

# Grossi Faces a Litmus Test in Tehran

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## Opinion

## Iran should hold nerve to make splash

By Masoud Hossein

TEHRAN – Iran national football team's spot in the 2022 FIFA World Cup is almost booked and they have to concentrate to get prepared for the event from now on.

Iran have participated in the FIFA World Cup five times but they have not qualified for the knockout stage so far.

The 'Persian Leopards' are leading the Asian teams in the FIFA ranking and have a wonderful opportunity to shine in the upcoming edition.

Iranian football team are acquainted with Qatar's condition since the players have played in the Persian Gulf state for many times and the neighbor is like a second home for the country's clubs.

Iran can end their 44-year qualification drought for the first time, depending on how difficult is their group.

Dragan Skocic's appointment as Iran head coach was a controversial decision made by the football federation but the Croatian coach has proved that he is the right person to lead the team.

From now on, the football federation must focus on preparing the team.

The Iranian golden generation can make splash for the first time ever.

Vahid Amiri, Sardar Azmoun, Mehdi Taremi, Ali Gholizadeh, Saman Ghoddos, Saeid Ezaatollahi and Shoja Khalilzadeh, under tutelage of Skocic, will likely end the drought in Qatar if they avoid controversies.

Iran football team must keep nerve for making history in Qatar.

## Report

## Time for the U.S. to really leave Afghanistan alone

TEHRAN – The ruling Taliban government in Afghanistan has called on the United States to actively address the humanitarian crisis that many observers blame on Washington for creating in the war-ravaged country. A statement by the Taliban's Foreign Ministry, noted the country's increasing humanitarian and financial crises are a result of Washington freezing Kabul's assets.

In a statement it noted that "currently, the fundamental challenge of our people is financial security and the roots of this concern lead back to the freezing of assets of our people by the American government."

The United States Special Representative for Afghanistan, Thomas West responded by saying "U.S. officials made clear to the Taliban for years that if they pursued a military takeover rather than a negotiated settlement with fellow Afghans then critical non-humanitarian aid provided by the international community – in an economy enormously dependent on aid, including for basic services – would all but cease."

He also added, "Afghanistan was unfortunately already suffering a terrible humanitarian crisis before mid-August, made worse by war, years of drought, and the pandemic."

The Taliban Foreign Ministry spokesman, Abdul Qahar Balkhi, pointed out that the comments that Afghanistan faced a humanitarian crisis prior to August [when the Taliban took power] are true. He says "It is correct that economic problems have been inherited by the new government. Thus, everyone should fulfill their own responsibilities to address the issue." ▶ Page 5

## Congress offers internship to "white" murderer: This is America



TEHRAN — If clearing a "white" murderer of all charges was not enough for you, take this one. Three U.S. congress members have offered an internship to the murderer.

On November 19, Madison Cawthorn, Matt

Gaetz, and Paul Gosar offered an internship position to Kyle Rittenhouse, a teenager who killed two protestors in August 2020.

They offered the position after the 18-year-old Rittenhouse was found not guilty of the

five counts he faces for shooting two protesters and injuring a third during protests in Kenosha, Wisconsin last summer.

The next day, Rep. Cori Bush, D-Mo., called for the expulsion of House ▶ Page 2

## Health Ministry receives UNIATF award

TEHRAN – The Ministry of Health has won the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of NCDs award (UNIATF 2021).

This year 19 organizations received the award in three categories of ministries of health (or government agency under a ministry of health); ministries (or government agencies) beyond health; and non-state actors (non-governmental organization, academic institutions, and philanthropy).

The Ministry of Health and Medical Education of Iran for demonstrating excellence in delivering mental health services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Winners are selected on the basis of demonstrative commitment to multisectoral action in preventing and controlling the NCD-related SDGs (at local, national, regional, or international level) with particular weight given to nominations that demonstrated evidence of one or more of the fol-

lowing: new and innovative activities; acting as an exemplar for others; overcoming significant obstacles; demonstrating outstanding leadership; and mobilizing resources, knowledge or expertise.

Earlier in February, Ahmad al-Manzari, World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Director for Eastern Mediterranean said that Iran's measures to control non-communicable diseases (NCDs) is a role model for the Middle East (West Asia). ▶ Page 7

## Kish Island ready to host Qatar World Cup spectators

TEHRAN – The Iranian island of Kish in the Persian Gulf is ready to host Qatar World Cup spectators as well as participating teams, the head of the Association of Kish Hoteliers, has announced.

The proximity of Kish to Qatar and the lower cost of staying on this island make it possible for spectators and teams to stay here during the World Cup, which will be held from November 21 to December 18, 2022, ISNA quoted Masihollah Safa as saying on Monday.

Due to the large leap taken by the Iranian national football team to participate in the World Cup, there is a need to increase the capacity of accommodation and reception services on Kish Island, the official explained.

Therefore 4,000 rooms are being prepared to accommodate Iranians and foreigners attending the World Cup, he added. ▶ Page 6

## Automobile, auto part exports from Iran exceed \$58m in 7 months

seven months of the current year.

The production by the mentioned companies has risen 1.1 percent compared to the previous year's same seven months in which the output stood at 496,095.

During the said seven months, IKCO manufactured 242,276 vehicles, which was 2.8 percent less than the output in the same time span of the previous year. ▶ Page 4



Ahovan caravanserai, a magnificent example of Iranian historical inns

Ahovan caravanserai is one of the most beautiful examples of Iranian historical inns. It is situated in a region of the same name in Semnan province.

