive



human and financial costs to reach only minimal results, possibly no result at all. Many of the social and economic benefits gained in the past years will probably get lost in the future. Moreover, the Afghan experience will probably deliver another fatal blow to the idea that it is somehow possible to export 'Western-style democracy' through military intervention and state-building strategies. This was probably the main reason for the failure. A mission started with limited aims (hitting al-Qaeda and the Taliban regime supporting it and avoiding new attacks against the United States) creepingly evolved into a state-building effort without clear targets and an open deadline that proved unsustainable.

**What is the EU's stance towards developments in Afghanistan? Apparently, there is no serious posture.**

The European countries actively supported Afghanistan's socio-economic development with both men

and funds within and outside the NATO framework. The European Union, too, elaborated its own programs on a 2014–20 timespan investing more than four billion euros since 2002. However, the EU political drive has always been weak. Political coordination is traditionally tricky because different member countries have different priorities, and the outcome usually is a compromise. The U.S. withdrawal was largely resented, but no EU country could offer a credible alternative at both political and military levels. The G7 summit convened in late August to deal with the political and humanitarian implication of the Western withdrawal highlighted this state of things but was unable to provide alternative solutions.

**How could neighboring countries contribute to rebuilding Afghanistan?**

Afghanistan's neighbors have a strong interest in a stable and peaceful country. Although they lack the same financial means, they can project

their political influence more effectively than their Western counterparts. At the same time, Afghanistan is also the chessboard where its neighbors traditionally compete to extend their influence. Their rivalry reverberated in the country's long civil war and partly made possible the success of the Taliban movement in the second half of the 1990s. The most reasonable attitude for many of these countries would be to sit still and let the domestic situation stabilize but predicting a posture like this would be unrealistic. However, it is worth noting that two important external actors like Russia and China seem to have adopted such a cautious attitude, at least for the moment.

**What are the implications of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan for Washington's allies?**

I do not think that the U.S. withdrawal will impact the relations with its regional allies. In Afghanistan, I think the Arab countries have already 'decoupled' their policies from the U.S. for a long time. In terms of military commitment, too, I do not think what happened in Kabul conveys any particular message. In Washington's eyes, Afghanistan's status has never been comparable to the Arab states of the (Persian) Gulf. At the same time, Afghanistan has never had the same leverage the Arab states have on the U.S. posture. Moreover, the United States remains a critical regional player at political and military levels and shares many interests with its local allies. Supposing that the withdrawal from Afghanistan could change this long-established state of things is not credible, either if we focus on the U.S. perspective or its Arab counterparts.

## The 'war on terror' and the disciplining of American Muslims

By Abdullah Al-Arian

Earlier this month, The New York Times Magazine published a feature article profiling a former FBI agent who was imprisoned by the U.S. for exposing the rampant abuses in the government's domestic war on terror. In the piece, Terry Albury recounted the FBI's systematic harassment and intimidation of American Muslims, its spying on the community, and its prosecution of many of its members under the guise of combatting terrorism.

Upon joining the FBI shortly after the attacks of September 11, 2001, Albury recalled, "It was made very clear from day one that the enemy was not just a tiny group of disaffected Muslims. Islam itself was the enemy." Its uniquely candid and self-reflective tone notwithstanding, there was little in this account that would come as a surprise to most American Muslims.

Twenty years on from the launch of a war that would place an entire minority population under a cloud of suspicion, it is worth examining how the lives of American Muslims have been irrevocably transformed. As securitized subjects, they have existed on one of the many front lines in the global war on terror, forced to reassess their identity and core values in the name of belonging.

**Securitizing Islam**

Although anti-Muslim discrimination in the U.S. has roots that long predate 9/11, the global war on terror ushered in an unprecedented era of mass securitization of American Muslims that manifested in untold ways. U.S. law enforcement agencies quickly set about to uncover "sleepers cells" hiding within the community's mosques and Islamic centers. By reducing the actions of the 9/11 perpetrators down to their religious beliefs, all Muslims were effectively pathologized as potential terrorists.

The domestic war on terror would operate as a dual-pronged assault on both Islam and Muslims. Led by alarmist media and self-serving policymakers, the faith itself was repackaged as a dangerous ideology. Not unlike the depictions of communism at the height of the Cold War, Islam was portrayed as lurking behind every corner and posing a growing threat to the American way of life, if left unchecked.

Islamic traditions, beliefs and practices were sloppily anatomized by an emergent class of self-proclaimed "terrorism experts", talking heads with questionable qualifications who coined flashy buzzwords like "Islam-ofascism" and warned that Sharia was little more than a pathway to Orwellian totalitarianism.

At the same time, Muslims became an increasingly racialized category subjected to forms of discrimination that paralleled the treatment of targeted minorities throughout U.S. history. More than 80,000 Muslim immigrants were called in for questioning by federal agents and required to enroll in a national registry. Tens of thousands more were searched and interrogated at airports and prevented from travel through the use of no-fly lists. Simply wearing a headscarf or growing a beard made one suspect in the eyes of an ever-vigilant police force and a hypersensitive public.

Despite the fact that the sleeper cells never materialized, the domestic war on terror proceeded unchecked, due in part to the Patriot Act, a law passed overwhelmingly by Congress in October 2001 that greatly expanded the government's investigative powers at the expense of civil liberties. Against the national backdrop of fear and suspicion, American Muslims were systematically targeted in several waves. In the initial phase authorities singled out prominent community leaders and institutions.

