

# Israel U-turn on JCPOA Reveals Its Propaganda Tactics

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## Opinion

### Iranian maritime industry: a great capacity to be untapped

By Ebrahim Fallahi

TEHRAN – Having one of the oldest and most prominent shipping lines in the region, Iran has been taking serious measures for developing its shipping industry over the past two decades; however external factors such as sanctions have been holding this industry down and preventing it from reaching its true potential.

As the country's flag carrier group, the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL) was reported to be the world's 15th biggest shipping line in Alphaliner's rankings of prominent carriers in its Feb. 16, 2021 report, with a consolidated capacity of 151,706 TEUs.

IRISL currently has 150 active vessels, of which 32 are bulk carriers, 30 are container vessels, 22 are cargo carriers of general goods, 18 are service and passenger vessels, two are Roll-on/roll-off, and three are barges.

IRISL was sanctioned by the United States, United Nations, European Union, and other parties for a long time. However, the line returned to the world market in 2016, after a nuclear deal was reached between Iran and the world powers in August 2015.

However, once again, after the United States withdrew from the nuclear deal, U.S. sanctions against IRISL were re-imposed on June 8, 2020, impeding the Iranian shipping line's plans for becoming one of the world's top ten shipping lines by 2020.

Now the Islamic Republic is following new strategies to strengthen its maritime industry by empowering producers and by relying on domestic capacities.

Iran has all the means to become a shipping hub in West Asia, with its great geological advantages and having access to sea at both north and south of the country. ▶ Page 4

## Report

### Iraq election marred by “lack of transparency”

TEHRAN - The spokesman for the second-largest primary bloc, Fateh Alliance (Conquest alliance) in Iraq, Ahmed Al-Asadi, has confirmed that the alliance has logged a legal challenge to the initial results of Iraq's parliamentary elections on Sunday and says that the alliance is waiting for the final result from the country's Independent High Electoral Commission in a “transparent” manner.

Al-Asadi says, “we will not neglect one vote from the Iraqi people, and we will not back down [on this matter].” He stressed that Al-Fateh's rejection of the results “is not directed at any bloc or the Independent High Electoral Commission,” insisting that the results should be “transparent and clear to convince the masses.”

He pointed out that “one million votes were not counted among the announced preliminary results,” saying that “we have evidence that proves that we obtained a number of votes that qualifies us to win.”

The spokesperson of the second largest alliance in the outgoing parliament explained that “the legal challenge to the results is valid,” adding “we are waiting for the final result from the commission in a transparent manner.”

Al-Asadi noted that that “[the Fatah alliance] belongs to the [popular mobilization] people, which contributed to preserving the democratic process [by liberating the country from Daesh]” adding that “we have records for all electoral stations, and we call for the necessity of scrutiny, in a transparent manner.”

In its statement, the Al-Fateh Alliance called on the Iraqi judiciary to prosecute Muhammad Naim, the prime minister's advisor for electoral security, for his confessions in a leaked audio recording that he was charged with “entering the electoral process and destroying special electoral files targeting certain large blocs.” ▶ Page 5



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### Iran tests Joshan, Khatam air defense systems in military drills

TEHRAN — The indigenous air defense systems of Joshan and Khatam owned by the Army Air Defense Force have successfully shot down mock targets in the joint specialized air defense exercise codenamed “Defenders of Sky of Vellayat”.

“Through the main phase of the exercise, the Joshan and Khatam air defense systems of the

Army Air Defense Force destroyed hostile targets that intended to infiltrate the exercise area at low altitude,” Brigadier-General Qader Rahimzadeh, commander of Iran's Joint Air Defense Base, explained on Wednesday.

It was the first time that Khatam and Joshan systems were tested. The Joshan missile system is

an upgraded version of the 15 Khordad system that uses passive radar.

Rahimzadeh said the Joshan missile system successfully destroyed the targets assigned by the integrated air defense network, IRNA reported.

He added Iran will not neglect strengthening defense capability as a strategy in the field of air defense. ▶ Page 2

## 1,400 houses provided to families with disabled members

TEHRAN – Barekat Charity Foundation, affiliated with the Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam, provided 1,400 residential units to Iranian families with two or more members with disabilities.

“Last year (March 2020–March 2021), a joint memorandum of understanding was signed between the Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam, the Welfare Organization, and the Housing Foundation to build houses for families with two or more disabled members.

After a year, 1400 units in all 31 provinces of

the country have been built and prepared and will be delivered to their owners,” Seyed Mostafa Seyed-Hashemi, deputy coordinator of the Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam said.

So far, 4,000 community-based economic projects for the disabled have been implemented by the Barekat Foundation, he stated. He went on to say that we signed a contract to build 160,000 residential units for the deprived over the next two years, of which 50,000 units have been constructed throughout the country.

Over 1.3m persons with disabilities live in Iran



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### Tehran hosts intl. pharmaceuticals expo

The 6th international exhibition on pharmaceuticals and related industries was held at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Musalla on October 11-13.

A total of 509 companies from 23 countries participated in the three-day event.

According to officials, the import of pharmaceuticals has declined in Iran by 91 percent. A total of 227 knowledge-based firms are supplying medical equipment across the country.

## ‘Peace carpet’ being woven inside Iran pavilion at Expo 2020

TEHRAN – A carpet symbolizing peace and empathy is currently being woven by the hands of visitors to the Iran pavilion at the prestigious Expo 2020 Dubai, ILNA reported on Wednesday.

In collaboration with the Iran National Carpet Center, the Iran pavilion has prepared special programs for the Expo 2020 Dubai to showcase the capabilities of this national art, considering the importance of hand-woven carpets among the non-oil exports of the country, the report added.

Visitors to the pavilion are kindly required to tie a

knot on the carpet as a symbol of peace and empathy under the supervision of a master of carpet weaving.

The carpet will be completed with these knots in six months and is planned to be displayed at the Expo Museum, the report said.

Persian carpets, a symbol of Iranian art

For millennia, Iran's eminent carpets, which are adored for their intricate designs, lavish colors, and matchless craftsmanship, have been produced by hand along the nomad trail across the foothills and

high plains of the ancient land.

Weavers, the majority of whom women, spend several months in front of a loom, stringing and knotting thousands of threads. Some practice established patterns, some make their own.

It is a scene that seems ageless, a procedure that can take as long as a year, these efforts have long put Iran's carpets among the most complex and labor-intensive handicrafts in the world. When the weaving is finally done, the carpet is cut, washed, and put out in the sun to dry. ▶ Page 6

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## Interview



### There is doubt that Taliban has changed: researcher

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN - A Pakistani researcher says that despite initial optimistic views over the Taliban, there is now doubt whether the group has changed.

“At the start of their takeover in August, there was much optimism that the new Taliban regime would be different from the one in the 90s,” Arhama Siddiqi tells the Tehran Times.

“However, now there is doubt on whether the group has changed.”

When the Taliban were in charge from 1996 to 2001, they barred women and girls from school. After the Taliban was toppled in late 2001, female students began attending schools and universities as opportunities blossomed. Women were able to study for careers in business and government and professions such as medicine and law.

But now, after the Taliban return, there are doubts about the group's real intention to consider women's rights.

“Despite repeated assurances, girls in the secondary schools and above are not attending school. Moreover, women are prohibited from working, running businesses, or in some cases even going outside without being accompanied by a male family member,” Siddiqi notes.

Whereas the Taliban know they need international cooperation, which means they have to adopt a moderate outlook, they do not signal a fundamental change in their views. “At the moment, the Taliban's promises that its members will take a less hardline stance on social issues and respect women's rights are being met with some skepticism,” the Pakistani researcher emphasizes.

Following is the text of the interview:

**Given recent explosions, how do you see repercussions of U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan? Apparently, we should expect new waves of violence.**

The situation in Afghanistan is really uncertain and tricky at the moment. ▶ Page 5

## Top books on war against ISIS honored at Martyr Hossein Hamedani Awards

TEHRAN – Top books on the war against ISIS were honored on Tuesday at the 2nd edition of the Biennial Martyr Hossein Hamedani Awards.

The awards ceremony took place at the Art Bureau of the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization, the organizers of the awards event, which was launched in 2019.

The award has been named after Brigadier General Hossein Hamedani, a high-ranking military advisor with the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), who was martyred in October 2015 during a mission in Syria.

Books in six categories are awarded biennially. “My Mood These Days” won the award in the Memory category. The book written by Roqieh Karimi recounts the memories of Amir-Hossein Haj-Nasiri, the commander of the Seyyed al-Shohada Brigade in Syria.

Haj-Nasiri has been totally paralyzed due to spinal cord injuries that happened on the frontline in Syria. ▶ Page 8



## Iran tests Joshan, Khatam air defense systems in military drills

From page 1 ► “Accurate assessment of the perceived threats in the sky has led us to develop defense systems commensurate with threats, and today there is no threat that we have not thought of a way to deal with,” he remarked.

It should be noted that the indigenous long-range radar of the Quds Pulse Array of the Air Force of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps was also involved in the joint specialized exercise. The radar is capable of tracking targets at a range of over 500 km and an altitude of more than 90,000 feet.

**Armed Forces have acquired cutting-edge defense technology: IRGC**

The IRGC chief said on Wednesday that Iran's Armed Forces have, thanks to completely indigenous efforts, equipped themselves with the world's top-of-the-range defensive technology.

Major General Hossein Salami was speaking during the second day of major airpower drills involving the IRGC's Aerospace Division, the Islamic Republic of Iran Air Force (IRIAF), and the Islamic Republic of Iran Air Defense Force (IRIADF).

The exercise kicked off in the country's sprawling Central Desert, with the goal of practicing defensive maneuvers in the service of the country's “sensitive and vital” spots and testing the operational maneuverability of the Armed Forces' new-generation defensive equipment among other things.

Over just two days, the maneuvers saw the combined forces successfully lay into all the targets that had been designated for the purpose of the drills by the country's Integrated Air Defense Network, using at least six state-of-the-art air defense systems, namely Mersad-16, Tabas, Khordad-3, Khordad-15, Majeed, and Dezfoul.

“What we perceived during this exercise was a modern and advanced display of every aspect of air defense [operations] in the face of unpredictable scenarios,” Salami noted.

“By God's grace, all the targets that entered the area [of the drills] were struck by the systems' first shot,” General Salami stated.

“The reason for this is that the IRGC's Aerospace Division and the Army's Air Defense Force have acquired cutting edge technology [for its] very modern and advanced systems,” Press TV quoted him as saying.

General Salami went on to specify the message that the drills have been assigned to convey. According to the commander, the exercises are meant to send across the “invariable message of unity” between the IRGC and Army in their duty to serve in the country's defense.

The unity, he said, was rooted in the dual forces' defensive cooperation during the Western-backed imposed war that former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hossein waged on the Islamic Republic from 1980 until 1988.

## Iran, Pakistan agree to expand security ties, help establish peace in Afghanistan

TEHRAN — Islamabad had a busy day on Tuesday, when two Iranian delegations arrived in Pakistan. A delegation representing the Iranian parliament, and a high-rank military delegation headed by Armed Forces Chief of Staff Mohammad Baqeri.

Pakistan and Iran agreed for collective efforts in forming a strong government in Afghanistan and help establish peace in the country, according to Samaa TV.

This understanding was reached during a meeting between Pakistan's Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmad and Iranian parliamentary delegation led by MP Ahmad Amirabadi Farhani.

Both sides discussed bilateral relations and regional situation. They exchanged views on preventing and fighting terrorism and illegal human trafficking.

**Defense ties with Pakistan to be enhanced: Iran's military chief**

Major General Baqeri also expressed the hope that military and defense interactions between Iran and Pakistan would be strengthened.

In an exclusive interview with IRNA just after his arrival at a military airbase in Islamabad on Tuesday evening, General Baqeri said that Iran and Pakistan have deep and historical ties.

The top military official said that during his trip he will discuss how to establish better communications channels for more security along the “long and common borders of Iran and Pakistan.”

He added in recent years there have been a lot of cooperation on common borders.

Baqeri also said Afghanistan will feature



high in his talks with Pakistani officials. The top military official said Iran and Pakistan share common concerns over Afghanistan.