Located along the Silk Road, the caravanserai was built from stone and mortar in the 11th century. It is on the shortlist of traditional inns that Iran seeks to inscribe on UNESCO World Heritage List.

## Automobile, auto part exports from Iran exceed \$58m in 7 months

TEHRAN – Iran's exports of automobiles and auto parts have reached \$58.407 million during the first seven months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-October 22), the spokesman of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Ruhollah Latifi said that of the mentioned figure \$7.217 million was the value of automobile export.

According to the official, the destinations for the mentioned products were 12 countries on top of which stood Azerbaijan, followed by China, Spain, Russia, Senegal, Ukraine, Iraq and Turkey.

As previously reported, three major Iranian carmakers, namely Iran Khodro Company (IKCO), SAIPA Group, and Pars Khodro, manufactured 501,635 vehicles during the first

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## Interview

## Western powers weaponizing UN against Third World: law professor

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN – A professor of international law at the University of Illinois College of Law says the United Nations has turned into a tool in the hands of Western powers in pressing the Third World, particularly Muslim nations.

"They (Western powers) control the United Nations and use the UN as a weapon against the Third World, and in particular against Muslim states and peoples like Iran," Francis Boyle tells the Tehran Times

"I call it Bluwashing," Boyle says

Many critics blame international bodies, especially the UN, for a strong bias against undeveloped countries.

Despite UN declarations about human rights and sovereignty of every single member state of this international body, the bitter fact is that more powerful countries or regimes that pay more money can easily shape the international body's approaches.

"He who pays the piper calls the tune," Boyle emphasizes.

Following is the text of the interview:

**Western powers always talk about the importance of international bodies like the UN and the necessity of commitment to international norms. To what extent are they honest?**

Of course, they are completely dishonest. They control the United Nations and use the UN as a weapon against the Third World and in particular against Muslim states and peoples like Iran. I call it Bluwashing. ▶ Page 5

## Iran: U.S. better come to Vienna with "tangible" guarantees

TEHRAN — Speaking at his weekly press briefing on Monday, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said that the United States must provide "tangible" guarantees to Iran and the P4+1 when the talks are resumed in Vienna on November 29.

Khatibzadeh also said that the IAEA director general Rafael Grossi arrives in Tehran on Monday night.

He also welcomed Syria's possible return to the Arab League.

"Iran-IAEA relations have always tried to be technical within the framework of the Agency's safeguards and procedures, and I hope this trip will be as constructive as previous ones," the diplomat added.

He stated, "We have always advised the Agency to stay on the path of technical co-operation and not allow some countries to advance their political ▶ Page 2



## Iran: U.S. better come to Vienna with “tangible” guarantees

*Tehran says will welcome Syria's possible return to Arab League*

From page 1 ► orientations and intentions in the name of the Agency. It is natural that we make the necessary decisions in the context of developments based on circumstances.”

### Iran's focus is on negotiations to lift sanctions

In response to a question about the existence of a list of issues related to Iran concerning the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the spokesman said that the date of Grossi's visit was announced some time ago and the agenda was determined by Iran and the IAEA.

“There are issues between Iran and the Agency that we have always tried to resolve within a technical framework, and we asked the Agency to move forward in the same framework, and this trip is in the same direction,” Khatibzadeh noted.

He added, “No diplomatic trip is made without a clear agenda and it does not matter if the list is long, medium and short. The Agency is well aware that all the sabotage and terrorist acts of the Zionist regime have taken place inside Iran, and unfortunately, with the silence of some countries, it has had a significant impact on some technical aspects. These issues are being pursued between us and the Agency within its framework and level, and will be followed up during this trip as well.”

Khatibzadeh also commented on the statements made by French officials and their accusations against Iran, saying that as the Vienna talks are approaching, some people have made miscalculations and think that with some media claims they can change the place of the culprit and the accused.

“It is better for all of us to focus on the seriousness of the Vienna talks, and the Western parties know that Iran's focus is on lifting unilateral, extraterritorial and illegal sanctions,” the diplomat noted.

### We have no dialogue except sanctions lifting

On the approaching Vienna talks, the spokesman said, “Iran's position is quite clear and what will be done in Vienna is to focus on lifting unilateral and oppressive illegal sanctions that has been applied against Iran.”

He then said that if the Persian Gulf countries think that Iran and P4+1 will have a different dialogue, they should hear this position again.

Iran's position on both Vienna and the countries of the region is clear, the spokesman added.

Khatibzadeh added, “As much as we talk to the countries of the region directly and multilaterally in the same region, we also talk to the P4+1 parties about the lifting of the oppressive sanctions.”

### We hope that the Western parties will come to the talks in good faith

The Foreign Ministry spokesman also reacted to a question about the speculations about a temporary agreement between Iran and the Western parties, saying that he will not comment on the vague statements and media speculations.

“What everyone should focus on is the Vienna talks,” he reiterated.

The diplomat noted that Iran will be present in these negotiations with a serious will to lift the sanctions imposed on the Iranian people with a well-staffed team based on the stated goal. We hope that the other side come to the negotiating table to reach a practical and comprehensive agreement on the lifting of oppressive sanctions against the Iranian people with serious will and good intentions, instead of media speculations.

He added, “If they do not have this serious will or combine it with non-constructive intentions, Iran's response will definitely be commensurate with it.”

On remarks by the U.S. officials that all options are on the table, Khatibzadeh responded, “We saw all the options that the U.S. had in a country like Afghanistan and they saw those options themselves. I do not think that those who say these words believe what they say.”