Shortly after 9/11, the government cast a wide net by spying on community leaders. As files leaked to the Intercept later revealed, in one instance the government targeted a lawyer, a political lobbyist, an academic, and the heads of two of the most prominent American Muslim civic organizations. Those targeted for surveillance faced the threat of criminal prosecution for exercising their constitutionally protected rights to free speech and association.

In 2004, the Department of Justice brought terrorism charges against the largest Muslim charity in the U.S., the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development (HLF), and arrested five members of its staff. Following a retrial in 2008 after prosecutors initially failed to convict the men, all of whom were Palestinian-American, the HLF officers and employees were sentenced to up to 65 years in prison, despite the government never providing any evidence that the charitable donations had any connection to violence.

The fallout from the HLF case continued well beyond the trial. In an unorthodox move, prosecutors released the names of 246 unindicted co-conspirators in the case, a list that would normally be kept anonymous due to the fact that uncharged entities have no means of defending themselves against serious accusations like supporting terrorism. The list included several of the most prominent American Muslim organizations, from the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) to the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). The intent behind the leak was clear: to cast a cloud of suspicion over all American Muslim institutions, thereby paralyzing their ability to serve their communities and play any meaningful role in civic life.

Similarly, in 2005 the government targeted Ali al-Tamimi, a Virginia-based imam. He was charged with conspiring against the United States and was sentenced to life in prison for allegedly providing a fatwa to community members about "jihad" days after 9/11. These high-profile terrorism trials contributed greatly to the chilling effect among American Muslims, as imams and community leaders across the country

feared their words could be used to put them in prison.

At a time when the U.S. had launched large-scale military invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq while waging deadly covert operations in dozens of other Muslim-majority countries, the government was seemingly determined to neutralize political opposition and silence dissenting views at home.

**Fake plots, real consequences**

More than a decade after 9/11, the FBI had more than doubled the number of agents devoted to investigating terrorism, tripled its overall budget, with \$3.3bn dedicated to combatting terrorism alone, and a permissive legal environment within which to operate. It was also turning up no actual terrorist cells.

In the next phase of the domestic war on terror, the FBI decided to take matters into its own hands and expanded a practice it had launched soon after 9/11. It stepped up sending paid informants into communities to entrap unsuspecting Muslim youth into terrorist conspiracies that FBI agents would then foil.

A 2015 study revealed that since 9/11, more than half of all terrorism prosecutions involved the use of paid informants who were usually responsible for concocting the plot in collusion with their FBI handlers.

Sensationalistic media coverage of the most high-profile cases rarely if ever made mention of the fact that these conspiracies were the work of FBI informants. Instead, stories of foiled terror plots like those of the Newburgh Four or the Fort Dix Five provided fodder for the continued stigmatization of American Muslims.

The vacuum left by the assault on the community's leadership, coupled with a steady rise in Islamophobic sentiments across the wider American society, created a pervasive sense of isolation, particularly among younger American Muslims who had come of age in the post-9/11 reality.

With at least 15,000 informants at its disposal, the FBI's rampant infiltration of mosques and Islamic centers stripped Muslims of any sense of security or sanctity in their community spaces. As the entrapment cases unfolded with alarming regularity, it became painfully clear that the war on terror's latest victims were often the community's most vulnerable members, suffering from poverty, mental health issues, and other difficulties that made them easy prey for undercover agents.

Even those young American Muslims who avoided being ensnared by informants were nevertheless subjected to mass surveillance programs, such as the one pursued by the New York Police Department (NYPD) and the CIA. Exposed by the Associated Press in 2011, the secret program "mapped, monitored and analyzed American Muslim daily life", going as far as to infiltrate Muslim student groups at various universities in the New York metropolitan area.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

## Republicans urge Biden to designate Taliban as terrorist group

Several GOP senators have urged U.S. President Joe Biden to designate the Taliban as a terrorist group, calling it "a significant threat to the United States."

"Since reestablishing control of Afghanistan, the Taliban resumed the same murderous and oppressive habits that characterized their leadership tenure prior to the arrival of U.S. forces in 2001," the senators, led by Joni Ernst, wrote in a letter to Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Wednesday.

The senators mentioned the Taliban's approach towards the civilians, including women, as one of the reasons behind their demand.

They also slammed the appointment of Sirajuddin Haqqani, wanted by the FBI, as Afghanistan's acting interior minister.

"Given their history of supporting terror attacks on the United States, their brutal style of governance, their continued display of atrocities against Americans and our allies, and now, their enhanced military capability, the current version of the Taliban government presents a significant threat to the United States. Further, the Taliban display the will and the means to attack Americans and American interests," the senators added.

The letter comes after two prominent Republican senators, Lindsey Graham and Michael Waltz, introduced a resolution on Tuesday, asking the Biden administration to recognize the Taliban as a terrorist organization and call the group's takeover of Kabul a "coup d'etat."

"This resolution is one of the most important things Congress can do regarding the takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban," Graham said in a statement.

"Designating the Taliban as a Foreign Terrorist Organization will make it harder for countries to provide them aid and recognition. We would be sending a strong signal that America does not do business with terrorist groups and their sympathizers. The Taliban are radical jihadists in every sense of the word and use terror as their tactic," he noted.

Over the past weeks, the Biden administration has been under fire over its chaotic withdrawal of the U.S. forces from Afghanistan, which led to the Taliban's takeover of Kabul.

Biden's exit, which effectively ended the United States' two-decade war in Afghanistan, has led to infighting in the U.S., where politicians pin blame on each other for the return of the Taliban to power.

The United States and a number of its allies invaded Afghanistan and toppled a Taliban regime there in late 2001 under the pretext of the so-called "war on terror." The invasion and the ensuing war, however, gravely worsened the security situation in the country.