The current visit of Iran's military delegation to neighboring Pakistan marks a new stage in strengthening defense and security relations between the two important countries.

Considering security developments in the region and the Islamic world, including the situation in Afghanistan, political and military experts view the visit by the high-ranking Iranian military team to Pakistan as important.

Baqeri's visit to Pakistan is considered very important due to the growing trend of defense, security and military relations between the two neighbors.

The visit marks the common will of the Iranian and Pakistani military officials to enhance cooperation, develop security at common borders, stabilize the region, fight against terrorism and insecurity. The two countries share a common vision for a return of peace and stability to Afghanistan.

## Qatar FM backs interaction between Iran and Persian Gulf states



TEHRAN — The Qatari foreign minister on Wednesday renewed Doha's call for talks between the Arb states lying on the southern shores of the Persian Gulf with Iran.

Qatar's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammed bin Abdul Rahman Al Thani also elaborated on his country's views on the current situation in Afghanistan, Doha's important relations with Washington, and the talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

He also said a return to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially called the JCPOA, is in everyone's interest.

“It is in our interest to restore the nuclear deal and we will provide any necessary support to make this happen.”

**“Doha acts as neutral mediator with Afghanistan”**

Regarding the developments in Afghanistan, the Qatari foreign minister said that leaving Afghanistan alone was wrong and that Doha was in contact with

Washington and the Taliban to find a solution.

Solving the existing problems is not possible without interaction with the interim government in Afghanistan, he opined.

“We have played the role of a neutral mediator and seek to make Afghanistan a stable country,” he added, according to Al Jazeera. “We are in touch with all Afghan groups and we have a good relationship with them. An approach based on international cooperation must be taken on Afghanistan.”

The Qatari official added, “Our relationship with Washington is strong, strategic and important for regional security.”

**Qatar encourages Riyadh-Tehran talks**

“The misunderstanding with neighboring countries had reasons that we hope will not reappear,” the Qatari foreign minister said.

He added, “We are witnessing a positive movement between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and we encourage that.”

Qatar is interacting with Iran as a neighbor and a key player in the region, he said, noting that mediation between Iran and other countries is in Qatar's interests.

In another part of his remarks, the Qatari foreign minister stressed that normalization deal with the Zionist regime, known as Abraham Accords, is not in line with Doha's policies because it does not offer any prospect for ending the occupation of the Palestinian lands.

As long as the occupation continues, economic normalization with Israel cannot be relied upon.

# Armenian security chief: Aliyev's remarks do not help the negotiations

*There is no mention of a corridor in our negotiations*

From page 1 ► In addition, various officials of Iran and Armenia meet regularly, which indicates the positive development of relations between the two countries. The development of relations between the two countries shows that the accusations made about the relations between the two countries are not true.

After the signing of the tripartite declaration on firearms, various ambiguities have been raised on various issues, not only this declaration but also the war itself has had a great impact on the region. This war paved the way for the presence of terrorists in the region and created an opportunity for terrorists and the armed forces of some countries.

The presence of these terrorists has caused insecurity in our region. We have always warned others about these points, but these warnings issued by Armenia did not help them to prevent terrorists and armed people from entering the region.

As for removing the blockade on economic routes in the region, I must say that this issue was raised and emphasized both in the November statement and in the trilateral meeting of the leaders



of Armenia, Russia and the Republic of Azerbaijan held in Russia on January 11. I want to emphasize with confidence that there is no mention of the corridor in either the statement or in the meetings.

On the contrary, the Azerbaijani side has repeatedly stated that an issue has been raised about this corridor. I would like to emphasize that Armenia has never said, does not and will not say anything about the corridor, and has never negotiated and will never negotiate on the corridor.

**All communication routes between Turkey and the Republic of Azerbaijan will be under the control of Armenia**

Armenia is ready to open the existing roads in the country for transportation between the Republic of Azerbaijan and Turkey, but all these roads are under the sovereignty of the Republic of Armenia. We have talked about this openly both in the media and in meetings with colleagues.

Regarding Aliyev's remarks, it should be said that he tries to say things that

are outside the scope of the negotiations, which will never help the development of the negotiations and will not have a positive effect.

Regarding Aliyev's remarks, I must say that the Armenian Armed Forces are ready to defend the country's territorial integrity and security. Armenia will not allow border changes in the region; in this case we can clearly say that there is an international consensus on this.

I would like to make it clear once again that the government of the Republic of Armenia has never negotiated on the territory and sovereignty of Armenia. We have not and will not have any negotiations on the right of sovereignty and territory belonging to Armenia.

Nakhchivan is part of the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan. If Azerbaijan intends to equate these corridors, it is as if it recognizes Nagorno-Karabakh as part of the territory of Armenia, which means that when the Azerbaijani side looks at these two corridors on the same level, it means that as Armenia recognizes Nakhchivan as the territory of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan also recognizes Karabakh as part of the territory of Armenia.

## Amir Abdollahian says Tehran and Baku should not give enemies opportunity to undermine ties

TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian and his Azerbaijani counterpart Jeyhun Bayramov discussed the latest developments in bilateral relations in a telephone conversation on Tuesday.

While emphasizing the need for mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries, Abdollahian said Tehran and Baku have a long-standing relationship with each other, according to the Iranian foreign ministry website.

He stressed that the two countries must prevent misunderstandings in their relations and it is worthwhile to quickly put their ties in the right and growing direction.

Abdollahian also said Tehran expects that the problem of transit of Iranian trucks in the Azerbaijan Republic will be resolved soon.

The Iranian foreign minister spoke of the depth of relations between the two nations, saying Tehran and Baku have enemies and the two sides should not give the enemies the opportunity to disrupt relations between the two countries and concerns should be allayed through dialogue and cooperation.

The foreign minister of Azerbaijan also called relations with Iran friendly and added that ties with friendly countries are a priority for Baku.

He emphasized the need to resolve the differences through dialogue and in a calm and sincere atmosphere. Bayramov suggested that the two countries' customs officials hold talks to solve the problem of the transit of Iranian goods.

He stressed the pursuit of the release of two Iranian truck drivers detained in Azerbaijan.

The foreign ministers of the two countries invited each other to visit Tehran and Baku.

**Baku claims no terrorists in Azerbaijan**

Azerbaijan on Monday slammed Iran for what it called Tehran's “smear campaign” about presence of terrorist groups in Azerbaijan.

“We said this during the 44-day war and we emphasize once again that there were no terrorists in Azerbaijan. In general, as a country that has suffered due to terrorism, there has never been a place for terrorists in Azerbaijan,” Azeri Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Leyla Abdullayeva said, according to Yeni Safak

Referring to last year's Karabakh conflict, she stressed that Azerbaijan and its army of more than 100,000 soldiers did not need mercenaries to defeat Armenia.

Also on Wednesday, Azeri President Ilham Aliyev claimed that he himself makes the decisions, Azertag reported.

“No other country can or should try to influence Azerbaijan's decisions. Decisions are made here in Baku, by me, based on the national interests of Azerbaijan. Whoever tried to use artificial pretext and blame Azerbaijan for kind of relations with some other countries, failed. This is not the right path. It will lead to deadlock,” he said.

Speaking about the latest escalation of Iran-Azerbaijan relations, the president stated that “the reason for what is happening is not because of our relations with some other country, it is because our foreign policy is very open, transparent, stable and as I said independent.”

Several Iranian officials, directly or indirectly, have urged Baku to distance itself from Israel and avoid being trapped by Tel Aviv's anti-Iran plots.

During his Monday press briefing, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh bluntly warned that Tehran will not tolerate Israeli presence in any

neighboring countries.

“Iran by no means neglect its national security, and all its neighbors know this well. Messages are firmly sent to all neighbors. The Zionist regime has taken insecurity and instability everywhere it went. The Zionist regime definitely wants to see this region as insecure. Tehran and Baku must be careful that third parties do not interfere in these good relations,” Khatibzadeh asserted.

He cautioned, “We will not tolerate the presence of the Jerusalem occupying regime near our neighborhood and in any other neighboring countries.”

Earlier this month, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, whose support for Baku during last year's Nagorno-Karabakh 44-day war was appreciated by the Azerbaijani foreign ministry at the time, also commented on the situation in the south Caucasus region.

Addressing a military graduation ceremony via videoconference, Ayatollah Khamenei underlined the need for regional countries to rely on their own nations and avoid letting foreign countries interfere in the region.

“The armies of regional nations can run the region on their own and you should not allow others to enter. The events that are taking place in the northwest of our country in some of our neighboring countries are matters that must be resolved using this same logic,” the Leader said, adding, “Of course, our country and our Armed Forces are acting wisely. Our approach in all matters is to act wisely, authority coupled with wisdom. It is good if other governments act wisely too and not permit the region to face serious problems. Those who dig a hole for their brothers will be the first to fall into it.”

Tensions between Iran and Azerbaijan have many dimensions but Iran has mainly focused on the Israeli factor, one which it sees as the most dangerous element in the ever-changing politics of the region.

## Iran: Tehran's policy toward Afghanistan depends entirely on Taliban's behavior

TEHRAN — Kamal Kharrazi, head of Iran's Strategic Council on Foreign Relations, said on Wednesday that Iran closely monitors the policies and behavior of the Taliban in Afghanistan.

He said the main duty of any government is ensuring the rights of people, including providing security.

“This is also true of the current government of Afghanistan. Countering terrorism and preventing crimes such as the killing of innocent people in Shia schools and mosques by the ISIS terrorist group is primarily the task of the current government to purge terrorists from Afghanistan, and of course it is the natural right of the oppressed Shias of Afghanistan to defend their rights.”

The remarks by the former foreign minister come as ISIS targeted a Shia mosque in Kunduz on Friday in which more than 50 worshippers were killed and more than 100 injured.

Top Iranian officials including the Leader of the Islamic Revolution and president condemned the attack on worshippers in the strongest terms.

The Taliban were in power from 1996 to

2001 before they were overthrown after the September 11 attacks.

Kharrazi said the Taliban's behavior after seizing power can be different from the previous time, and this should be seen in the Taliban's attitude towards different ethnic and religious groups and establishing good ties with neighbors.

That is why Iran is closely monitoring the policies and behavior of the Taliban in Kabul and other parts of Afghanistan, he added.

“The interests of the Taliban and the interests of Pakistan, as the main supporter of the Taliban, entail a change in the Taliban's behavior during its rule so that peace inside Afghanistan and good neighborliness with its neighbors can be achieved,” Kharrazi pointed out.

The former foreign minister added only then Pakistan will benefit from a stable neighbor such as Afghanistan, that could help its strategic depth.

He underlined, “The Islamic Republic of Iran does not intend to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, but of course it has legitimate interests in that country that must be secured.”

Kharrazi elaborated that these interests



are in the field of security of the two countries' borders, preventing the activities of terrorist groups from infiltrating the Iranian territory, preventing drug trafficking to Iran, respecting the rights of Shiites and other Afghans, preserving and spreading the Persian language as part of the people's heritage.

“Afghanistan should pave the way for the return of Afghan refugees living in Iran, to secure Iran's access, develop trade and commerce between Iran and Afghanistan, and (the Taliban) participate in the reconstruction and development of the country,” he added.

He then stated that maintaining Afghanistan's political independence is not only a national interest, but a necessity for

the development of peace and stability, and it is up to the Taliban to insist on Afghanistan's political independence and prevent presence and influence of any foreign power.

“The presence of foreign forces for decades, including the U.S. and NATO forces, in the Afghan soil and the catastrophes they have created should be a lesson for the Afghan government and its oppressed people to never again become the hotbed of international and regional powers,” he emphasized.

Kharrazi concluded by saying that Iran's policy in Afghanistan depends entirely on the behavior of the Taliban.

“If the path in Afghanistan is towards an inclusive government, protection of the rights and security of all ethnic groups, counterterrorism and the adoption of a good neighborly policy, the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready for any cooperation,” the former foreign minister stated.

He then underscored that Iran is ready to assist the government and people of Afghanistan and will share all its experiences and capacities with “brothers and sisters” in Afghanistan.