Later Khatibzadeh added that the U.S. officials themselves are announcing that the signature of the U.S. president does not guarantee anything.

“It is natural that both we and the 4+1 need tangible guarantees, and it is better for the American officials who come to Vienna to know that these tangible guarantees must be given,” he said.

### JCOA window will not remain open forever

Regarding a claim that Iran is reaching an irreversible point that make it impossible to revive the JCOA, Khatibzadeh said that Trump is gone, but it seems that the “factory of falsifications and fake news of the United States has not been closed.”

It would not help a group to stage a show and imagine that they can shape a fake narrative to mislead the international community or create a different psychological aspect by the approaching Vienna talks.

He continued by saying that the United States seems to have forgotten, but it must remember that the world will not forget that it was the

United States that withdrew from the JCOA, and that this is the current administration that, despite sending contradictory messages to Iran, is continuing the same path.

“If the JCOA does not have specific economic interests for Iran and would not normalize foreign trade, the United States should know that this window will not be open forever, just as parliamentary law on Strategic Action to Lift Sanctions is binding and the government believes in it,” he stressed.

Regarding a change in Iran's terms in the talks, Khatibzadeh said that what Iran wants is a serious entry to the talks with a serious determination to lift sanctions. He added that it is better to focus on this issue and not base the judgment and answer on the statements that are vaguely published in the media.

### Syria cannot be excluded from the Arab League

In response to a question posed by the Tehran Times correspondent about Syria's possible return to the Arab League and Iran's position in this regard, Khatibzadeh said, “Syria is one of the most important and indelible actors in the Arab world, and has been active and present in the framework of regional organizations. Some countries are trying to remove Syria from the union by putting pressure on it.”

He then referred to the path taken by the UAE to restore ties with Syria, saying, “The path taken in recent months has been one in which various countries have come to believe that neither Syria can be eliminated nor that it is in the interest of the Arab world to eliminate Syria as an effective actor in the Arab world.”

He added that it is natural that Iran and countries like Russia welcome this and consider it a step in the right direction.

# Ex-diplomat: Interim agreement could be a hoax or an opportunity

TEHRAN — A former diplomat has said that until the details of a draft interim agreement for restoring the 2015 nuclear deal are not clarified, it will not be possible to make a correct judgment about it.

In an interview with IRNA published on Monday, Hamid Reza Asefi described the Ebrahim Raisi administration's approach to the nuclear talks as logical and wise.

“The administration seeks to neutralize sanctions through internal mechanisms,” Asefi remarked.

Accordingly, he said, the country's resilience must be increased to make sanctions “practically ineffective.”

Stating that the realization of this goal is time consuming and does not happen overnight, the former Foreign Ministry spokesman said in efforts to increase the country's economic power necessary mechanisms should be devised.

For example, he suggested, production capacity must be increased and relations with neighbors and other countries be strengthened.

Asefi recalled the experiences of Iran in the past four decades, especially since the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCOA) was signed, saying, “The accumulated experience of the Islamic Republic in the field of foreign policy and diplomacy proves the logical approach of the current administration on the importance of neutralizing sanctions at home and not making the country's economy dependent on the outside.”

The former Iranian ambassador to France went on to say that the Raisi administration announced from the beginning that it respected the commitment of the previous administration and it will implement it, and here the difference between the administrations of Iran and the United States becomes clear.

“This administration adhered to the commitments of previous administrations, but the U.S. presidents did not adhere to the commitments of previous administrations.”

President Donald Trump quit the JCOA – commonly called the 2015 nuclear deal – that was inked by his predecessor President Barack Obama. Trump did this despite the fact that the UN Security Council adopted a resolution endorsing the agreement.

Asefi saw the past few months as an opportunity for the country's new diplomacy and foreign policy team to review past developments.

He said the Vienna talks should be seen what steps the Americans are taking. “The Americans are moving in a multi-layered way, meaning that while emphasizing that they want to return to the JCOA to fulfill their obligations, they are also imposing new sanctions.”

Until June, six rounds of talks were held between Iran and the remaining parties to the JCOA to put the agreement on the right track. The talks, which started in April, started after the Biden administration said it is ready to rejoin the JCOA.

### IAEA actions one of layers of U.S. anti-Iran scenarios

The ex-diplomat said it a sign of “dishonesty” by the Americans that they impose sanctions while emphasize the need for negotiation to revitalize the nuclear pact.

“This approach will cause the new Iranian negotiating team to take a more



cautious approach to U.S. promises and strengthen pessimism on the Iranian side.”

Asefi, who also served as Iran's ambassador to the UAE and Germany, stated that Europe did not stay “in” the JCOA from the beginning. Rather, he said, it stayed on the “sideline” of the JCOA.

“Europe did not leave the JCOA, but it did not fulfill its obligations to Iran. Maybe Europe was waiting for the American green light. In any case, the approach of the Europeans indicated that they were following the United States, and this makes Iran cautious about accepting the promises of the Europeans.”

Asefi assessed the U.S. emphasis on negotiation with Iran along with talks with some countries in the region and activating the IAEA as different layers of the U.S. scenario toward Iran's peaceful nuclear program.

The U.S. uses the IAEA as a leverage against Iran and the new efforts of the Agency in the face of Iran's nuclear peaceful activities are in line with this policy.

IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi was scheduled to arrive in Tehran on Monday night for talks with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian and chief of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization Mohammad

Grossi has been launching a propaganda campaign against Iran by saying that Tehran has limited access by IAEA inspectors to Iran's nuclear sites. However, Iran is cooperating with the IAEA based on the nuclear safeguards Agreement.