## Japan provided Iran with 2.9 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines: Japanese expert

From page 1 ► Following is the text of the interview:

**Could you update us about the history of Iran-Japan ties?**

Japan established its diplomatic relations with Iran in 1929, which is 92 years ago. Japan started to import oil from Iran in the 1950s and since then, Japan's relations with Iran have centered on oil.

However, our relations actually date back to centuries ago, when many elements of Persian culture were brought to Japan through the Silk Road. Japanese people have traditionally shown great respect towards Persian culture.

**What are the main areas of trade between Iran and Japan? And how have the American sanctions affected it?**

The main field was oil as I mentioned in the answer to the first question. We imported oil from Iran and exported cars and machinery in return, but our oil import from Iran has far exceeded the amount of our export to Iran.

U.S. sanctions affected the oil trade greatly because



the U.S. used it as a weapon to fight against Iran. It was as if the U.S. took Iranian oil as a hostage and demanded foreign banks to pay a ransom if they wanted to get it back. The U.S. sanctions worked and Japan did not import Iranian oil in 2020.

**What is your prediction of Tehran-Tokyo relations now that Ibrahim Raisi has taken power in Iran?**

We are hoping that the Vienna negotiations will start again soon so that the sanctions will be lifted and we can start trading again.

**What are Japan's collaborations with Iran in terms of fighting COVID-19?**

Japan provided Iran with 2.9 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines manufactured in Japan.

**How is Iran viewed in Japan? As a Japanese researcher who lived in Iran, how do you describe the Iranian culture?**

As I mentioned already, Japanese people have shown great respect towards the Iranian culture. For me, the Iranian culture is very rich in the sense that it consists of diverse elements, each of which has its own history.

The Iranian culture is full of wonder and beauty that encompasses all the realities and contradictions that we could think of. My work as a researcher is like a journey to reach a sound understanding of the Iranian culture, whose various aspects have fascinated me in each step that I have taken.

## Hezbollah to the rescue again

Not for the first time, Lebanon faces a crisis. Hezbollah has helped guide the country out of the predicament.

The movement is known for resisting, defending, liberating and preserving Lebanon's territorial integrity from Israeli occupation and aggression.

In 2000, Israel withdrew its forces from Lebanon after a hard-fought resistance by Hezbollah.

During Israel's war on Lebanon in 2006, Hezbollah took the regime by surprise and emerged victoriously.

That victory created an equation whereby Israel never attacked Lebanon again and the people of the country benefited from living in safety and security until today.

This extremely significant victory also overshadowed Hezbollah's other activities from the international arena. These include its welfare programs, the educational facilities it runs for orphans, for example, different types of assistance and helps for the needy, the elderly and many other aspects in this regard.

Over the past year or two, the country has faced multiple domestic crises. One of the biggest challenges Lebanon faces today is the unprecedented energy crisis that is literally suffocating a nation struggling to keep the light on.

This crisis is not just ongoing but getting worse and worse. It is already on the verge of reaching a point where hospitals, shops, bakeries, etc... cannot function because of a lack of fuel. Lebanon was heading towards the unknown.

Here, Hezbollah once again, devised a plan to alleviate the crisis, while preventing any foreign interference or trouble for Lebanon.

After careful consideration, the Secretary-General of Hezbollah, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah and other high-ranking officials in the movement decided to purchase oil from the Islamic Republic of Iran and bring the oil tankers to Lebanon itself.

The Hezbollah Chief says after being told of possible sanctions or other measures by the United States, that could hurt the government if the tankers docked in Lebanon; it decided to dock the first vessel in neighboring Syria

and take the cargo by land across Lebanese-Syrian border crossing.

Nasrallah has extended his gratitude to the Syrian government for helping coordinate the logistics of importing this vital commodity. He also thanked the Syrian government for understanding the situation of Lebanon and the dangers of Lebanon and Syria's enemies in trying to harm Damascus for the assistance it provided.

On Sunday, the vessel docked at a Syrian port, and the process of unloading the oil and dispatching it to Lebanon is expected to be completed by around Thursday. Hezbollah says this is the first of many ships to bring oil from Iran to Lebanon.

Nasrallah noted whoever issued negative statements about this operation should learn a lesson.

According to Nasrallah, the negative statements were the following and he noted how they ended up in dustbin of history.

One: The announcement [importing oil from Iran] was just a PR stunt. However, the oil has arrived.

Two: Those who said the operation will fail because Iran itself has problems exporting gasoline and diesel.

Three: Those who stated Israel will prevent the tanker from reaching Lebanon or Syria, especially because Hezbollah announced the move publicly on the Day of Ashura. It wasn't a secret operation.

Nasrallah says it's unfortunate that some had hoped Israel would prevent the ship from reaching Lebanon.

He highlighted that the 2006 war which created a security equation with Israel is what prevented the regime from stopping the fuel from arriving. This is despite the fact that Tel Aviv is very well aware the arrival of the fuel would increase Hezbollah's popularity even more, something Israel has, for decades, tried to prevent.

Four: Those who said America will prevent this operation. Nasrallah noted the U.S. knows any action would lead to a reaction "from a certain party".

The Hezbollah Chief says America only knows sanctions, tried to pressure Lebanese officials and when that did not work, the U.S. embassy in Beirut presented an

alternative plan.

The "U.S. embassy in Beirut plan" had already been widely ridiculed among Lebanese commentators and analysts.

Those who said the import of oil would cause problems for the new government and this never happened.