## Top MP advises Erbil authorities to halt terrorists' acts against Iran

TEHRAN — A member of the parliament's National Security Committee has warned that if authorities in the Iraqi Kurdistan region fail to stop the terrorist acts by armed groups, Iran would use its legal right to take the necessary measures.

Armed groups use the Iraqi Kurdistan region for hit-and-run operations in western and northwestern Iran. These militants harass the local ordinary people and attack military forces whenever they find an opportunity.

In an interview with Fars News Agency published on Wednesday, Esmail Kowsari said: “These outfits were armed after the victory of the Islamic Revolution with the support of the United States, the Zionist regime and the reactionary countries in the region.”

Under international law, he said, Iran has the right to take military action against these militants.

The former military commander said support

for these counter-revolutionary groups, including providing a wide range of logistics such as manpower training, equipment and other facilities, have enabled these groups to grow and be able to take action against the Islamic Republic.

The parliamentarian noted that so far Iran has held several rounds of talks and meetings with these countries in which terrorists take refuge in their lands but some have taken action against them and some been unable to contain them.

“Therefore, Iran always warned them that if these countries stopped those terrorists in the first place, that is good, because we have enough evidence that they are carrying out terrorist acts against us, but if these countries do not take necessary measures to halt these terrorist groups, based on our legal right, we will prevent their actions,” Kowsari asserted.

Ultimately, this issue must be resolved within the

region, especially on the Iranian borders with neighbors, he added.

Regarding the silence of the officials of the Iraqi Kurdistan region and the central Iraqi government and the lack of effective action in this regard, Kowsari urged them to take appropriate measures to prevent these outfits to take actions against Iran.

Prior to remarks by Kowsari, Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) Ground Force Commander Mohammad Pakpour had warned Iran won't tolerate militants in northern Iraq.

“The officials of Iraq and the Kurdistan Region must evict the elements and members of the terrorist and anti-Revolution groups from northern Iraq immediately, otherwise we will destroy their strongholds and bases,” Tasnim quoted Pakpour as saying in late September.

Iranian Armed Forces Chief of Staff Mohammad Baqeri has also made similar warnings.



# Israel U-turn on JCPOA reveals its propaganda tactics

TEHRAN – In a contradictory departure from Israel's longstanding propaganda, former Mossad chief Yossi Cohen has said Iran is not even close to getting a nuclear weapon, laying bare Tel Aviv's deceitful campaign against Iran which rests on magnifying Tehran's alleged threats against Israel.

Speaking at a conference hosted by the Jerusalem Post, Cohen struck a different note about Iran's nuclear program and boastfully hinted that Israel was behind acts of sabotage targeting the Iranian nuclear facilities.

"I think that Iran, to this day, is not even close to acquiring a nuclear weapon," the former Israeli spy chief said. "This is due to longstanding efforts by some forces in the world."

The remarks came at a time when Israel strenuously seeks to influence the U.S. stance on reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and that they cannot be separated from Israel's overall policy toward Iran.

Cohen himself was aware that he was moving away from the official line. So, he described his view as "different." But this cannot be construed as a personal view given the fact that Cohen stopped reading "intelligence" only a few months ago.

During his tenure as Mossad chief played a crucial role in Israel's propaganda against Iran and building the case for U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA. In Early April 2018, just slightly more than a month before former



U.S. President Donald Trump pulled Washington out of the JCPOA, Cohen managed to plant a story in western media that Mossad is "100 percent certain" Iran seeking nuclear weapons even while the JCPOA was still in place and that the nuclear deal must be "completely changed or scrapped."

Cohen called at the time the nuclear deal a "terrible mistake," saying it allows Iran to keep key elements of its nuclear program intact and will remove other restraints in a few years.

As head of the Mossad, I am 100 percent certain that Iran has never abandoned its military nuclear vision for a single instant. This deal enables Iran to achieve that vision," the then Mossad chief claimed. "That is why I believe the deal must be completely changed or scrapped. The failure to do so would be a grave threat to Israel's security."

In the ensuing month, Trump withdrew from the JCPOA and embarked on a policy of "maximum pressure" against Iran that continues to this day.

In the time since Israel kept raising alarm bells about Iran getting a nuclear weapon within few months. For instance, in February this year, Israel's energy minister said it would take Iran around six months to produce enough fissile material for a single nuclear weapon.

This exactly corresponds with a projection by former Israeli Benjamin Netanyahu in September 2012. "They are very close, they are six months away from being about 90 percent of having the enriched uranium for an atom bomb," Netanyahu told NBC at the time.

So which assessment is correct? None, in short. Because Iran has made it crystal clear that it does not seek to develop a nuclear weapon and its

nuclear program is solely for peaceful purposes.

Israel propagates misinformation against Iran's nuclear program at every critical juncture. They use this strategy to extort more security and military concessions from the United States and, more recently, from some Arab states.

Without magnifying Iran's alleged threats, Israel would have never succeeded in normalizing ties with these Arab states. Cohen called this normalization "one of the greatest accomplishments ever" and "a majestic thing" that is "no less than a miracle for Israel."

Israelis now hope that other Arab states, especially Saudi Arabia, join the normalization push. But they seem to have difficulty convincing Saudi Arabia and its allies that the benefits of normalizing ties with Tel Aviv outweigh its costs. Saudi Arabia has been involved in talks with Iran since April and the two countries are reportedly inching toward a deal to reopen consulates and restore diplomatic ties after more than six years of unrelenting tensions. And even in this regard, Israel feels it is the loser.

An opinion piece published by Haaretz opined that if the Saudi-Iranian rapprochement is successful and the Saudi consulate in Tehran is reopened, and relations between the two countries are normalized; This would mean the elimination of the anti-Iran alliance, on which Israel relied and pinned many hopes, including the possibility of establishing diplomatic with Saudi Arabia.

## SPORTS

### Coaching staff should solve Iran's tactical problems soon: expert

By Farrokh Hesabi

Iranian football pundit Jalal Cheraghpour says that Iran national team may get into trouble in the future if they don't solve their tactical problems.

Iran retained the top spot of Group A of the 2022 World Cup qualifiers after a 1-1 draw against the Korea Republic on Tuesday in Tehran.

The result keeps Iran two points ahead of Korea on top of the group, and Dragan Skocic's side remain well placed to reach Qatar 2022.

However, there were some concerns about the performance of the national team in this game.

"We should consider some points about Team Melli before analyzing the game against Korea," Cheraghpour told Tehran Times.



"First of all, Iran came to this game with 10 wins in a row and accordingly with the best mental condition. Second, Iran had all their players ready to play without any suspended or injured players. Third, Iran played against the UAE in the previous game, a modern Asian team in terms of tactical issues, despite suffering some weakness in their game. Fourth, it was a game of the two of the biggest Asian teams, Iran and Korea, who both have the class and character in Asian football," explained the Iranian football expert.

"Considering the given factors, we expected a better performance of our national team, but the reality was something different.

"The first thing we could see in the Iran team was the lack of appropriate passes for the two forwards, Sardar Azmoun and Mehdi Taremi. Both strikers are in their best form in their European clubs, but in Tuesday's game, they had to fight physically to create opportunities for themselves.

"The reason for this problem was the weakness in our midfield. Saeid Ezatollahi and Ahmad Nouroollahi, as two central and defensive midfielders, have very similar characteristics in their style of play. They were not able to get the ball into the attacking line.

"Moreover, there was a clear split between our two defensive midfielders that allowed the Koreans to make a penetrating pass for Son Heung-min. He used the trough ball and scored the goal.

"Iran had the same problem in the game against the UAE. The existing split in our midfield let the UAE create a chance that led to our defender's dismissal. However, the VAR rejected that red card, but our weakness in the defensive tactics was clear. The Korean team had analyzed us well and took advantage of such weakness," he added.

"I warn the coaching staff that if they do not solve the tactical problems, they will get into a lot of trouble in the next games," Cheraghpour concluded.

### Skocic not satisfied, Bento welcomes "fair result" after Tehran draw

Tehran- Islamic Republic of Iran head coach Dragan Sko?i? was left wanting more, while his Korea Republic counterpart Paulo Bento praised a quality contest after the two sides played out a 1-1 AFC Asian Qualifiers – Road to Qatar draw at Azadi Stadium on Tuesday.

Son Heung-min looked like he may have given the visitors all three points when he scored on the break in the 48th minute, but that goal sparked an Iranian revival which culminated in an Alireza Jahanbakhsh equaliser.

The result keeps Team Melli two points ahead of the Koreans on top of Group A, and both sides remain well placed to reach Qatar 2022, but Sko?i? wouldn't go as far as saying he was happy with dropping

points on home soil.

"In the first half we had some problems in the midfield, and we tried to correct this in the second half," said the Croatian boss, whose perfect record of 10 consecutive wins as Iran head coach ended on Tuesday.

"I have to tell you, I'm not happy to draw this game. I'm not satisfied, but at the same time, we played against a great team with top players, and, at any moment, they can take chances.

"We are satisfied to stay in this position. We are in a good position. Today we also played with our rival (to qualify) and we are looking forward to our future games in the competition."

It was a see-sawing game, and one which really burst into life after Son's goal.

Korea Republic played calmly and defended well during the first half, then landed the game's first real blow when the Tottenham Hotspur star became the first Korean player to score in the Iranian capital since Park Ji-sung in 2009, the-afc.com reported.

The hosts largely controlled the latter stages, with Saeid Ezatollahi and Mehdi Taremi both hitting the woodwork, although it took an Alireza Beiranvand save in the dying seconds to prevent Na Sang-ho from winning it for the visitors.

Bento said, all things considered, each side deserved a point.

"I think it was a good game between two good teams with different styles," he declared.

"I think we were better in the first half. Then after our goal, Iran had a very good reaction. We couldn't attack or control the game the way we did in the first half. We had a chance to score at the end of the game, but I think it's a fair result in a balanced game."

"We knew it wouldn't be a game where we were going to dominate the opponent every time. We should think that the opponent is a very good team with very good players, strong players. They pressed our team strongly and we also had difficulties to find space behind their defensive line."

With eight points from four games, Korea Republic remain second in the group table ahead of next month's matches against winless United Arab Emirates and Iraq, while Iran will carry their total of 10 points through to the November fixtures against Lebanon and Syria.

### Sepahan held by Nassaji in friendly

TEHRAN – Sepahan football team were held to a 1-1 draw by Nassaji on Wednesday in Tehran in a friendly match.

The match was held as part of preparation for the 2021/22 Iran Professional League (IPL) season.

Nassaji scored an own goal in the first half and Ali Alekasis scored a late equalizer.

The 2021/22 season will kick off on Oct. 19.

A total of 16 teams will participate at the new season.

Persepolis are defending champions and look to win the IPL title for the sixth in a row.

Fajr Sepasi and Havadar will take part in the upcoming season as the newcomers after secured promotion to the league last season.

Machine Sazi and Saipa were also relegated from the IPL to the First Division.

Iran Professional League is the highest division of professional football in the west Asian country. It is the top-level football league in Iran since its foundation in 2001.

Since 2013, the league comprises 16 teams. The winners of IPL and Hazfi Cup automatically qualify for the AFC Champions League group stages. The runners-up and the third-place teams should participate at the AFC Champions League Play-off round.

Persepolis are the most successful club with seven titles in IPL and 14 in total.

### Iranian women finish 3rd at 2021 Youth World Weightlifting

TEHRAN – Iran's women's team finished in third place at the 2021 Youth World Weightlifting Championships.

Yekta Jamali made history in the games, winning the first-ever silver medal for Iran in the weightlifting championships.

Iran came third with 405 points.

The U.S. and Russia finished in first and second place with 655 and 507 points, respectively.

Iran's men's weightlifting team also finished in fifth place with 349 points. Russia and the U.S. became champions and vice champions with 725 and 555 points.

## Iranian FM, Swiss National Assembly speaker hold extensive talks

TEHRAN – The Speaker of the Swiss National Assembly Andreas Aebi met on Tuesday morning at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian to discuss bilateral relations and exchange views over regional and international issues.

The Iranian foreign ministry said the two sides discussed extensive issues including the stalled nuclear talks between Iran and major world powers.