The IAEA has also refused to condemn sabotage acts against Iran's nuclear sites. According to international law, any efforts against nuclear sites is crime against humanity.

### U.S. using nuclear issue as a platform for other purposes

Asefi also says the U.S. is seeking other goals against Iran through nuclear negotiations.

“Iran's nuclear activities are not the only issue for the U.S.,” he said. “As U.S. officials have repeatedly acknowledged, they use the nuclear issue as a platform for other issues, and their ultimate goal is to limit Iran's defense and missile capabilities while reducing the Islamic Republic's authority in the region.”

Asefi referred to the news surrounding an interim agreement in some U.S. media outlets, indicating that the issue of interim agreement has been raised to release a sum of Iran's frozen assets in exchange for halting

some of Iran's nuclear activities.

The details of such an agreement need to be clarified so that it can be evaluated, he commented, adding an interim agreement “can be both helpful and deceptive.”

The former diplomat noted that until the details of such a plan released by the American media outlets under the title of “interim agreement” are not clarified, a correct judgment cannot be made about it.

“This plan can be both an opportunity to make a decision in a clear atmosphere or it can be a media trap.”

The Americans have not yet officially announced anything, and the Iranian negotiating team would make the necessary decision after receiving the details.

The former foreign ministry spokesman stated that time is not in the favor of the United States.

“Time is in the favor of Iran and the anti-Iran actions of the United States have not achieved results. Now, the Islamic Republic has not only made good progress in the nuclear field, it has also become stronger in the region, and its defense capabilities are greater than ever. Washington has failed in all areas of showdown with Tehran, and the White House's request to negotiate with the Islamic Republic is due to its frustration.”

He said an agreement that would serve the national interests of Iran will be considered as a good agreement and that a good agreement is desirable whenever it is reached.

The retired diplomat also said Iran will not give in to attritional negotiations and at the same time it is in no hurry to conclude negotiations.

“Iran's new nuclear negotiating team has clarified one issue for the American and European sides, and that is that we are not willing to reach agreement at any cost. For the current administration, agreement is not the goal but the realization of national interests.”

The expert on international diplomacy added if Iran's national interests were ensured in the negotiations, an agreement could be reached, otherwise this situation will continue.

In that situation, he said, Iran should be in close contact with the Chinese and the Russians and talk to them.

The ex-diplomat went on to say, “It remains to be seen on November 29 whether the Americans will enter into negotiations honestly or whether they want to pursue their own policies by using sticks and carrots and threatening and encouraging. The Islamic Republic

has come a good way so far, and time is in our favor, and the Americans are desperate and have lost everything in diplomacy, and the success of the negotiations depends on their honesty or dishonesty.”

### U.S.-E3 statement was based on ‘baseless extravagance’

Asefi also called the recent anti-Iran statement by the U.S., the European troika (known as E3) and some Arab countries “baseless extravagance.”

He noted, “U.S. intervention is the cause of the region's problems and the country is not in a position to talk about our region's issues. Washington has always been a cause of divergence in the region, because if friendship is established between the countries of the region, it will no longer have a pretext to be present in the region and sell weapons worth billions of dollars.”

The former Foreign Ministry spokesman recalled the history of Iran's negotiations with the Persian Gulf states over the past four decades since the Islamic Revolution.

“The regional security dialogue plan and the Hormuz peace plan were among the plans that Tehran used to improve relations with the countries of the Persian Gulf. From the beginning of the revolution until now, we have pursued these regional security arrangements in various administrations, but unfortunately, some countries in the region, which see the continuation of their rule in foreign support, have followed the policies of the White House.”

Asefi also reacted to the remarks of the Secretary-General of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council seeking to participate in the nuclear talks between Iran and the P4+1 (four permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany).

“40 years ago, we proposed the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council regional cooperation and regional arrangements and insisted on it. We still insist. Countries in the region can talk to each other, but these talks have nothing to do with the United States. The nuclear issue is also between Iran and the P4+1 and should not be confused with regional issues.”

### Iran will not sign agreement under pressure

Asefi highlighted that negotiation should be concluded when Iran's interests were ensured, and if it was reached sooner, it was better, and if it was not reached, Iran should wait until it was reached.

“It is not possible for Iran to sign something that does not serve its interests under pressure. Perhaps the problem with the previous administration is that we rushed to sign the deal.”

Regarding the movements of the Zionist regime, the former diplomat said, “Israel is seeking chaos and can only survive in the light of chaos and sedition. Israel has realized that Iran's regional authority is growing exponentially and is doing everything it can to create a rift between Iran and the countries in the region.”

Iran should not be worried about Israel's movements because Israel's anti-Iran provocations have a forty-year history and will not reach anywhere, and this regime can only maintain its existence for a limited time, the former diplomat concluded.

## Congress offers internship to “white” murderer: This is America

From page 1 ► Republicans who have offered the internship to Rittenhouse.

“Just being real: every day it feels more and more dangerous coming to work. Not only do these members fuel violence. Now they're actively recruiting someone whose sole qualification is killing people standing up for Black lives and getting away with it,” Bush tweeted. “They must be expelled.”

Bush included screenshots of three public offers to hire Rittenhouse as an intern from the Republican Reps. In response to the offers, Rittenhouse's criminal defense attorney said he thinks his client pursuing a career in politics would not be a “wise thing” to do.