Five: Finally, those who said this was a sectarian move, and the energy would only be distributed to Hezbollah strongholds in Southern Lebanon. Nasrallah says the oil would be sent to every region of Lebanon.

In the upcoming days, the second ship will dock in Syria and will also contain diesel.

A third ship has been loaded with gasoline and the paperwork has been completed for it to sail. The fourth tanker will contain diesel. Nasrallah says the fourth ship will contain diesel because it will arrive at a time when some areas of Lebanon get cold and more diesel is needed than gasoline.

The Hezbollah Chief has reiterated the movement is not after trade and profit or competing with energy companies. The initiative is simply adding to a product short in supply.

Hezbollah is now preparing to work on distributing the first shipment which contains the diesel.

Nasrallah says the resistance movement has studied the distribution process from a humanitarian point of view and came up with the following.

A months' worth of supply will be offered, free of charge, to government run hospitals, centers who care for the elderly and vulnerable, every facility that cares for orphans, water facilities in poorer provinces, fire stations, the Lebanese Red Cross.

The reality of this humanitarian mission cannot be emphasized enough when Hezbollah says it is offering the diesel to the above free of charge.

The second list will be sold, but also in terms of priority, to those that need the energy most and at a reasonable price whereby other energy supplier's business are not affected.

Private hospitals, pharmaceutical manufacturers, mills, bakeries selling bread, companies purchasing, storing and selling vital food products, food manufacturers, agricultural companies. Among



## Fars province prepares to develop religious tourism



TEHRAN – The Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department of Fars seeks to develop religious tourism across the southern Iranian province.

“We intend to develop the required infrastructure for religious tourism across Fars province, which is home to numerous holy shrines, mosques, theological madrasas, and other spiritual sites,” CHTN quoted the provincial tourism chief as saying on Wednesday.

Benefiting from the capacity of the students of Islamic seminaries who are fluent in foreign languages will be a considerable help to introduce and promote the Iranian-Islamic culture to the visitors of historical buildings, Hadi Shahdoost Shirazi added.

The official noted those students are needed first to attend training courses for tour guides under the supervision of the cultural heritage and tourism department.

With the help of Islamic seminaries, the [capital]

city of Shiraz, which is home to the mausoleum of Shah-e Cheragh (“King of Light”), can be a gateway to other religious sites throughout the province, the official explained.

The dazzling shrine of mirrored tiles is where Sayyed Mir Ahmad, one of the brothers of Imam Reza (AS), is laid to rest. Each day, it draws hundreds of the faithful from all over the country or even abroad.

A Cascade of photogenic domes and minarets can be seen in every corner of Iran as inseparable elements of mosques some of which are widely known as timeless benchmarks of Islamic architecture.

The country is home to hundreds of shrines, Imamzadehs, mausoleums, churches, and even fire temples amongst other religious destinations which are dedicated to different faiths. Among the top destinations for international tourists to Iran are the religious cities of Mashhad, Qom, Shiraz, and the capital Tehran. These cities are respectively home to the holy shrines of Imam Reza, the eighth Imam of Shia Muslims; his sister Hazrat Masumeh (SA); his brothers Ahmad and Mohammad; as well as the late founder of the Islamic Revolution Imam Rouhollah Khomeini.

A unique time for visiting Iran for religious tourists is during the first ten days of the lunar month of Muharram, when Iranians, who are mostly Shia Muslims, hold special ceremonies to commemorate the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (AS), the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his 72 loyal companions.

TEHRAN – A fresh study on inscribed clay tablets, which were used for the treasury archives of the Achaemenid Empire, has revealed workers of the mighty kingdom were paid silver coins for their wages.

Conducted by Iranian archaeologist Soheli Delshad, the study investigated 33 clay tablets, the majority of which dating back to the time of Darius I (Darius the Great), who was the third Persian King of Kings, reigning from 522 BC until he died in 486 BC.

Darius I was one of the greatest rulers of the Achaemenid dynasty, who was noted for his administrative genius and his great building projects. Darius attempted several times to conquer Greece; his fleet was destroyed by a storm in 492, and the Athenians defeated his army at Marathon in 490.

Of the tablets, all of which bearing Elamite cuneiform, 28 have been selected from the royal treasury of Persepolis, and the remaining four from a fort archive, ILNA quoted Delshad as saying on Wednesday.

The tablets reveal that the wages of workers were paid in silver from the king’s treasury, he stated.

According to the archaeologist, 136 men who received the payments were described as masonry (and possibly plasterers).

In 2019, hundreds of Achaemenid clay tablets and related fragments, which were on loan from Iran to the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago since 1935, were returned home.

In February 2018, and following years of ups and downs, the fate of those ancient Persian artifacts, was left in the hands of a U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled in favor of Iran.



## Achaemenid workers paid silver for wages, study on clay tablets finds

Archaeologists affiliated with the University of Chicago discovered the tablets in the 1930s while excavating in Persepolis, the ceremonial capital of the Persian Empire. However, the institute has resumed work in collaboration with colleagues in Iran, and the return of the tablets is part of a broadening of contacts between scholars in the two countries, said Gil Stein, director of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago.

The tablets reveal the economic, social, and religious history of the Achaemenid Empire (550-330 BC) and the larger Near Eastern region in the fifth century BC.

The Achaemenid [Persian] Empire was the largest and most

enduring empire of its time. The empire stretched from Ethiopia, through Egypt, to Greece, to Anatolia (modern Turkey), Central Asia, and to India.