During the meeting, the Iranian foreign minister referred to the good relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Switzerland, describing as important parliamentary diplomacy between the legislative bodies of the two countries and the role of parliaments in the comprehensive development of cooperation, according to the Iranian foreign ministry.

Abdollahian also called the Swiss National Assembly speaker's trip an important step for the development of parliamentary cooperation between the two countries.

The foreign minister further explained the vision of the new Iranian government regarding balanced relations with foreign countries and said the development of ties with Switzerland in various areas is important.

Abdollahian also spoke of the important capacities of bilateral relations in political, economic and cultural fields, saying cooperation between their small and mid-sized enterprises (SMEs) could be enhanced. He stressed the need to hold a joint commission for cooperation between the two countries.



The Iranian foreign minister continued to address some important issues in the region, including the latest developments in Afghanistan. Abdollahian explained Iran's principled view on the formation of a comprehensive government in Afghanistan with the involvement of all Afghan groups. He underlined that confronting the challenges posed by the developments in Afghanistan with regard to refugees, narcotics and terrorism requires joint international efforts.

Referring to the beginning of the cold season and the escalation of difficult conditions for the people of Afghanistan, Abdollahian emphasized the need for collective cooperation of all countries to handle the situation there, especially sending humanitarian aid to the country. He added that the Islamic Republic of Iran has already been active in this field.

The Iranian foreign minister explained the Ebrahim Raisi government's view on the resumption of the Vienna talks, saying Iran will finalize its conclusions in this regard in the near future. He said in future talks,

Iran's actions will be commensurate with the level of actions of the other parties.

The speaker of the Swiss National Assembly also said he was pleased to visit Iran as a country with a pivotal role in the region. Aebi described his meetings with the Iranian parliament speaker and other parliamentary officials as constructive. He went on to refer to the role of the Swiss Embassy in Tehran as a guardian of the interests of some countries and the importance of strengthening this role.

He also praised the role of the Islamic Republic in taking in millions of Afghan refugees over the past decades and Tehran's current approach to providing services to the Afghan people.

Regarding the nuclear talks, the speaker of the Swiss National Assembly stressed his country's interest in playing a role in bringing the parties' views closer together.

The latest developments in the talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia, as well as the developments in Yemen, were among the other topics discussed by the Iranian foreign minister and the speaker of the Swiss National Assembly.

Iran and Saudi Arabia have been engaged in private talks since April in Baghdad to mend ties. After years of tensions, Iran and Saudi Arabia are reportedly about to reopen consulates. According to press reports, the two sides are inching closer to hammering out a deal to restore diplomatic ties.

said.

Ali Bagheri Kani, the deputy foreign minister of Iran, also confirmed the visit on Twitter on Wednesday.

"In continuation of the recent regional and international consultations, I will host Enrique Mora, Deputy Director of the EU [External] Action Service, tomorrow. Discussions on bilateral and regional issues, including Afghanistan, as well as talks on lifting oppressive sanctions are on the agenda," Bagheri tweeted.

Vienna nuclear talks between Iran and world powers have been put on hold since June due to a number of reasons including Iran's undergoing transition period emanating from its recent presidential election.

He said out of the \$85 million that the Indians were going to invest in Chabahar port, 30% have been realized and 6 gantry cranes have been provided.

This shows that the Indians intend to stay in the contract and invest, he remarked.

He also said, "Our northern ports have a capacity of 30 million tons, of which one-fifth is currently in use."

He added, "It is possible to use the sea route instead of land. The port of Astara is also being dredged, of which only 70,000 cubic meters remain."

He added: "Iranian companies do not have RO.RO ships. Therefore, a Russian company has announced its readiness to carry out RO.RO transportation activities in the northern ports of Iran. The shipping company of the Islamic Republic is also looking to buy a RO.RO ship."

### PMO director talks about terror attack on Iranian ships in recent years

TEHRAN — The Director-General of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) on Wednesday revealed the terrorist attack on the shipping fleet of the Islamic Republic in the Red Sea in recent years.

Speaking on the sidelines of International Maritime Day, Mohammad Rastad told reporters that the causes of the attacks are unknown.

Some ships did not suffer much damage due to some measures taken by the PMO and they were returned to service soon, Rastad said.

The PMO chief also referred to reintroduction of sanctions on Iran following the U.S. withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal that affected Iran's shipping transportation.

"Our ships were severely restricted from entering the ports of other countries," he added.

However, he said, the shipping fleet was able to

bypass restrictions in some ways and be able to dock in a number of ports, Mehr reported.

Rastad also said Iran enjoys a superior geographical position in maritime transport and has 5,800-kilometer coasts.

"In terms of capacity, Iran's ports are also among the top countries with a current capacity of 260 million tons," he said, adding, "Our ports will reach 285-million-ton capacity by the end of the current Iranian year (March 21, 2022)."

The extension of the Chabahar port operator's contract with an Indian company, was among other issues that Rastad referred to.

"The contract that we have with an Indian operator is still active. This contract is in the form of temporary operation of Chabahar port and we hope it will become a long-term contract," he highlighted.



## New RAI head appointed



TEHRAN – Seyed Miad Salehi has replaced Saeed Rasouli as the new head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (known as RAI), IRNA reported.

Salehi holds a PhD in Mechanical Engineering from Sharif University of Technology and is a member of the faculty of Iran University of Science and Technology.

The official was previously the managing director of the State Pension Fund.

Being a member of the board of directors of

the Innovation and Prosperity Fund, advisor to the minister and head of new industry projects at the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry, chairman of the Industry and Mining Committee of the Expediency Council Secretariat and advisor to the Vice President for Science and Technology are also on Salehi's resume'.

Salehi also has scientific and professional backgrounds in rail industry, including the publication and presentation of several articles in ISI journals and prestigious international conferences in the field of rail, as well as experience in several passenger and freight rail companies.

The Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (abbreviated as IRIR, or sometimes as RAI) is the national state-owned railway system of Iran. The Raja Passenger Train Company is an associate of the RAI and manages its passenger trains.

The Railway Transportation Company is also an associate of the RAI, which manages its freight transport.

The Ministry of Transport and Urban Development is the state agency that oversees the IRIR.

## Raisi puts Mehdi Ghazanfari in charge of NDF

TEHRAN – President Ebrahim Raisi in a decree appointed Mehdi Ghazanfari as the new head of the National Development Fund (NDF), Tasnim news agency reported on Wednesday.

Ghazanfari has previously served as the Minister of Industry, Mining, and Trade. He is also a faculty member at the Iran University of Science and Technology. He also served as the deputy minister of commerce and was the head of the Trade Promotion Organization (TPO).

The National Development Fund of Iran is Iran's sovereign wealth fund. It was founded

in 2011 to supplement the Oil Stabilization Fund. NDF is independent of the government's budget. Based on Article 84 of the Fifth Five-year National Development Plan (2010–2015), the National Development Fund was established to transform oil and gas revenues into productive investments for the future generations.

The fund is a member of the International Forum of Sovereign Wealth Funds and therefore is signed up to the Santiago Principles on best practice in managing sovereign wealth funds.

## Over 222,000 TEUs of commodities exported from Shahid Rajaei port in H1

TEHRAN- As announced by a provincial official, 222,753 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of commodities have been exported from Shahid Rajaei port, in the south of Iran, during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22).

Alireza Mohammadi Karaji-Ran, the head of Ports and Maritime Department of Hormozgan province, where the port is located, said the export indicates 18-percent growth as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

The official further announced that 208,735 TEUs of commodities were imported to the port in the first half of the present year, showing three-percent fall.

Transit of goods via the port also rose 85 percent in the said time span to stand at 141,000 TEUs, he underlined.

In the first six months of this year, 824 container ships traveled to Shahid Rajaei port, which is an increase of 2.4 percent compared to the same period last year, according to the head of Ports and Maritime Department of Hormozgan province.

Enjoying the most modern container terminals and port equipment, Shahid Rajaei accounts for 85 percent of the total loading and unloading at the Iranian ports.

Given its significant role in the country's import and export of products as well as transit and transshipment via Iran, the development of Shahid Rajaei

Port has been among the most important development projects in the country.

In late December last year, Iranian Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) signed six memorandums of understanding (MOU) with domestic companies for investing 100 trillion rials (about \$2.38 billion) plus €800 million in development projects of Shahid Rajaei port's hinterland.

The signing ceremony was attended by the former Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami, and the PMO Head Mohammad Rastad.

The mentioned investments will be made in a variety of projects including zinc, lead, manganese, and copper factories, the construction, and development of industrial components and parts production units, development and integration of the existing industrial units in the area, construction of an alumina refinery, as well as the construction of container manufacturing units.

Implementation and construction of production units in Shahid Rajaei Port will make this port a center for value-added production and a logistics center, which will upgrade the port's level to the third generation and significantly reduce transportation and storage costs.

Back in August 2019, PMO's Director of Engineering and Infrastructure Development Mohammadreza Allahyar had said that the port's capacity is planned to rise 2.1 million TEUs to reach



8 million TEUs.

While Iran is combating the U.S. unilateral sanctions on its economy, the country's ports as the major gates of exports and imports play some significant role in this battle. This role makes all-out support to ports and more development of them serious and vital.

Such necessity has led the government to define projects for more development of the ports and also take some measures to encourage investment making in ports, in addition, to facilitate loading and unloading of goods, especially basic commodities, there.

It is worth mentioning that PMO has defined a high number of projects to develop and improve the country's ports, as the country aims to double the capacity of its ports in a course of five years.

Meanwhile, as Farhad Montaser Kouhsari, the deputy head of PMO for Ports and Economic Affairs, announced last month, the PMO plans to modify the financial framework of its operatory contracts.

Given that the framework of PMO

# Iranian maritime industry: a great capacity to be untapped

From page 1 ► According to the Head of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO), considering the vacant capacity of commercial ports and the position of the national fleet, Iran has the potential to become a transshipping hub in the region and significantly increase its share of container transport.

Speaking in a ceremony on the occasion of World Maritime Day, Mohammad Rastad said: "The current government pays special attention to the development of the maritime economy and we are on the path of development in this regard."

Rastad said that the country's potential maritime capacity is significant in terms of ocean-going fleet, adding: "At the same time, the capacity of the country's port terminals is 260 million TEU, of which only 150 million tons are used annually."

"If trade increase with the lifting of sanctions, we would be able to strengthen the country's economy



by using all the vacant capacity of commercial ports and the national fleet", he stated.

Stating that the capacity of commercial ports is beyond the current level of trade, Rastad said: "We should seek to attract more transit goods in suitable conditions and both commercial ports and terminals to become

transship hubs for regional ports."

The official noted that Iran currently has a well-developed infrastructure in the marine industry, but in order to expand in-house construction, more financial resources should be allocated to this area.

Also speaking at the same event, IRISL Head Mohammadreza Modares Khiabani said maritime

transportation conducted by IRISL fleet in the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-August 22) has increased by 43 percent compared to the previous year's same period.

He described the sanctions as a debilitating factor in the way of IRISL activities, saying that "sanctions have made it difficult for us to supply parts for the vessels and also have significantly increased insurance costs."

All and all, with the negative impacts of the coronavirus pandemic fading away and with new economic and political horizons coming to perspective, hopes are rising that the Iranian maritime industry would finally be able to reach its true potentials.

Even if the U.S. sanctions are not removed, the Islamic Republic is strongly determined to become self-sufficient and to focus on its allies to tap into its potentials in all areas including the shipping industry.

## IMF sees Iran's GDP growth at 2.5% in 2021

TEHRAN – The International Monetary Fund (IMF), in its latest World Economic Outlook report titled "Recovery During a Pandemic", predicted a 2.5-percent real gross domestic product (GDP) growth for Iran in 2021, with no change from the fund's previous report.

The entity has modified its forecasts of the global economic growth from six percent in its previous report to 5.9 percent; the fund expects the global economy to shrink even more in 2022 to settle at 4.9 percent in 2022.

The downward revision for 2021 reflects a downgrade for advanced economies—in part due to supply disruptions—and for low-income developing countries, largely due to worsening pandemic dynamics, according to the report.