To understand the true color of the United States, we must first get to know the “white” murderer, Kyle Rittenhouse.

Rittenhouse, a member of an armed white militia, killed two anti-racism protesters after shooting them with an assault rifle as he was patrolling the streets, staying out after a curfew with the approval of police officers on duty at the time, who infamously handed out water to groups of armed civilian men who are part of militia groups.

The court found Rittenhouse not guilty for intentional homicide, reckless homicide, attempted intentional homicide among other counts. The judge even cleared Rittenhouse of a charge that he was a minor (aged 17 at the time of the shooting) in

possession of a dangerous firearm. The courtroom claims he acted in self-defense but there was no accountability for even manslaughter which means the victims who lost their lives and their loved ones will not see any justice.

The representatives who offered the internship position to Rittenhouse are known for their racism. Just last week, Cori Bush asked for expulsion of Paul Gosar, one of the Congressmen who offered an internship job to Rittenhouse, for posting and edited anime that portrayed killing minority representative, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y.

Gaetz, one of Trump's biggest fans and a “white supremacy” theory supporter and advocate, has a long record of racist comments. He is a big supporter

of “great Replacement Theory,” introduced on live TV by Fox News host, Tucker Carlson. Basically, the idea says that white Americans are being replaced by non-European ethnicities in service of a grand political project by the Democratic Party. It's a deeply racist idea that presupposes white people are the “real Americans.”

The theory neglects Native Americans as real and original Americans.

It also says that all immigrants vote monolithically for the Democratic Party.

When the theory first broke out, many people called on Fox News to fire Carlson, but Gaetz rose to support him.

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) asked Fox

News to fire Carlson, but Gaetz said that ADL is being racist.

The biggest racist and white supremacist of all time, Donald Trump went even so far as to congratulate the white murderer as well as praising the court's verdict.

Trump has stirred up racism in America for the past 6 years by motivating white supremacist groups, but one must not think that the issue is personal. Systemic racism has always been the main problem in the United States.

Although the U.S. tries to portray a rosy picture of itself, the bitter truth was what we all witnessed on November 20: White people can kill and receive job offers while minorities are being stumped.



# Grossi faces a litmus test in Tehran

TEHRAN – Chief of the United Nations nuclear watchdog is again traveling to Iran after months-long hiatus in high-level contacts between Tehran and the UN body.

Rafael Grossi, director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), confirmed on Monday that he will travel to Iran for high-level talks on the current state of play between the IAEA and Iran.

"I'm travelling to Tehran today for meetings with Iranian officials to address outstanding questions in #Iran. I hope to establish a fruitful and cooperative channel of direct dialogue so the @IAEAorg can resume essential verification activities in the country," he said on Twitter.

In addition to a meeting with Mohammad Eslami, head of Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), Grossi will meet with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian, a meeting for which Grossi has long been badgering.

The director-general's visit comes at a time when Iranian officials are complaining about outside political influence over what is supposed to be a mere technical body.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh underlined the need for the IAEA to remain solely technical and avoid being used as a tool by some parties to advance their interests.

Speaking at a weekly press



conference on Monday, Khatibzadeh commented on Grossi's visit and hoped for the IAEA to remain professional.

"We hope this trip would be as constructive as previous trips. We have always advised the Agency to stay on the path of technical cooperation and not allow some countries to advance their political intentions in the name of the Agency. We make our decision within the framework of developments and circumstances," Khatibzadeh said.

Iranian officials have long complained about the way the IAEA handles its relations with Tehran, saying that the UN body has failed to act professionally on various issues, ranging from leaking confidential Iranian-supplied documents to putting on agenda unsubstantiated allegations made by hostile third parties.

And there is the issue of the director-

general's ingratitude toward Iran's remarkable cooperation with the IAEA in the past. Over the past few weeks, Grossi has been pressing for a meeting with Iranian officials, particularly the new Iranian foreign minister, in light of restrictions on the Agency's ability to monitor some Iranian nuclear sites. TESA Karaj Complex stood out as a major point of contention.

The IAEA lost complete access to the centrifuge component manufacturing factory largely due to an act of sabotage unofficially attributed to Israel. Despite suffering from Israeli sabotage, the Agency has refrained from putting the blame on Israel, arguing that it is not in a position to make political announcements.

This behavior created a sense of resentment among Iranian officials, prompting them to relatively curtail

cooperation with the IAEA, and believing that, when it comes to Iran, the IAEA unabashedly makes politically-motivated statements all while ignoring conspicuous, politically-motivated acts of sabotage by other parties.

And all this happened after Iran rewarded Grossi twice during his recent visits to Iran with technical agreements ensuring the continuation of the IAEA's monitoring of Iranian nuclear facilities.

Every time Grossi paid a visit to Iran, he is able to reach understandings with the Iranian side at a critical juncture in terms of cooperation between Iran and the IAEA. But every time the flexibility of Iran resulted in politically-motivated statements from the IAEA and subsequent bullying by the West.

The current visit of Grossi, therefore, would be a litmus test of change in the director-general's modus operandi toward Iran. Less than a week from now, Iran and the P4+1 group of countries (China, Russia, France, and the UK plus Germany) will be gathering in Vienna again later this month to resume the stalled talks.

In addition, the IAEA's Board of Governors is expected to convene a meeting in the coming days with the possibility of censuring Iran at the urging of France.

Grossi's assessment of his trip to Iran is likely to determine the trajectory of events at both meetings.