The royal city of Persepolis ranks among the archaeological sites which have no equivalent, considering its unique architecture, urban planning, construction technology, and art. Persepolis, also known as Takht-e Jamshid, whose magnificent ruins rest at the foot of Kuh-e Rahmat (Mountain of Mercy) is situated 60 kilometers northeast of the city of Shiraz in Fars province.

The city was burnt by Alexander the Great in 330 BC apparently as revenge to the Persians because it seems the Persian King Xerxes

had burnt the Greek City of Athens around 150 years earlier. The city’s immense terrace was begun about 518 BC by Darius the Great, the Achaemenid Empire’s king. On this terrace, successive kings erected a series of architecturally stunning palatial buildings, among them the massive Apadana palace and the Throne Hall (“Hundred-Column Hall”).

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

Elamite language, extinct language spoken by the Elamites in the ancient country of Elam, which included the region from the Mesopotamian plain to the Iranian Plateau. According to Britannica, Elamite documents from three historical periods have been found. The earliest Elamite writings are in a figurative or pictographic script and date from the middle of the 3rd millennium BC.

Documents from the second period, which lasted from the 16th to the 8th century BC, are written in cuneiform; the stage of the language found in these documents is sometimes called Old Elamite.

The last period of Elamite texts is that of the reign of the Achaemenian kings of Persia (6th to 4th century BC), who used Elamite, along with Akkadian and Old Persian, in their inscriptions. The language of this period, also written in the cuneiform script, is often called New Elamite.

## Qajar-era caravanserai in eastern Iran undergoes restoration

TEHRAN – The first phase of a restoration project on Chehel Payeh Caravanserai in Tabas, eastern South Khorasan province has been completed, the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

The project involves landscaping, repairing rooms and rooftops as well as strengthening the whole structure that dates from the Qajar-era (1789-1925), Ali Shariatimanesht said on Wednesday.

A budget of one billion rials (\$23,800 at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been allocated to the project, he explained.

The historical inn, which is one of the candidates for collective UNESCO tag has four towers, a courtyard, stable, cistern, and a pool, the official added.

Caravansary (also Caravanserai or Caravansaray) is a building that served as the inn of the Orient, providing accommodation for commercial, pilgrim, postal, and



especially official travelers.

According to Encyclopedia Iranica, from the number of surviving caravansaries and their sizes, it is clear that in Safavid and Qajar times there was a state architectural department that was specifically concerned with the construction of caravansaries and stations on the overland routes. Furthermore, in the cities, several caravansaries were erected as lodging houses, depots, and commercial offices in the vicinity

of the bazaars.

A typical caravansary consists of a square or rectangular plan centered around a courtyard with only one entrance and arrangements for defense if necessary. Whether fortified or not, it at least provided security against beasts of prey and attacks by brigands.

**Iranian caravanserais being ready for collective UNESCO tag**

An all-inclusive dossier of a select

of Iranian caravanserais is being prepared to be evaluated during the next session of the World Heritage Committee, which will be held in 2022.

Last year, the tourism ministry announced that Iran is developing a dossier for a selection of its historical caravanserais for a possible inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage list. In this regard, cultural heritage experts are assessing such monuments that are scattered across the country to make a shortlist in terms of their architecture, historical and cultural values.

Iran’s earliest caravanserais were built during the Achaemenid era (550 -330 BC). Centuries later, when Shah Abbas I assumed power from 1588 – to 1629, he ordered the construction of network caravanserais across the country. For many travelers to Iran, staying in or even visiting a centuries-old caravanserai, can be a wide experience; they have an opportunity to feel the past, a time travel back into a forgotten age!



TEHRAN – A medium-sized earthquake that struck Quchan in Khorasan Razavi province, inflicted minor damage to historical sites across the northeastern city, Quchan’s tourism chief has announced.

A group of assessors and cultural heritage experts were immediately dispatched to the region after the 5.1 magnitude quake was reported, Javad Rajabi said on Wednesday.

Field investigations have revealed some minor harm and cracks in four historical sites including Karimi Mosque, Soltan Ebrahim Holy Shrine, Museum of Anthropology, and a traditional Yakhchal (ice storage), the official added.

The quake opened up some deep cracks in the walls of the historical monuments, he noted.

Over 50 historical sites, natural sites, and ancient hills in Quchan have been registered on the national heritage list so far, he explained.

The Iranian plateau is located in a very seismically active region of the world and is known not only for its major catastrophic earthquakes but also for the disasters relating to natural hazards, especially earthquakes.

About two percent of the earthquakes of the world occur in Iran but more than six percent of the victims of the world earthquakes during the 20th century are reported from Iranian earthquakes.

## Iran wants UNESCO recognition for archaeologically-rich Sialk

TEHRAN – Iran is preparing to nominate its archaeologically-rich Sialk Hill for a possible UNESCO registration.

Experts believe that Sialk is a treasure trove of information about diverse subjects such as palaeobotany, palaeozoology, palaeoanatomy, diet, climate change, and ancient metallurgy.

Situated halfway between Kashan and Fin in Isfahan province, Tapeh Sialk (“Sialk Hill”) has yielded interesting pottery pieces, metal tools, and domestic implements made from stone, clay, and bone that date from as early as the 4th millennium BC.

“We have commenced work to develop a dossier for the registration of Sialk on the UNESCO World Heritage list,” Kashan’s tourism chief said on Wednesday.

“To accelerate the progress a specialized team has been formed to collect the necessary documents,” the official noted, CHTN reported.

Several excavation projects at the site have so far been conducted, beginning with a 1933 French Louvre delegation led by Roman Ghirshman; capping with a most recent project in 2009, which was led by Hassan Fazeli-Nashli, a faculty member of the Archaeology Department, University of Tehran.