"The global economic recovery is continuing, even as the pandemic resurges. The fault lines opened up by COVID-19 are looking more persistent—near-

term divergences are expected to leave lasting imprints on medium-term performance. Vaccine access and early policy support are the principal drivers of the gaps," the report read.

"This is partially offset by stronger near-term prospects among some commodity-exporting emerging market and developing economies. The rapid spread of Delta and the threat of new variants have increased uncertainty about how quickly the pandemic can be overcome. Policy choices have become more difficult, with limited room to maneuver."

IMF has predicted West Asia's GDP to grow by 4.1 percent in the current year.

The international body sees Iran's inflation (consumer price changes) at 39.3 percent in 2021, increasing 1.9 percent from 36.4 percent in 2020. The report sees the country's inflation fall to 27.5 percent in 2022.



As reported, the country's account balance which was – 0.1 percent of the country's GDP in 2020 is expected to climb to 1.3 percent in 2021.

Based on the IMF data, despite the sanctions and the negative impact of the pandemic, the Iranian economy is going to outperform many countries both in the region and across the world.

## Davoud Manzour appointed as new INTA head

TEHRAN – Iranian Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Ehsan Khandouzi has appointed Davoud Manzour as the new head of the Iranian National Tax Administration (INTA), Tasnim news agency reported.

Khandouzi suggested Manzour for the position in a cabinet meeting on Wednesday which was approved by the attendees.

He holds a PhD in economics, econometrics, and public sector economics from Tehran University and a master's degree in economics and Islamic education from Imam Sadeq University.

He was previously the deputy head of Iran's Power Generation, Distribution, and Transmission Company (known as Tavanir).

The official also served as the deputy energy minister for planning and economic affairs, deputy minister of finance and economic affairs, deputy head of the vice presidency for strategic planning and supervision, economic advisor to the energy minister, secretary of the national energy committee, and Iran's representative in the World Energy Council since 2006. He has also been an advisor to the head of the parliament research center.

The Iranian National Tax Administration or in brief INTA is one of the organizations affiliated with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs in Iran which is responsible for handling the country's tax affairs. Among the tasks of this organization are reforming and mechanizing the country's tax system and implementing Value-added tax

## TEDPIX falls 21,200 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN – TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 21,236 points to 1,397 million on Wednesday.

As reported, over 5.654 billion securities worth 42,594 trillion rials (about \$1.014 billion) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index dropped 16,763 points, and the second market's index fell 39,023 points.

Capital market analyst, Soheil Kolahchi, believes the stock market is going to be able to compete with other parallel markets for bringing positive returns to investors in the second half of the current Iranian calendar year (September 22, 2021-March 20, 2022), IRNA reported.

Stating that the stock market can be one of the

suitable markets for investment in the second half of the year, Kolahchi said: "The capital market can provide an acceptable return to shareholders and experience good growth compared to other parallel markets by the end of the year."

"The stock market can grow by the end of the year as the prevailing environment for investing in other parallel markets (including the forex, gold, and housing markets) is calm and nothing special is going to happen in any of them," he explained.

Emphasizing the sharp decline in the number of deals in the housing market in recent months, Kolahchi noted: "The foreign currency exchange market is also experiencing slight fluctuations."

## 17 idle industrial units revived in Qom province in 6 months

TEHRAN- As announced by a provincial official, 17 idle industrial units returned to the production cycle in Qom province, central Iran, in the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-Septembr 22).

Mahmood Seyjani, the head of Industry, Mining and Trade Department of Qom province, said that these units being revived have created jobs for 183 persons.

He said that 1,319 trillion rials (about \$314 million) has been invested for reviving the mentioned units.

He mentioned textile, types of yarns, steel profiles and sections, steel wire, various types of construction and automotive paints, stone cutting, mineral chemicals, laboratory hoods, synthetic fibers, shoe uppers, and animal feed as some fields in which the revived units are active.

Technology change, attracting new investors, improving the market, launching a new line and producing a new product have been important factors in reviving 17 stagnant industrial units in the first six months of this year, according to the official.

As announced by the head of Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO), in the last Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), 1,557 stagnant and semi-active units returned to the production cycle in the industrial parks with a financing of 35 trillion rials (over \$833 million), providing employment for 27,000

people.

With the aim of reactivating stagnant units or units that are operating below capacity, 900 consultants from the private sector and knowledge-based companies were selected in the form of industry clinics across the country to recognize the weaknesses of these units, Ali Rasoulani has previously stated.

"Despite the two major challenges of sanctions and coronavirus pandemic, which imposed severe restrictions on the country, we tried to activate domestic capacities by turning to localizing the technology of manufacturing parts and equipment", he added.

Sanctions have caused problems for financial exchanges and the export of goods to other countries, he said, adding, "The negative effects of coronavirus pandemic on various parts of the country, including industry, are not hidden from anyone, and the economic growth of some countries has reached below zero during this period."

Iran is proud that despite these restrictions and pressure from these two important challenges, its industry has grown by more than seven percent, according to the statistics and reports from various sectors, the official further highlighted.

Also, as announced by Deputy Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Mehdi Sadeqi Niaraki, over 6,500 new



industrial units were established across the country during the past year which created jobs for over 121,000 people.

Touching upon the Industry Ministry's plans for the realization of the motto of the current year which is named the year of "Production: support and the elimination of obstacles" by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, the official has said: "In the year that has been dedicated to the production sector by the Leader of the revolution, the orientation of all government organizations and executive bodies should be towards supporting the country's industrial and mining units."

Niaraki pointed to a 40-percent increase in the issuance of establishment licenses for industrial units in the previous year, saying: "The number of

establishment licenses increased to more than 36,000 last year, which shows that people are encouraged to invest in the productive sectors."

He also mentioned an 85-percent rise in the allocation of land for establishing industrial units across the country and noted that over 4,500 hectares of land were handed over to applicants in the previous calendar year.

According to the official, there are over 46,000 small and medium-sized industrial units in Iran's industrial parks and zones, of them about 9,200 units are inactive.

In late September, the ISIPO head announced the allocation of 10,000 hectares of land for the development and construction of industrial parks across the country.

According to Rasoulani, new industrial parks are mainly planned to be constructed in under-developed regions of the country.

The index for development of Industrial parks in the country has increased by five percent, the official stated.

He pointed out that one of the important priorities of the ISIPO is to provide suitable land for establishing industrial parks, adding: "The organization has prepared a plan to provide 10,000 hectares of land for this purpose."

"Also, to supply electricity to industrial parks and zones, the required hardware and equipment, including posts and transmission lines, have been supplied and constructed in collaboration with the Energy Ministry."

He further noted that the country's industrial parks are currently facing over 2,000 liters of water deficit, saying: "Our approach to compensate for the water shortage is to use municipal wastewater, which we have communicated with the Ministry of Energy to purchase and have started using it in some areas."

Rasoulani also mentioned the construction of small workshops for companies that do not have a high financial capacity and added: "Last year, 72 workshops were established in the country's industrial parks and zones, and we hope that our plan for the current year, which was the construction of 1,000 workshops, will play a significant role in creating employment in the country."

Iran's industrial parks play a significant role in making the country independent through boosting production, which is a major strategy of Iran to combat the U.S. sanctions.

In fact, strengthening domestic production to achieve self-reliance is the most important program that Iran is following up in its industry sector in a bid to nullify the effects of the U.S. sanctions on its economy.



# There is doubt that Taliban has changed: researcher

From page 1 ► The system is on the verge of collapse. For instance, many doctors have fled the country, so there is a shortage of doctors and even medicine. The violence will only get worse from here onwards unless something drastic is done to thwart it.

While supporters of the Taliban repeatedly claim that the new generation of the organization has changed, many experts are pessimistic about a fundamental change in the Taliban's behavior due to some violence cases in Afghanistan. What is your comment?

At the start of their takeover in August, there was much optimism that the new Taliban regime would be different from the one in the 90s. However, now there is doubt on whether the group has actually changed. For instance, despite repeated assurances, girls in secondary schools and above are not attending school. Moreover, women are prohibited from working, running businesses, or in some cases even going outside without being accompanied by a male family member. So even though the Taliban know that if they want to gain international legitimacy, they have to adopt a moderate outlook, they do not seem to be following this trajectory. At the moment, the Taliban's promises that its members will take a less hard-line stance on social issues and respect women's rights are being met with some skepticism.

Many critics accuse Pakistan of sponsoring the Taliban and other extremist groups in Afghanistan? To what extent is this claim rightful?

Pakistan has always been an advocate of an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process. The fact that Pakistan has



not recognized the Taliban regime as yet shows that Pakistan is following events with caution and not taking any blatant sides.

Do you predict any coordination among Afghanistan's neighboring countries to restore stability?

In terms of providing humanitarian aid, Afghanistan's neighboring countries have been very active. In the near future, I predict they may actively take part in counter-terrorism measures since it is in their interests that extremist groups not

use Afghan soil against them. Also, we may soon see a consolidated, concerted effort on providing humanitarian aid and refugee influx.

How can Islamabad manage what is going on around its borders from Afghanistan to India and China-Taiwan disputes?

First and foremost, Islamabad should keep its borders on high alert and refrain from passing any uncoordinated statements with regard to the mentioned dispute. A border patrol on each front must

## Afghanistan's neighbors have been very active in terms of providing humanitarian aid.

be active to ensure that no smuggling or human trafficking takes place.

## Iraq election marred by “lack of transparency”

From page 1 ► The Al-Fateh Alliance affirmed that it “will hold a difficult account for anyone who seeks to harm Iraq, its sovereignty, and its constitutional institutions that were built with the blood of its men, and it will stand against anyone who tries to bring down the democratic process in Iraq.”

The Fatah alliance is not alone in voicing its objection to the announcement of the preliminary results. Other parties, such as the state of law coalition led by former Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, have also expressed doubts about the election results despite winning more seats than the state of law coalition won in the previous election.

The Hikma (wisdom) party led by the cleric Ammar al-Hakeem has also rejected the announcement by the Independent High Electoral Commission, as has the party of former Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi.

This as Iraq's Independent High Electoral Commission has acknowledged errors in the vote-counting process. The commission says that “the votes in more than 3,100 polling stations will be counted manually, and they will be added to the announced results,” adding that “the results [of the election] will change according to the vote counting of the remaining stations.”

To be more precise, the commission officials say 3,177 outstanding ballot boxes were not included in the initial results and will be manually counted. The boxes will be returned to Baghdad and counted at the Iraqi capital's National Centre in the presence of international observers and the media.

The commission has confirmed that “the final re-



sults will be announced after the resolution of the appeals and the counting of the remaining votes.” It added that 6% of the electronic machines had technical problems and will be hand-counted

It added that if they find issues with the original count, the commission will recount all the ballot boxes in all the polling stations in all the provinces.

A day earlier, the leader of the Fatah party, Hadi al-Amri, rejected the results and warned, “we will not accept these fabricated results whatever the cost, and we will defend the votes of our candidates and voters will full force.”

A joint statement by several parties, including the Fatah Alliance, said, “we will appeal against the results, and we reject them.”

One of the Popular Mobilization Unit's most powerful factions, the Hezbollah Brigades, rejected the election as “the biggest scam and rip-off the Iraqi people have been subjected to in modern history.”

There were fears before the election that the German-made (imported from South Korea) bio-metric electronic voting system could be subject to a cyber attack by foreign powers.

According to preliminary results from the electoral commission, the biggest winner appeared to be the movement of Shia cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, which increased its lead to 73 of the legislature's 329 seats. Parliament speaker Mohamad al-Halbousi's Toqadom (progress party) came in second place with 38 seats, despite state TV stating 43 seats. In third place (according to the election commission) was the state of law coalition with 37 seats. Former prime minister Nouri al-Maliki also leads the party.

The initial results have changed after the commission recounted more votes. The Fatah alliance got six more seats, the state of law coalition three more seats, and independent candidates formerly affiliated with the popular mobilization units seven extra seats. Muqtada Sadr's party has lost three seats. These results are subject to change as more appeals are heard, and more votes are counted.

Sunday's vote was held under a new law billed by Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi to loosen the grip of established political parties and pave the way for independent, pro-reform candidates. Voting districts were made smaller, and the practice of awarding seats to lists of candidates sponsored by parties was abandoned.