## SPORTS

### Barnsley appoint Poya Asbaghi as new head coach

TEHRAN – Barnsley FC have appointed Swedish-Iranian Poya Asbaghi as their new head coach.

Asbaghi, 36, had previously been in charge of Sweden's under-21 side.

He takes over from Markus Schopp, who was sacked in early November after seven consecutive defeats, The Athletic reported.

Joseph Laumann had been the caretaker manager and will lead the team against promotion-chasing Fulham on Saturday, with Asbaghi taking first-team training from Monday.

Asbaghi will be joined by assistant coach Ferran Sibila, who worked with him during a two-year spell at IFK Goteborg between 2018 and 2020.

Khaled El-Ahmad, Barnsley CEO, said: "We welcome Poya and Ferran to the club. Both are good people, talented coaches with clear leadership and tactical philosophy.

"Poya was on the radar back in 2019 and as we went through our recruitment process it became clear to all parties that Poya and Ferran can take Barnsley FC forward.

"We would like to thank Jo Laumann and the first team coaching staff for their continued hard work and professionalism over the past few weeks during what has been a transitional period for the club."

Barnsley are currently second from bottom in the Championship with only 11 points so far from 18 matches.



### Ali Alipour linked with move to Persepolis

TEHRAN – Marítimo football team forward Ali Alipour has been linked with a return to Iran's Persepolis.

He left Persepolis in September 2020 to join the Portuguese team on a two-year deal but has yet to meet the expectations.

The 26-year-old striker has scored five goals in 37 matches.

In the interview with the Iranian local media Alipour has shown his interest in returning to Persepolis.

Defending champions Persepolis sit seventh in the Iran Professional League (IPL).

### 14 players invited to Iran for FIBA Basketball World Cup Asian Qualifiers

TEHRAN – Iran national basketball team head coach Mostafa Hashemi invited 14 players to the team for two matches against Bahrain in the 2023 FIBA Basketball World Cup Asian Qualifiers.

Iranian iconic players Hamed Haddadi and Samad Nikkhah Bahrami have been left out of the team.

Iran will host Bahrain in Tehran in Group D of the FIBA Basketball World Cup Asian Qualifiers on November 26 and play the team three days later in Isa Town.

\* Iran Squad:

Amir Hossein Azari, Matin Aghajanzadeh, Rouzbeh Arghavan, Mohammad Jamshidi, Mohammad Hassanzadeh, Saeid Davarpanah, Navid Rezaeifar, Asghar Kardoust, Arsalan Kazemi, Mehdi Kamrani, Sajad Mashayekhi, Salar Monji, Meysam Mirzaei, Behnam Yakhchali

### Draw date set for new-look FIFA World Cup intercontinental play-offs

TEHRAN – The draw for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ intercontinental play-offs will be held in Zurich, Switzerland, on Friday, 26 November 2021, fifa.com wrote.

The fixtures that will determine who plays who between the AFC, Concacaf, CONMEBOL and the OFC in the contest for the last two spots at football's flagship global event will be decided after the European play-off draw, which will start at 17:00 CET. Both draws will be streamed live on FIFA.com for all territories.

Following the draw, a dramatic conclusion to the FIFA World Cup 2022 preliminary competition looms with the two intercontinental play-off matches to take place over a single leg on 13 and 14 June 2022.

The play-offs were originally scheduled to take place in March 2022 but were rescheduled to June 2022 as a result of the unprecedented disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic on the scheduling of FIFA World Cup qualifiers globally.

Four years ago, Australia and Peru secured passage to the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia via the intercontinental play-offs with wins over Honduras and New Zealand respectively.

## Azeri deputy prime minister holds ‘constructive’ talks in Tehran

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman has praised the visit by a senior Azerbaijani official to Tehran, describing the visit as "constructive."

Speaking at a weekly press conference on Monday, Saeed Khatibzadeh said Shahin Mostafayev, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan, held extensive meetings with Iranian officials during his stint in Tehran.

The Azerbaijani official arrive in Tehran on Sunday and met with a number of Iranian officials including Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian.

The visit by the Deputy Prime Minister of Azerbaijan was a "remarkable and constructive", the spokesman said, adding Mostafayev had very intensive meetings with two cabinet members and a detailed meeting with Amir Abdollahian.

"The visit of the Deputy Prime Minister of Azerbaijan was a remarkable and constructive one, and he had very intensive meetings with cabinet members and a detailed meeting with Amir Abdollahian," Khatibzadeh stated.

He added, "Many projects were discussed, and the relations, God willing, are designed to enter a new phase after the unwanted and unnecessary media tension that we passed through with the tact of both sides. This trip was in the same direction."

The spokesman brought good tidings of enhancement of bilateral ties with Azerbaijan. "Other good news about the relations between the two countries is on the way, and the Republic of Azerbaijan defined this trip as a basis for the implementation of some projects, and we followed this approach. Trips will take place between the two countries at different levels over the next few weeks," Khatibzadeh said.

Commenting on a possible meeting between the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and Iranian President Ayatollah Seyed Ibrahim Raisi on the sidelines of the ECO summit in Ashgabat, he said, "The meeting between Mr. Aliyev and Dr. Raisi is normal in this diplomatic framework, but you should ask the President's Office."

The remarks came a day after Amir Abdollahian and Mostafayev held a meeting at the Iranian foreign ministry. Khatibzadeh described the meeting as "detailed."

The two officials discussed the latest

developments in the Caucasus region and cooperation between Iran and Azerbaijan.

Mostafayev is also the Chairman of the Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation between Tehran and Baku.