Many travelers opt to pass Kashan on their journeys between Tehran, Isfahan, Shiraz, and Yazd, because this delightful oasis city on the edge of the Dasht-e Kavir, is one of Iran’s most alluring destinations. Kashan not only boasts a cluster of architectural wonders, an atmospheric-covered bazaar, and a UNESCO-recognized garden, but it also offers some of central Iran’s best traditional hotels.

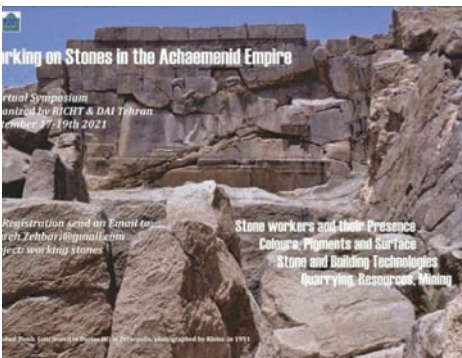
## Intl. conference to turn spotlight on Achaemenid stone carving

TEHRAN – An online symposium will be held from September 17 to 19 to discuss Iran’s art of stone carving during the Achaemenid era (ca. 550–330 BC), CHTN reported on Wednesday.

Entitled “Working on Stones in Achaemenid Empire”, the conference has been organized by the Research Institute for Cultural Heritage & Tourism (RICHT) in collaboration with the German Archaeological Institute (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, DAI).

Researchers from Iran and “abroad” have been invited to give lectures during the three-day conference about their new research in the fields of archaeology, linguistics, restoration, and archeology, Iranian archaeologist Zohreh Zoheiri announced.

The art of stone carving was a very practical skill during the Achaemenid period, and many immovable and moveable pieces of stone survive from this period, indicating



that there were a lot of stonemasons who served at the court of this empire, she added.

For decades, researchers have studied stone working methods, tools, stone mines, and techniques, and now this virtual symposium is an excellent forum for exchanging ideas, she noted.

## Drawings, paintings by Qajar king on show at Golestan Palace

TEHRAN – A selection of drawings and paintings created by the famed Qajar king Nasser ad-Din Shah (1821-1896) have been put on show at the UNESCO-registered Golestan Palace in downtown Tehran.

Nasser ad-Din Shah, who tested his artistic taste in a variety of arts, was intrigued by painting and drawing, Mehr quoted Afarin Emami, the director of the World Heritage site, as saying on Wednesday.

He was the student of Abul-Hassan Khan Ghaffari Sani ul-Molk, and his works, like his

master, follow the principles of naturalism, describing all the details he saw, and they are an amalgam of ancient Iranian styles influenced by the European ones, she explained.

“13 artworks can be visited online on the palace’s official Instagram page,” the official added.

Nasser ad-Din Shah was a different and effective ruler in certain areas. He introduced telegraph and postal services, built roads, opened the first school offering education along Western lines, and launched Iran’s first



newspaper. He visited Europe and was impressed with the technology he saw there.

Although the monarch had a desire for a modern Iran, his style of governance was dictatorial

which won little support from his people. Most reforms took place under his Prime Minister Amir Kabir who was unlimitedly been executed upon his decrees.

Nasser ad-Din Shah reigned for nearly 50 years from 1848-96 when he was assassinated by Mirza Reza Kermani, who believed that the Shah’s concessions to foreign powers, including the British Empire, could threaten the region by making it vulnerable to being conquered by European imperialism in the same way that India was.

## Historical relics donated to Kerman cultural heritage department



TEHRAN – An Iranian national has donated two historical relics to a cultural heritage department of Kerman province.

“One of the objects is a [wrecked] clay jar and the other is a [broken] cylindrical container,” a local police commander in charge of protecting cultural heritage said on Saturday.

“An ‘honorary guardian’ has been donated the relics, which date back to the prehistorical and Islamic eras,” the official said, CHTN reported.

The relics have been discovered in Jiroft that is one of the richest historical areas in the world, with ruins and artifacts dating back to the third millennium BC. Many Iranian and foreign experts see the findings in Jiroft as signs of civilization as great as Sumer and ancient Mesopotamia.

Big and sprawling Kerman province is something of a cultural melting pot, blending various regional cultures over time. It is also home to rich tourist spots and historical sites including bazaars, mosques, caravanserais, and ruins of ancient urban areas.

The southern province is bounded by the provinces of Fars on the west, Yazd on the north, South Khorasan on the northeast, Sistan-Baluchestan on the east, and Hormozgan on the south. It includes the southern part of the central Iranian desert, the Dasht-e Lut.



# World Ozone Day: preserving a layer that takes 50 years to repair

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN – The ozone layer is of great importance for its sustaining life on earth, if harmful emissions are reduced enough, it will take about 50 years for the ozone layer to repair so that it requires global attention and action.

Observed on September 16, the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer is celebrated every year across the globe since December 2000. The theme for the celebration of this year is “Montreal Protocol - Keeping us, our food, and vaccines cool”.

34 years ago, the use of harmful man-made chemicals began eating away at the ozone, the hole over Antarctica was first discovered by the British Antarctic Survey in 1985.

Therefore, 197 countries signed “the Montreal Protocol on substances that deplete the ozone layer” to cut short of the substances that deplete the ozone layer; the United Nations (UN) enforced it in 1989, which is now considered the most successful international environmental treaty.

The ozone layer is a part of the atmosphere that has high concentrations of ozone (a gas made of three oxygen atoms O3), compared to oxygen molecules that exist in nature as a pair of oxygen atoms. It exists 10km to 40km above the surface of the earth in a region called the stratosphere and contains 90 percent of all the ozone in the atmosphere.