Since the U.S.-led invasion in 2003, elections in Iraq have been followed by protracted negotiations that can last months to select a Prime Minister, President, Parliament Speaker and serve to distribute government posts among the parties with the most seats.

All blocs and parties have emphasized the importance of resorting to legal avenues to challenge the results. They say they will not succumb to any foreign enemy plot to pit one party against the other in a manner that results in violence or civil unrest.

## Commission officials say 3,177 outstanding ballot boxes were not included in the initial results.

## Qatar FM on GCC blockade, Iran and engaging with the Taliban

Qatar's top diplomat discusses Gulf neighbors, Iran's nuclear deal, ties with the U.S. and Afghanistan at a security forum.

A three-year-long blockade on Qatar by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain and Egypt fractured the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) but the group's six leaders are working on strengthening it once again, Qatar's Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani has said.

In 2017, Saudi Arabia and its three Arab allies imposed a land, air and sea blockade on Qatar, accusing it of, among other things, supporting terrorist groups and being too close to Iran, the allegations Doha has consistently denied.

The four nations agreed to restore full diplomatic and trade ties at a summit of GCC member states, including the other two members Kuwait and Oman, in Saudi Arabia earlier this year.

Speaking on Wednesday at the Global Security Forum held in Doha, Qatar's top diplomat said there was a need to find “the means for preventative diplomacy.”

“We need to find a way to prevent our countries from being in such a crisis again,” he said.

He added that Qatar considered Iran “part of our region” and urged GCC's engagement with Tehran.

“Engagement [with Iran] is important for all of us as the GCC countries,” said Sheikh Mohammed. “Our aim is to achieve a regional security understanding be-

tween the GCC and Iran.

“Iran is our neighbor, a player in our region ... we cannot change geography. Our disagreements can be resolved around a table, they can't be resolved by confrontation.”

Speaking about Qatar's possible role in reviving Iran's nuclear talks with world powers, he said: “It is in our interests to see the nuclear deal with Iran back in place and to see that there is no risk of a nuclear race in our region.”

“We are going to provide any support needed by all parties. We are talking and engaging with Iran, encouraging them and the U.S. to go back to the deal,” the FM said.

“We have managed to contain several situations from exploding. Qatar will continue with this role because it is in our national interest. Iran is our neighbor, we share borders, water, gas fields ... we need to see Iran flourishing and being an active, positive player in our region.”

‘Hiccups’ in Qatar-U.S. ties

The Qatari official revealed that ties between Doha and Washington experienced some “hiccups” during President Donald Trump's tenure because of “some personalities over there and some misunderstandings” but added that relations have since improved.

“We have continued growing our relationship even during President Trump administration, even during the crisis,” he said, adding that Qatar stood with its allies during the recent Afghanistan evacuation

crisis as it assisted with logistics.

“When they are in need, we are going to step up,” he said. “Each country has its own foreign policy. We need to understand when sometimes the U.S. takes decisions that are not aligned with our policy. They also need to understand when we are taking decisions that are not aligned with their interests.”

Meanwhile, Sheikh Mohammed said again that abandoning Afghanistan following the Taliban takeover would be a mistake “no matter who is leading the government.”

“We have been saying from the beginning that an isolation will never be an answer and when we are talking about engagement, that is needed with whoever is governing Afghanistan because abandoning Afghanistan will be a big mistake,” he said.

Following the fall of the previous government, Qatar, earlier this week, hosted the first face-to-face talks between the United States and Taliban representatives.

“Our aim is finding a way forward, because we cannot leave it as it is and we cannot just wait for steps to be taken by the Taliban.

“I believe the international community have a responsibility to direct those steps, to have a clear road map in dealing with the situation over there ... the financial system is totally closed, public servants are not paid, the government assets have been frozen without a clear path forward.

“From our perspective, it is very important to provide guidance for them [the Taliban] ... rewarding each positive step they are going to take and not just to talk about penalizing the negative steps. This will create an incentive for progress and the way to forward.”

Sheikh Mohammed reiterated Qatar's position that recognizing a Taliban government was not a priority but engagement with other countries was important.

“The issue of recognition ... it is not a priority. We recognize countries, we don't recognize governments. As long as there is a country called Afghanistan and there are Afghan people, we need to deal with that situation despite the government which is in power.”

(Source: Al Jazeera)

## Yemeni official: Ma'rib liberation ‘a milestone’ in battle to expel occupiers, free oil wealth

A senior member of the political bureau of Yemen's Ansarullah resistance movement says the liberation of the strategic central province of Ma'rib will mark an important “milestone” in the battles to expel the occupiers and retake the country's energy resources seized by the Saudi-led military coalition and its allied militants.

“The liberation of Mari'b will have significant impacts on [efforts to] expel occupation forces and return oil wealth” to the country, Mohammed al-Bukhaiti told Lebanon-based Arabic-language al-Mayadeen television news network on Tuesday night.

The official said the Saudi-led coalition of aggressors runs a key command center in Ma'rib, which is tasked with directing the operations against the Yemeni armed forces and “that is why the liberation of the rest of Ma'rib constitutes a major objective for Yemen and will mark a milestone and the start of a new phase” in the Yemeni army's liberation struggles.

He added that Yemeni army troops and fighters from Popular Committees will soon mount a major operation against Saudi-led coalition forces and their mercenaries.

Bukhaiti said the Saudi-led coalition's air power will not last long, and the Yemeni armed forces continue to strengthen their military capabilities.

“We tell those involved in the fighting with the coalition that we do not want to target them,” said Bukhaiti, apparently addressing the militants serving the Saudi-led coalition on the battle ground. Besides foreign mercenaries, many Yemeni militants loyal to the former Riyadh-friendly government Sana'a have been serving the Saudi-led campaign.

The balance of power is tilting in favor of Yemen and the country will enter a new phase once enemy forces are defeated, he said.

“The Sana'a initiative is still on the table” Bukhaiti said, calling on Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to “quickly seize the opportunity and embrace peace.”

“Yemen's goals are defensive at present, but the objectives of the battles may change as time

passes,” he said.

Earlier on Tuesday, the Spokesman for Yemeni Armed Forces, Brigadier General Yahya Saree, said in a press conference that Yemeni armed forces had made significant territorial gains in Ma'rib Province, seizing control over large swaths of territory from Saudi-backed mercenaries.

The high-ranking military official said the latest military operation dubbed Fajr al-Intisaar (Dawn of Victory), which came in the wake of a series of attacks by Saudi-backed aggressors in recent days, was launched after the success of the previous operation dubbed al-Bass al-Shadid (Intense Strength) to liberate Ma'rib strategic province from the grip of Saudi-sponsored Takfiris.

“With the participation of various military units, the Mujahideen began to carry out the plan that necessitated the attack on the enemy from several sides, before the main sides branched out into several other sub-sides,” he said in a tweet later.

The armed forces launched Operation Fajar Al Entessar “Dawn of Victory”, which aimed to liberate other areas in Marib Governorate and to defeat the invaders, traitors, agents and mercenaries.

“Every mercenary, agent, traitor can save his life and leave his position as our forces advance, our forces will allow him to escape and leave even if he is carrying his personal weapon,” Saree added.

Saudi Arabia, backed by the US and regional allies, launched the war on Yemen in March 2015, with the goal of bringing the government of former Yemeni president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi back to power and crushing popular Ansarullah resistance movement.

The war has left hundreds of thousands of Yemenis dead, and displaced millions more. It has also destroyed Yemen's infrastructure and spread famine and infectious diseases.

Yemeni armed forces and allied Popular Committees, however, have grown steadily in strength against the Saudi-led invaders, and left Riyadh and its allies bogged down in the country.

(Source: Press TV)



## Palestinian Islamic Jihad prisoners announce hunger strike

Most of the 400 prisoners belonging to Islamic Jihad have begun their hunger strike against Israel's punitive measures.

The Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement has announced the start of a mass hunger strike by its prisoners held in Israeli jails, in refusal of the punitive measures imposed on them following the escape of six Palestinians from Gilboa prison last month.

Palestinian prisoners are divided into cells according to their political affiliation.

Most of the prisoners who belong to the Islamic Jihad, who number about 400, will participate in the strike, with the support of all other factions, that started on Wednesday.

According to a statement from the Palestinian Prisoners Club, the hunger strike is part of “the resistance programme announced recently by the prisoners' National Emergency Committee, which was based mainly on rebellion and rejection of prison administration laws”.

The statement said the Islamic Jihad prisoners delivered a letter to the Israeli prison administration on Tuesday, stating their demands, as well as informing them of their decision to go on a hunger strike.

There are about 4,600 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, including 35 women and 200 children.

September jailbreak

In the aftermath of the six Palestinian prisoners escaping from the high-security Gilboa prison last month, the Israel Prison Service cracked down particularly hard on prisoners belonging to the Islamic Jihad, to which five of the escapees belong.

The jailbreak triggered a massive manhunt for the



group that included Zakaria Zubeidi, a former leader of the Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades armed group and the only member affiliated with the Fatah group.

The six men were all caught in pairs at separate times barely two weeks after their escape, and face lengthy charges in addition to their original life sentences.

Zubeidi and his fellow inmate Munadel Infiat were not sentenced at the time of their escape.

Following the prison break, a number of prisoners belonging to the Islamic Jihad were transferred to solitary confinement, and leaders of the movement were transferred to interrogation cells in a bid to dismantle its structure within Israeli prisons.

The Palestinian factions then announced an escalating “struggle programme” against the prison administration's suppression of prisoners and its attempt to suppress the achievements made by prisoners through past hunger strikes.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

## Most of the prisoners who belong to the Islamic Jihad, number about 400.



## ‘Peace carpet’ being woven inside Iran pavilion at Expo 2020

From page 1 ► Persian carpets are sought after internationally with the medallion pattern being arguably the most characteristic feature of them all. However, there is tremendous variation in the shapes and sizes of the medallions as well as the way they are used in various rugs. It’s not wrong to say that no two rugs will have the same medallion layout.

Medallion carpet is any floor covering on which the decoration is dominated by a single symmetrical centerpiece, such as a star-shaped, circular, quatrefoil, or octagonal figure.

The name, however, is sometimes also given to a carpet on which the decoration consists of several forms of this kind or even of rows of medallion figures.

**Expo 2020, an opportunity to promote Iran’s tourism, handicrafts**

The Expo 2020 Dubai opened on September 30 with a lavish ceremony of fireworks, music, and messaging about the power of global collaboration for a more sustainable future.

Iran’s pavilion in the world fair is planned to showcase each Iranian province’s strengths and assets in tourism, cultural heritage, handicrafts, as well as its natural sites, traditional ceremonial practices, and historical significance.

Many countries and companies are also looking to the expo – the first major global event open to visitors since the coronavirus pandemic – to boost trade and



investment.

According to organizers, the Expo, an exhibition of culture, technology, and architecture under the banner “Connecting Minds and Creating the Future”, is expected to be a demonstration of ingenuity, and a place where global challenges such as climate change, conflict, and economic growth can be addressed together.

The Persian Gulf state has relaxed most coronavirus limitations but Expo requires face masks to be worn and for visitors over 18 to be vaccinated against, or test negative for, COVID-19.

Iran expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 26 being inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

## Forgotten craft of weaving Gabbeh revived in Hamedan



TEHRAN – The art of weaving Gabbeh, a handicraft field that was quite obsolete in Qahavand, has been revived in the deprived and rural areas of the ancient county, which is situated in the west-central Hamedan province, the deputy provincial tourism chief has announced.

The training of over 60 villagers is currently underway in this field of handicrafts, Hashem Mazaheri said on Wednesday.

He also expressed hope that the county will soon become a hub for weaving Gabbeh in the province.

Gabbeh is a traditional flooring similar to carpet but they differ from one another in motifs, size, colors, and the number of its long and thick wefts.

They are woven usually by nomadic people using handspun wool. Their patterns are of a simple type with only a few elements of decorative, mostly rectangular objects containing animals.