In the meeting, Amir Abdollahian expressed satisfaction with the upward trend in trade relations and deep ties between the two nations.

He called the liberation of Azerbaijan's territories the beginning of a new chapter in economic relations between the two countries and stressed the need for the two sides to use all economic capacities in the fields of trade, transport, energy and tourism, according to the Iranian foreign ministry.

The top Iranian diplomat referred to the capabilities of the Islamic Republic and announced that Iranian companies are ready to participate in the reconstruction of the newly liberated areas.

Amir Abdollahian also cited the success of the two countries in vaccination against the Covid-19 and underlined the need to facilitate communication between citizens of both sides and re-establish flights between the two countries. The foreign minister reaffirmed Iran's unwavering support for the territorial integrity of countries, stressing that international borders are unchangeable.

The deputy prime minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan also expressed satisfaction with his constructive meetings with Iran's oil and transport and urban development ministers, saying the two countries are close to signing historic agreements in the fields of oil, gas and transportation.

Mostafayev also stressed the constructive role of the two countries' foreign ministers in overcoming the recent tensions.

He said a meeting of the joint Commission for Economic Cooperation between the two countries will be held early next year. In other remarks, the Azeri deputy prime minister referred to the increase in trade exchanges between Tehran and Baku since the beginning of 2021. Mostafayev said the 22% hike in trade during the Covid pandemic indicates friendly relations and economic capacities of the two sides.

Amir Abdollahian and Mostafayev also discussed the forthcoming ECO summit and the documents of bilateral agreements.

vice president for science and technology should use the capacity of graduates and give students hope for their future.

In another part of his remarks, the president said it is necessary that all bodies to be prepared to deal with cyber-attacks and added, "Services provided to the public in the context of cyberspace should be completely secure and services and data should be fully protected against enemy cyber-attacks."

Emphasizing the need for close and mutual relations



between the administration and research and academic centers, the president said, "Elites and scientific communities should propose a scientific and executive solution to the various issues and problems of the country."



## ‘Facilitating activities of financial institutions to pave way for market development’



TEHRAN – Head of Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) has said facilitation of the activities of stock market institutions like brokers will lead to the development of the capital market, IRIB reported on Monday.

“Facilitating the establishment of brokerage firms and the ease of licensing issuance for financial institutions, as well as the strict supervision of the SEO over the activities of such financial institutions, are the basis for the development of the capital market,” Majid Eshqi said.

Noting that the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs has put the support for the capital market on the agenda, Eshqi added: “In order to support the capital market, Economy Minister Ehsan Khandouzi has put issues such as the development of institutions, the removal of monopolies, the use of new tools, and the strengthening of the primary market on the agenda of this

ministry.”

“Elimination of monopolies and facilitating the issuance of licenses for establishment of financial institutions is one of the most important missions of the Securities and Exchange Organization, however this goal has made the SEO more precise in performing its supervisory duties to prevent any possible problems for shareholders,” the official explained.

Referring to the concerns of some capital market experts and shareholders about the increase in the number of financial institutions without paying attention to quality improvement, he stressed: “The capital market has the capacity for a large number of financial institutions to be active in, and it is not that the smaller the number of institutions, the easier the monitoring of their performance would be.”

“Although the establishment licensing process has been facilitated, strict measures have been taken into account for reviewing the guidelines and standards, and the SEO's supervision will become more stringent once the institutions become operational,” Eshqi noted.

As the market expands quantitatively, new ideas and tools enter the market which requires stronger supervision to prevent new risks. In this regard, the SEO will deal with violators very strongly, the official stressed.

## Natural gas consumption exceeds production level, warns NIGC

TEHRAN – Head of the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC)'s Production Coordination and Supervision Management Ahmad Zamani said the consumption of natural gas in the country has exceeded the current production level, Shana reported.

Speaking to the national TV on Monday, Zamani called on various sectors to manage their consumption during the cold season's peak consumption period.

“Considering the recent reduction in temperature, people should put consumption management and optimal use of heating appliances on their agenda, because only by observing the optimal consumption patterns we can reduce the gap between production and consumption and get through this early winter,” the official said.

According to Zamani, the household sector accounts for a big share in the country's natural gas consumption, and optimal use by this sector would reduce the country's total consumption to a great extent.

“In this season, it is important to maintain an optimal temperature in households; because with the decrease of the temperature, consumption in this sector increases sharply,” he said, adding: “Our emphasis is more on observing the comfort temperature in the households

(18-21 degrees Celsius) while wearing warm clothes, limiting the heating space in the house, and turning off the heating devices when leaving the house.”

Earlier this month, Iranian Gas Transmission Company (IGTC)'s Managing Director Mehdi Jamshidi Dana said his company is completely prepared for sustainable gas supply throughout the country during winter.

He said major overhaul operations have been carried out for pressure boosting facilities, pipeline operation centers, and smart monitoring stations, while timely periodic visits have also been done to ensure sustainable and secure gas supply to Iranian subscribers in the country during winter.

Stating that the company has taken all the necessary measures for the sustained transmission of gas during the winter, Jamshidi Dana said: “Due to the increase in the amount of gas consumption at peak periods, all operational areas are ready to operate at maximum capacity and spare units are also prepared to ensure the stability of gas transmission and to avoid any disruption.”

The official further called on the people to manage their consumption during the peak periods to help the national Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) and IGTC to maintain gas supply during the cold season.