Some harmful gasses including HCFC and Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) can interfere with the formation of ozone; mostly causing gaps or holes in the layer, as well as passing UV radiation from the sun to the atmosphere.

CFCs are referred to compounds of carbon, hydrogen, chlorine, and fluorine typically gases used in refrigerants and aerosol propellants. They are harmful to the ozone layer in the earth's atmosphere owing to the release of chlorine atoms on exposure to ultraviolet radiation.

HCFCs are also man-made compounds containing hydrogen, chlorine, fluorine, and carbon and do not occur naturally anywhere. These compounds are used in refrigeration, aerosol propellants, foam manufacture, and air conditioning.



HCFCs are less dangerous causing a smaller risk to the ozone layer; while being very powerful greenhouse gases, which are nearly 2,000 times more potent than carbon dioxide in adding to global warming.

### Depleting factors

Mohsen Roshani, manager of the monitoring unit at Tehran Air Quality Control Company said that the ozone layer is essential for the survival of the planet's ecosystem, and just as the world can play a role in its destruction, its destruction can have devastating effects on the whole world's population.

“The depletion of the ozone layer has occurred mostly in areas such as the North Pole and Antarctica and some neighboring countries such as New Zealand and Australia, however, its destructive effects extend to the life of the entire planet,” he lamented.

According to Roshani, degrading or reducing the thickness of the ozone layer reduces resistance to the sun's ultraviolet rays and allows them to reach the earth's surface more easily. However, this phenomenon usually occurs in some areas, such as the

Arctic and Antarctic, where the ozone layer is destroyed.

Ultraviolet radiation reaches the earth's surface causing problems in agriculture, aquatic life, and diseases such as skin cancer and ocular cataracts, he further added.

Pointing to the two natural and man-made factors in ozone depletion, he said that natural ozone-depleting factors, such as volcanic activity and wildfires, the impact is estimated at only 16 percent, so that human-related factors have a greater share in its

destruction.

The use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) has had a devastating effect on the ozone layer over the past decades, but now the Montreal Protocol has been ratified in all countries, including Iran, to contain the depleting effects, he further added.

### How Iran confronted chemicals jeopardizing the ozone layer?

Iran also joined the international cooperation protecting the fragile layer of ozone in 1989 and contributed significantly to global efforts in order to address climate change while protecting human health and ecosystems.

In 1992, the Department of Environ-

ment in collaboration with the United Nations Development Program approved a plan to establish an ozone layer conservation office in the Montreal Protocol executive committee; and the office started working a year later.

Maryam Hasani, an official with the ozone layer conservation office, told IRNA that activities of the ozone conservation office are summarized in five fields of changing production process, controlling and monitoring, raising public awareness, regional and international cooperation.

“Through the first phase of the plan, we succeeded in omitting 9,800 tons of ozone-destroying gasses changing the manufacturing processes of 1,378 factories, and it is scheduled to eradicate some 2,000 tons through the second phase,” she explained.

Holding various workshops, enforcing a set of laws and regulations, and strengthening supervision in the manufacturing units are also part of the project's second phase, which will be achieved by the 2030s, she added.

Until 2013, Iran was able to keep the consumption of hydrofluorocarbons at the base level (5,380 ODP tons) and by 2018 reduce this base level by 30 percent.

### Ozone hole shrinking

The ozone hole which was once the major environmental concern turned to the least important concern today; as the concentration of harmful emissions has considerably reduced by 14 percent since 2000.

The hole has been shrinking by 1-3 percent a decade.

However, the upper ozone layer above the Northern Hemisphere is said to be completely repaired in the 2030s, the gaping Antarctic ozone hole should disappear in the 2060s, according to a scientific assessment released in 2018 at a conference in Quito, Ecuador.

According to the UN, efforts to protect the ozone layer have also helped to tackle climate change by preventing the release of about 135 billion tons of carbon dioxide since 2010.

By the end of the century, eradicating Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) emissions not only can lead to the ozone layer repair but to reduce the temperature raise up to 0.4°C.

## Let’s clean up the world: “We are the first one to be hurt”

From page 1 ► Tehran is 750 to 800 grams per person daily. In fact, every Tehrani produces about 5 times their own weight of waste every year.

The environment is a global issue, and if something happens to it in one corner of the world, its effect will show itself in another part of the world in a few years, so the process of environmental degradation by over-production of waste has become worrisome.

In fact, the sheer volume of waste has led to the creation of the seventh continent in the world, which means that waste in the western United States and the western Pacific off the coast of Hawaii has created an area that is now 3.5 million square kilometers.

Increasing by 10 percent annually, this area has become one of the major environmental challenges in the world, endangering 280 species of birds and aquatic animals and killing more than 1 million birds and aquatic species annually.

This situation is worrying in the world, hence an environmental campaign called Clean Up the world, which consists of various associations around the world was formed in 1993 as an association approved and supported by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP).

The campaign annually brings together about 35 million volunteers from 130 countries as one of the largest environmental gatherings in the world. However, it is now somewhat limited due to the



outbreak of the coronavirus.

Since the world's first cleanup campaign in 1993, millions of volunteers have made amazing progress.

According to statistics, about 8,000 tons of waste is produced daily in Tehran, nearly 17 percent of which is recycled, and the rest is landfilled, while in the developed world 70 percent of the waste is recycled and 30 percent is buried.

Many countries have been so successful that some even claim to reduce waste to zero by 2030, and some are looking to generate energy from waste.