The motifs and patterns of Gabbeh are not the same as the carpet. Gabbeh may do not have any margin, or may not be symmetrical. Many of its motifs look like paintings of children, quite simple and primitive, but

inspired by nature and surroundings.

Patterns of Gabbeh are created by the memory of their weavers. They are completely free to use any motif and they can place it anywhere they desire in the pattern. Another major difference between Gabbeh and carpet is the color palette used in them.

The weavers are mostly women and girls who each have a special kind of motif on their minds and they skillfully weave them.

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

Hamadan has had many names: it was possibly the Bit Daiukki of the Assyrians, Hangmatana, or Agbatana, to the Medes, and Ecbatana to the Greeks. One of the Median capitals, under Cyrus II (the Great; died 529 BC) and later Achaemenian rulers, it was the site of a royal summer palace.

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

Sitting on a high plain, Hamedan is graciously cool in August but snow prone and freezing from December to March. In summer the air is often hazy. Ali Sadr cave, Ganjnameh inscriptions, Avicenna Mausoleum, Hegmataneh hill, Alaviyan dome, Jameh mosque, and St. Stephanos Gregorian Church are amongst Hamedan’s attractions to name a few.

## Coronavirus: Lorestan registers 6,000 overnight stays in H1

TEHRAN – Vacationers made some 6,000 overnight stays in hotels and guest houses of Lorestan province during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year 1400 (started March 21) as many potential visitors stayed home since virus restrictions began in early 2019.

“Some 6,000 travelers stayed in hotels and other official accommodation centers across Lorestan province during the first six months of the year,” provincial tourism chief Seyyed Amin Qasemi said on Wednesday.

A total of 82,725 people visited historical and natural attractions of the western province during the period, the official added.

Iranians made about one million overnight stays in Lorestan during the calendar year 1398, according to official



data compiled by the provincial tourism directorate.

Soaked in history and culture, Lorestan is one of the lesser-known travel destinations in Iran, which mainly acts as a gateway to the sweltering plains below in adjoining Khuzestan province. Most travelers just pass through on their way to

the UNESCO sites of Susa, Tchogha Zanbil, and Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System. Lorestan is also a region of raw beauty that an avid nature lover could spend weeks exploring.

Lorestan was inhabited by Iranian Indo-European peoples, including the Medes, c. 1000 BC. Cimmericians and Scythians intermittently ruled the region from about 700 to 625 BC. The Luristan Bronzes noted for their eclectic array of Assyrian, Babylonian, and Iranian artistic motifs, date from this turbulent period.

Lorestan was incorporated into the growing Achaemenid Empire in about 540 BC and successively was part of the Seleucid, Parthian, and Sasanid dynasties.

**Iran preparing for tourism rebound**  
Iran considers reopening borders to

cups, and instruments used in religious ceremonies are all among the artworks on display.

The exhibit will run until October 25 at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts.

Iranians have been skillful metalworkers since the Achaemenid period (559–330 BC) when they were already acquainted with various techniques such as chasing, embossing, casting, and setting with precious stones.

According to Britannica Encyclopedia, statuettes of gold and silver are known from the 5th century BC, and vessels of silver and gold from this time take the form of phials, conical cups, vases, and rhyta (drinking cups in the shape of an animal’s head).

# Tall-e Bakun and its prominent role study of early Iranian art

TEHRAN – Tall-e Bakun is a prehistorical twin site situated in the fertile Marvdasht plain of Fars province, near the UNESCO-designated Persepolis, the Achaemenid ceremonial capital.

Tall-e Bakun was continuously inhabited from c. 4200 to c. 3000 BC, expected to be the oldest yet discovered in that area of Iran.

Excavations in 1928 by the University of Berlin and 1932 by the University of Chicago uncovered several building levels, numerous flint implements, stamp and button seals, and many animal and human figurines, as mentioned by Britannica.

The painted pottery found at Tall-e Bakun displays a seemingly inexhaustible variety of geometric patterns and animal motifs and is especially important for the study of early Iranian art.

Bakun has played a prominent role in the understanding of the prehistory of Fars, partly because it was the first large-scale excavation of a prehistoric mound there, and primarily for the richness of its finds, according to the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

Differentiated as Bakun A and Bakun B, the latter being earlier. Tall-e Bakun B (ca. 5000–4200 BC) was first excavated by Alexander Langsdorff and Donald McCown in 1932, and later in 1937 by Eric Schmidt and McCown on behalf of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

Excavations at Bakun was part of a major Oriental Institute archaeological project in Iran, with Persepolis as the main focus and headquarters of the project. The results from the 1932 excavations were published (Langsdorff and McCown 1942); the materials from the 1937 season are now being prepared by Abbas Alizadeh, the Oriental Institute, for final publication.

As stated by the Oriental Institute, Tall-e Bakun B consists of two distinct cultural deposits; the lower



deposit, Bakun BI, contained only layers of ash and debris with coarse redware; and the upper one, Bakun BII also did not contain architecture but yielded painted pottery.

The first season of excavations at Bakun A (ca. 4000–3500 BC) commenced in 1932. Work was concentrated on the northern part of the mound, where an area of about 1200 sq. meters was opened.

“Four occupational levels were reported, Level I being the lowest, and Level III being the best preserved and most extensively excavated. Level III contained a complex of buildings consisting of rectangular houses and warehouses with common walls. The buildings of Level III suggest a planned architectural layout; they are oriented northeast-southwest with nicely aligned and carefully abutted common walls. This level also produced most of the artifactual material including the clay sealings, which are primary indicators of

ancient administrative technology,” according to the Oriental Institute.

The excavations yielded artifacts including pottery, animal and human figurines, spindle whorls, pottery tokens of various shapes and sizes, small, decorated, pottery pipes, firedogs, pottery wasters, stone maceheads and pounders, stone and clay sling missiles, large and miniature vessels of alabaster and local stones, flint and obsidian blades, scrapers, borers, and drills, finished and half-finished stone stamp seals, copper objects such as points

### The painted pottery found at Tall-e Bakun displays a variety of geometric patterns and animal motifs.

and needles, chisels, a 25cm-long dagger, a stamp seal, and copper ores.

While many whole pottery vessels still in situ, some still containing animal and fish bones, were discovered from various buildings and warehouses in the northern complex, the primarily workshop areas in the central and southern areas (excavated in 1937) produced

mostly potsherds, and the few whole jars, indicating specialized activity areas within the settlement.

The central and southern areas are markedly different from the northern complex of the 1932 season. The northern constructions of the 1932 season exhibit a planned architectural layout as can be discerned from the regularity in the spacing of the rooms and thickness of their walls. The architectural units of the central and southern quarters follow the same northeast-southwest orientation; they are not, however, as carefully constructed as the units of the northern complex. Also, these units are surrounded by open areas containing kilns of various sizes and covered with layers of debris and ash.

The wealth and variety of material items at Bakun and the evidence of large workshop areas point to the existence of local industry and connections/trade with distant regions such as the Persian Gulf, the central plateau, Kerman, and northeastern Iran whence goods like shells, copper, steatite, and turquoise were procured.

However, a reanalysis of the combined results of the 1932 and 1937 seasons demonstrated that Bakun A was a late prehistoric example of the precursors of the later fourth millennium BC urban societies.

The ancient region of Fars, also spelled Pars or Persis, was the heart of the Achaemenian Empire (550–330 BC), which was founded by Cyrus the Great and had its capital at Pasargadae. Darius I the Great moved the capital to nearby Persepolis in the late 6th or early 5th century BC.

The capital city of Shiraz is home to some of the country’s most magnificent buildings and sights. Increasingly, it draws more and more foreign and domestic sightseers flocking into this provincial capital which was the literary capital of Persia during the Zand dynasty from 1751 to 1794.

## Leakage at Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System is immediate concern: official

TEHRAN – Water leaks at Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System, a UNESCO-registered prehistorical ensemble in southwest Iran, which is known globally as a masterpiece of creative genius, are an immediate concern and need to be controlled, an official with the Provincial Government has announced.

To prevent water leakage in the historical structure, which could result in its destruction, short-term measures are taken, Mehr quoted Fazel Abiat as saying on Wednesday.

Studies and research are being conducted and meetings with consulting engineers are underway to find a way to cause the least damage to this ensemble, the official added.

He also noted that by the end of the current Iranian month of Mehr (October 22), all water networks in the area with an area of about 90 square kilometers should be leak-tested so that if there are leaks, they can be fixed.

Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System comprises bridges, weirs, tunnels, canals, and a series of ancient watermills powered by human-made waterfalls. It is named after an ancient city of the



same name with its history dating back to the time of Darius the Great, the Achaemenid king.

Inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list in 2009, the Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System may testify to the heritage and the synthesis of earlier Elamite and Mesopotamian knowhow. According to UNESCO, the ensemble was probably influenced by the Petra dam and tunnel and by Roman civil engineering.

UNESCO says that the Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System demonstrates outstanding

universal value as in its present form, it dates from the 3rd century CE, probably on older bases from the 5th century BC. It is complete, with numerous functions, and large-scale, making it exceptional.

The property is as rich in its diversity of civil engineering structures and its constructions as in the diversity of its uses (urban water supply, mills, irrigation, river transport, and defensive system). The Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System testifies to the heritage and the synthesis of earlier Elamite and Mesopotamian knowhow; it was probably influenced by the Petra dam and tunnel and by Roman civil engineering.

“The hydraulic system has been considered a Wonder of the World not only by the Persians but also by the Arab-Muslims at the peak of their civilization,” according to the UN cultural body.

Furthermore, one of its main canals is a veritable artificial watercourse that made possible the construction of a new town and the irrigation of a vast plain, at the time semi-desert.

The Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System sits in an urban and rural landscape specific to the expression of its value.

## Five agritourism farms to open to public in northwest Iran

TEHRAN – Five agritourism farms will come on stream in the lush and fertile regions of East Azarbaijan province, northwest Iran.

“They would be the first-ever agritourism farms to be inaugurated near the cities of Tabriz, Maragheh, Marand, and Jolfa,” the deputy provincial tourism chief said on Tuesday.

“East Azarbaijan enjoys diverse agricultural products which provide a good platform for attracting tourists in different seasons of the year and holding festivals of agricultural products,” the official explained.

Agritourism is a subset of a larger industry called rural tourism that includes resorts, off-site farmers’ markets, non-profit agricultural tours, and other leisure and hospitality businesses that attract visitors to the countryside.

It is a relatively new branch of the travel industry in which tourists stay with local people in rural areas. Farm/ ranch recreation refers to activities conducted on private agricultural lands, which might include fee-hunting and fishing, overnight stays, educational activities, etc.

Agritourism and nature-tourism enterprises might include outdoor recreation (fishing, hunting, wildlife study, horseback riding), educational experiences (cannery tours, cooking classes, or tea or coffee tasting), entertainment (harvest festivals or barn dances), hospitality services (farm stays, guided tours, or outfitter services), and on-farm direct sales (u-pick operations or roadside stands).

Experts believe that in addition to the customer services jobs, agritourism pays special attention to the production sector, saying agricultural tourism is much more important and practical than other branches of tourism because it creates a new chain and diversity in the field of production and services.

## Silverworks by Iranian-Armenian artisans on show in Tehran

TEHRAN –An exhibition featuring some 130 silverworks made by Iranian-Armenian silversmiths opened in Tehran on Tuesday.

Organized by the Traditional Arts Research Group of the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, in collaboration with Arch Bishop Ardashir Manoukian Museum, the exhibit is showcasing artworks by several Armenian masters of silver crafts including Herach Megerdoun, Sarou Megerdoun, Armin Vartin, and Simon Malekian, ISNA reported on Wednesday.

Silverware, pictures, and decorative objects engraved using various techniques, a copy of the Bible with silver engraving on the cover, engraved silver

cups, and instruments used in religious ceremonies are all among the artworks on display.

The exhibit will run until October 25 at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts.

Iranians have been skillful metalworkers since the Achaemenid period (559–330 BC) when they were already acquainted with various techniques such as chasing, embossing, casting, and setting with precious stones.

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The Oxus treasure in the British Museum and the Susa find in the Louvre, Paris, are good examples of



# 120 national standards registered for medicinal plants

TEHRAN – The Vice Presidency for Science and Technology has so far registered 120 national standards for medicinal herbs and traditional medicine.