# Automobile, auto part exports from Iran exceed \$58m in 7 months

From page 1 ▶ SAIPA manufactured 192,628 vehicles in the mentioned period. Production by this automaker rose 2.2 percent in comparison to the previous year's same time span in which the output stood at 188,490.

Pars Khodro also manufactured 66,731 vehicles in the period under review, 14.5 percent more than the output in the first seven months of the past year.

Iran currently stands in 20th place among the world's top automobile manufacturers producing 821,060 vehicles by the end of 2019, according to the Organisation Internationale des Constructeurs d'Automobiles (OICA), worldpopulationreview.com has recently reported.

Back in August, Iranian Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Seyyed Reza Fatemi Amin said that his ministry



has a two-year plan for the auto industry based on which this industry will undergo serious changes and improve significantly.

“We must strengthen competition, improve management and economic mechanisms, and increase production in the auto industry in order to succeed in our plans,”

Fatemi Amin said.

“Our plan is to produce 1.6 million vehicles next year (begins in March 2022), which will increase to three million units in [the Iranian calendar year] 1404 (begins in March 2025), and 30 percent of the production, equivalent to about one million units, should be sent to export markets,” he added.

Iran's major carmakers had manufactured 900,714 vehicles in the previous year (ended on March 20), which was 4.3 percent more than the figure of its preceding year.

During the past year, IKCO manufactured 480,338 vehicles, which was 21.9 percent more than the output in its preceding year, which was 393,812 vehicles.

SAIPA manufactured 317,321 vehicles, with a 12.6-percent fall from 363,379 vehicles manufactured in 1398. And Pars Khodro manufactured 103,055 vehicles in the past year, showing a 2.8-percent drop from the output of its previous year, which was 106,072 vehicles.

Iranian Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry's programs for the current Iranian calendar year show that the manufacturing of 1.2 million cars has been put on the agenda.

## Iran, Iraq to expand agricultural ties

TEHRAN – Iran and Iraq are planning to expand bilateral relations in various agricultural fields, an official with the Iranian Agriculture Ministry announced on Sunday, IRNA reported.

Speaking in a meeting with Iraqi Ambassador to Tehran Naseer Abdul Mohsen Abdullah, the Agriculture Ministry's Director-General for Specialized Organizations and International Affairs Alimorad Sarafrazi referred to the close relations between the two countries and stressed the need to set up various specialized working groups in the field of agriculture.

He then referred to some challenges and obstacles in the way of trade relations between the two countries and stated that improving and establishing mechanisms for plant quarantine, monitoring livestock health at common borders of the two countries,



creating unity of procedure at different border crossings between the two countries and also promoting infrastructures for transporting goods between the two countries seem essential in that respect.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Sarafrazi called for the timely announcement of bans and restrictions on the export of Iranian agricultural products to the Arab country

in order to prevent damage to Iranian exporters and producers.

He also underlined the need for exchanging technical knowledge in various agricultural fields between the two countries.

Iraqi envoy to Tehran, for his part, pointed to the longstanding political, economic, social, cultural, and especially agricultural relations between the two countries and welcomed the proposal of the Iranian side for setting up specialized working groups in the relevant fields.

He promised to expedite the announcement of bans and tariff restrictions from relevant Iraqi authorities and called for increased cooperation between Iran and Iraq in the field of livestock and plant health monitoring and the transfer of technical knowledge to Iraq and the formation of a working group in this regard.

## Average daily gasoline production stands at 102m liters

TEHRAN- Iran is currently producing 102 million liters of gasoline per day on an average basis, the managing director of National Iranian Oil Products Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC) announced in a press conference on Sunday.

Jalil Salari also said the average daily gasoline consumption has risen 15 million liters to 90 million liters in the current month, after easing the coronavirus restrictions.

Having the production capacity of nearly 120 million liters per day of gasoline, Iran currently has also the capacity to storage three billion liters of the strategic fuel.

Although the Islamic Republic is currently self-sufficient in gasoline production, fluctuations in consumption at different periods through the year have led to the creation of storage facilities across the country to manage the sustainable supply and distribution of gasoline.

These tanks will help the country's refineries continue operating at full capacity if on certain days of the year (such as the Nowruz holidays) gasoline consumption reduces significantly, and also prevent any interruption in the supply of the fuel if consumption increases drastically.

In this regard, the capacity

of the country's gasoline storage facilities has increased in recent years, so much so that according to the National Iranian Oil Products Refining and Distribution Company, the volume of gasoline storage has increased from 1.8 billion liters to more than three billion liters.

According to the former NIORDC Managing Director Alireza Sadeq-Abadi, Iran is currently the biggest producer and exporter of gasoline in West Asia.

The country has achieved this success despite the external pressures and hurdles imposed by the U.S. sanctions on its oil industry, Sadeq-Abadi said back in January.

According to the deputy oil minister, the significant increase in the country's gasoline production and



exports comes despite the fact that nearly two years ago Iran was an importer of the strategic product, shipping in 17 million liters per day of gasoline.

“In [the Iranian calendar year] 1396 (ended on March 20, 2018), the production of gasoline in our country was 59 million liters per day; the figure reached 107 million liters per day last year, and today the country's gasoline production capacity is between 107 to 120 million liters per day,” the official said.

## Govt., Tehran private sector discuss tax issues

TEHRAN - The 81st meeting of the dialogue council of the government and the Tehran Province's private sector was held on Sunday, in which the attendees explored the issues raised between the private sector and the Iranian National Tax Administration (INTA), the TCCIMA portal reported.

The meeting was attended by the Deputy Chief of Tehran Province Justice