In Iran, it requires the promotion of a culture that must begin in schools, or governments must adopt incentive and punishment systems to reduce waste production and make separation at source into a culture among Iranian families.

## Iranians produce more than 50,000 tons of waste per day, which is twice the world standard.

## Iran to block borders in coming years to fight narcotics



TEHRAN – Iran has planned to block the borders in the coming years to prevent drug smuggling, IRNA reported on Wednesday.

Due to the need to block the borders in order to fight narcotics trafficking, meetings were held and issues were raised in the Majlis [Iranian parliament] so far, Vali Eskandari, member of the parliament said.

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), more than 224,000 hectares of farms in Afghanistan were planted with poppies in 2020, which is a 37 percent increase compared to a year before.

The discovery of more than 20 tons of methamphetamine transited from Afghanistan into Iran over the past year (March 2020-March 2021), shows multiplication of the production of narcotics in the neighboring country, police chief Majid Karimi, said.

The discovery of more than 76 percent of narcotics on the eastern and southeastern borders indicates the success of the police force in this area, he further stated.

Iran is the leading country in the fight against narcotics worldwide; despite its proximity to Afghanistan, which is the largest producer of narcot-

ics, he explained.

According to the UN Office, the Islamic Republic's continuous efforts to combat narcotics trafficking came up with the seizure of more than 90 percent of opium, 70 percent of morphine, and 20 percent of world heroin.

### ‘Common understanding, global action’

Iranian deputy anti-narcotics police chief Naqi Mahmoudi has stressed that the drug trafficking fight requires a common understanding and action by all members of the international community, and no country alone can address the challenges in this area.

Despite the conditions caused by the coronavirus outbreak and the imposition of harsh sanctions against the country, fortunately, with the efforts of anti-narcotics police in 2020, drug detection increased by 41 percent.

After the Islamic Revolution (in 1979), 3,800 were martyred, 12,000 were wounded and disabled in the fight against drug trafficking.

The UNODC has praised Iran's efforts to fight against narcotics trafficking on the occasion of International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

The organization also officially announced that the world's first place in the discovery of opium, heroin, and morphine belongs to Iran.

According to UNODC, Iran remains one of the major transit routes for drug trafficking from Afghanistan to European countries and has had a leading role at the global level in drug-control campaigns.

UNODC World Drug Report 2020 estimates that in 2018, 91 percent of world opium, 48 percent of the world morphine, and 26 percent of the world heroin were seized by Iran.

## COVID vaccination to complete in 48 days

TEHRAN – A plan has been prepared to vaccinate the whole population against coronavirus over the next 48 days, Alireza Raisi, a spokesman for the National Headquarters for Coronavirus control, has said.

Mass vaccination has been accelerated, as over 1 million doses are being injected daily, which can be achieved only by few countries, he further stated.

More homegrown vaccines, such as Fakhra, Noora, Spikogen, and Pastu Covac, have received emergency use licenses, and will be on the market within a month, he explained.

Currently, more than 5.2 million doses of domestic COVIRAN vaccine have been injected, and the possible side effects of this vaccine are really low compared to the foreign vaccines such as Pfizer, Moderna, etc., Raisi highlighted.

### COVID-19 toll declining

The coronavirus mortality related to delta variant peaked in July and recorded over 700 daily deaths, but with the increase of vaccination pace, the toll is now decreasing.

Today, more than one million doses of vaccine



are injected daily in the country, and many age groups of the elderly, rare diseases patients, teachers, university professors, health professionals, veterans, etc. have been vaccinated against the disease and now the process of vaccinating students is underway.

Studies show that people who are not vaccinated are 4.5 times more likely to develop COVID-19 than those who are fully vaccinated, and 10 and 11 times more likely to be hospitalized and die, respectively.

According to these studies, vaccines are effective against Delta strain and prevent hospitaliza-

## Homegrown vaccines, such as Fakhra, Noora, Spikogen, and Pastu Covac, have received emergency use license.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## Hospital beds capacity rises to improve medical system

Health Minister Saeed Namaki inaugurated 23 health centers, including 201 hospital beds, in Lorestan, Kermanshah, and Khuzestan provinces on Tuesday.

Built on 26,935 square meters area, the centers were constructed with a budget of 2.9 trillion rials (nearly \$70 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials).

The Ministry of Health is scheduled to add 10,600 hospital beds to the capacity of the country's medical system within the next 7 months.

Two years ago, there were a total of 140,859 beds in the country, which means 1.7 hospital beds per 1,000 population.

## افزایش ظرفیت تخت های بیمارستانی

سعید نمکی وزیر بهداشت امروز به صورت مجازی ۲۳ مرکز بهداشتی و درمانی را شامل ۲۰۱ تخت بیمارستانی در استان های لرستان، کرمانشاه و خوزستان افتتاح کرد.

به گزارش ایرنا، این مراکز در زیربنای ۲۶ هزار و ۹۳۵ مترمربع و با اعتباری بالغ بر ۲۹۸۰ میلیارد ریال ساخته شده است. وزارت بهداشت قرار است تا ۱۲ فروردین سال ۱۴۰۰، ۱۰ هزار و ۶۰۰ تخت بیمارستانی به ظرفیت بیمارستان های کشور اضافه کند.

در انتهای سال ۱۳۹۷ مجموعاً ۱۴۰ هزار و ۸۵۹ تخت فعال در کشور فعال بود که اگر این میزان را به ازای جمعیت محاسبه کنیم، ضریب تعداد جمعیت به تخت‌مان، ۱.۷ تخت به ازای هر ۱۰۰۰ نفر است.