One of the necessities of improving the quality of products in any industry is to obtain special licenses. The field of medicinal plants and traditional medicine is no exception, and due to dealing with the issue of individual and community health, licensing should be applied more strictly.

In the national document of medicinal plants and traditional medicine, special emphasis has been placed on organizing the processes and structures of monitoring and evaluation of all activists and activities in this field.

For this reason, the Vice Presi-

dency for Science and Technology, in cooperation with the relevant organizations, has taken effective measures to simplify and amend the relevant laws and regulations.

So far, 120 national standards for medicinal plants and herbal medicines have been registered, which leads to improving the quality of products, IRNA reported on Wednesday.

Approving instructions for registration of herbal and traditional medicine used in veterinary medicine, simplification and modification of rules for herbal products registration, are among the measures.

Earlier in September, ten national plans have been defined to promote the culture of production and consumption of medicinal plants by



the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology.

Iranian traditional medicine is one of the most ancient forms of traditional medicine. It is grounded in the concept of four senses of humor: phlegm (Balgham), blood (Dam), yellow bile (Safra), and black bile (Sauda'). The concept of four senses of humor is based on the teachings of Rhazes and Avicenna into an elaborate medical system.

Iranian traditional medicine strongly focuses on prioritizing health maintenance and disease prevention over treatment.

**8,000 herbal species grow in Iran**

So far, about 30,000 plant species are identified in the world, with Iran's share of about 8,000 species that its plant diversity is more than

the whole of Europe.

Currently, about 2,300 species of medicinal plants have been identified in the country, accounting for one-third of the medicines used in human societies, the share of world trade in these products is about \$124 billion and Iran's share is \$570 million, which is only 0.5 percent of the total.

The per capita consumption of medicinal plants in Iran is about one kilogram of dried plants, in other words, 83,000 tons of medicinal plants worth 1.2 trillion rials (around \$29 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) are consumed in the country, while in Europe this amount is 900 grams and in the United States is 2.5 kilograms.

## Natural disasters: environment's fate or revenge?

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN – Throughout history, mankind has always struggled with natural disasters, which are exacerbating over time. In the meantime, the question arises as to how much of Iran's natural disasters are inevitable and how much is the cost of harming the environment?

International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction is observed annually on October 13, aiming to promote a global culture of risk awareness and disaster reduction.

It was designated in 1989, after a call by the United Nations General Assembly for a day to promote a global culture of risk-awareness and disaster reduction.



Floods that flow through 11 rivers into the wetland are stored in a reservoir and gradually enter the sea, but about 80 percent of the reservoir is overflowing due to sediment accumulation and does not have the capacity to hold water, he explained.

Reza Siah-Mansour, a faculty member at the Research Institute of Forests and Rangelands, also pointing to the consequences of changes in forests and says that "when we change the nature of forest lands, we make them vulnerable to water influx." Due to the fact that the forest and rangelands in Iran are often located on slopes, the destruction of vegetation makes them vulnerable to floods, and the soil is washed away by floods bringing irreparable consequences.

The statements of these experts show that the human footprint in intensifying the destructive effects of the flood has become more prominent than before. Over the years and the disappearance of natural barriers that have been at the forefront of flood control, today mankind is more at risk.

such as climate change, have made Iran feel the water crisis more than ever; A crisis that does not end here, and its effects, such as the depletion of groundwater aquifers, introduce us to a new term called subsidence.

Land subsidence, a gradual settling or sudden sinking of the Earth's surface due to subsurface movement of earth materials is mainly caused by aquifer-system compaction, drainage, and decomposition of organic soils, underground mining, oil and gas extraction, hydro compaction, natural compaction, sinkholes, and thawing permafrost.

Subsidence results in significant economic losses in the form of structural damage and high maintenance costs. This affects roads and transportation networks, hydraulic infrastructure, sewage systems, buildings, and foundations. The total damage worldwide is estimated at billions of dollars annually.

Geologists call subsidence a "silent earthquake" because an earthquake is instantaneous and its effects are visible at the same time, but subsidence is the cause of environmental depletion and its impact appears gradually; which is getting a big threat in the country.

Iran is greatly affected by the phenomena, as 29 provinces of the country are affected.

Tehran is the most populous city in West Asia, which is sinking into the ground at an alarming rate.

The metropolis is home to some 15 million people and is a victim of dramatic subsidence. New research reveals that the region is sinking by more than 25 centimeters annually in some parts.

Alireza Shahidi, head of Geological Survey and Mineral Exploration said in May that 80 percent of the groundwater is withdrawn annually in Iran, which outpacing the global rate.

In the whole world, water resources withdrawal is between 3 to 20 percent, and when it reaches 40 to 60 percent which is considered problematic, and it will be a crisis when exceeding 60-80 percent, Shahidi noted.

Over the past decades, some of the aquifer levels dropped by 100 centimeters.

After subsidence, there is practically no way to return, and only by quickly managing excessive withdrawals and blocking unauthorized wells, and developing watershed and aquifer management plans can prevent intensification and continuation.

Although natural disasters and their occurrence are beyond our control, our wrong and unprincipled actions can increase the number and severity of some of them. But without a doubt, the adoption of macro-policies will only affect us sooner or later, taking into account human goals and ignoring the environment.

According to UN surveys this year, the main natural disasters listed for Iran are drought, floods, and earthquakes. Subsidence is also a phenomenon that has emerged as one of the consequences of drought along with the aforementioned three challenges.

**Flood, a small price for our oppression of nature**

Hossein Rafiei, an expert in the field of water, says: "Natural floods cause destruction when agricultural lands, gardens, and construction are developed in the flood plains." In fact, encroaching on areas that are naturally flood-prone causes floods, so that damages structures and human activities.

Masoud Baqerzadeh Karimi, the director-general of aquatic ecosystems at the Department of Environment (DOE) points to the role of wetlands in flood control and, referring to the unfortunate situation of wetlands, including Anzali Wetland, states that what can be a serious threat to this wetland and surrounding villages in the future is the loss of flood control power.

## Mismanagement and human ownership have caused changes in nature both in national and global dimensions.

Some mismanagements and the feeling of human ownership of nature, have caused changes not only in the national dimension but also in the global dimension, which take a long time to compensate for.

"Climate change is also associated with other devastating weather events such as frequent and more severe storms, floods, rain, and winter storms. Although climate change and global warming may occur as part of natural processes due to fluctuations in sunlight intensity, deviations in the Earth's path, and volcanic activity, the climate after the Industrial Revolution and the increasing consumption of fossil fuels is increasingly under the impact of human activities."

**Drought and land subsidence**

Today, it is difficult to name an area that does not deal with water problems. These conditions have led to drought as one of the main environmental challenges in Iran. Numerous illegal wells and some poor management decisions, along with global problems

## ENGLISH IN USE

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## SDSs mitigation plan to take effect next year

Sand and dust storm (SDS) mitigation plan will be implemented in the southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan as of the next Iranian calendar year (beginning March 21), Department of Environment (DOE) chief has announced.

A total fund of \$150 million from the National Development Fund has been proposed to counter dust storms in Sistan-Baluchestan province, IRNA quoted Issa Kalantari as saying on Tuesday.

Referring to the SDSs hitting southeastern part of the country causing the residents severe health problems, he noted that the president is pursuing the issue and as long as the fund is provided the plan will go into effect.

## طرح مهار گرد و غبارهای سیستان از اول سال آینده اجرایی می شود

رئیس سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست گفت: طرح مهار گرد و غبارهای منطقه سیستان و بلوچستان از ابتدای سال آینده اجرایی می شود.

عمیسی کلاتنری روز سه شنبه در گفت و گو با خبرنگار ایرنا اظهار داشت: برای مبارزه با گرد و غبار این منطقه رئیس جمهوری تقاضای ۱۵۰ میلیون دلار اعتبار از صندوق توسعه ملی کرده است.

وی بیان کرد: توفان ها و گرد و غبار مساله جدی در منطقه سیستان است و مردم سالها با این مشکل مواجه و از آن رنج می برند و رئیس جمهوری به شدت پیگیر حل این مساله هستند. طرح مهار گرد و غبارهای منطقه سیستان به محض تأیید منابع مورد نیاز اجرایی می شود.

## COVID-19 tests for over 194,000 passengers at borders

TEHRAN – PCR and rapid tests have been performed on 194,312 passengers at the country's official borders based on a plan launched on March 10 to rapidly identify suspected cases of coronavirus.

Some 713,277 passengers have so far been screened for coronavirus by thermal tests at the country's official borders, Mehdi Valipour, head of Relief and Rescue Organization affiliated to the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS), has stated.

He went on to lament that some 212 individuals, who tested positive, have so far been temporarily quarantined, under a plan to rapidly identify suspected cases of coronavirus and prevent the spread of new UK strain.

A total of 471 members of the IRCS cooperate for carrying out the plan in 16 provinces across the country, Valipour concluded.

With the cooperation of ministries of health and transport, a plan is being implemented with the goal of rapidly identifying and testing incoming passengers and keeping them in quarantine facilities, if necessary.

Twenty-eight border checkpoints have been selected, including 18 land borders, nine air borders, and three sea borders, all incoming passengers will be tested and referred to the quarantine facilities in case of necessity.



Around 8,000 individuals enter the country via borders on a daily basis.

On August 22, Iran announced that all travelers must have a negative PCR test certificate or a health card to enter the country during the Covid-19 pandemic, IRINN reported.

Due to the prevalence of delta variant, negative PCR test is also mandatory for vaccinated passengers, Mohammad Reza Seif, head of safety and quality assurance department of Imam Khomeini Airport Town Co, said.

All passengers entering Iran, even if they have been vaccinated and have a vaccination card, must have a negative test result, he stated.

## 1,400 houses provided to families with disabled members

From page 1 ► Since the approval of the law, education for students with disabilities has been provided in Azad universities, subsidies for patients with spinal cord injury as well as disability care centers have been increased, in addition to residential units to families having members with disabilities.

Asghar Shirzadi, chairman of the board of the Iranian association of the disabled, said on Saturday that it still seems that the related organizations are not very willing to implement the law; more attention is required.

### Disability prevalence worldwide

About 15 percent of the world's population lives with some form of disability, of whom 2-4 percent experience significant difficulties in functioning.

The global disability prevalence is higher than previous WHO estimates, which date from the 1970s and suggested a figure of around 10 percent. This global estimate for disability is on the rise due to population aging and the rapid spread of chronic diseases, as well as improvements in the methodologies used to measure disability.

## Climate change is already affecting almost everyone on earth



The effects of climate change span the globe and have reached an overwhelming majority of people on Earth in the form of coastal flooding, wildfires, and other climate-related events, new findings suggest.

Using a special computer program to analyze the sizeable amount of data on climate change, researchers report that about 85% of people have felt its effects, according to results published Monday in Nature Climate Change.

To come to this conclusion, scientists fed published

summaries of more than 100,000 studies on climate change into a computer trained to identify key information. The computer mapped that information onto a global grid of data on local temperature and precipitation changes that are linked to human activity.

The maps show where these precipitation and temperature shifts -- both of which are measures of climate change -- were likely connected to climate-related outcomes such as drought, floods, fires, and even human health.

The results suggest that 80% of the Earth's land, not including Antarctica, is experiencing climate change because of human activity -- at least in part. Almost all the temperature shifts are toward warming, though precipitation changes are mixed, with increases in some areas and declines in others.

Compared with low-income countries, high-income countries had about double the amount of solid evidence for the human factor in climate change, the researchers found. That said, one possible explanation for why the roughly 20% of land mass where human-induced effects were seemingly weaker -- like in western Africa and some parts of Asia -- is that these areas have been less scrutinized by scientists, the study authors said.

## COVID-19 UPDATES ON OCTOBER 13

New cases	12,289
New deaths	194
Total cases	5,742,083
Total deaths	123,275
New hospitalized patients	1,699
Patients in critical condition	5,026
Total recovered patients	5,264,775
Diagnostic tests conducted	33,563,390
Doses of vaccine injected	68,357,307



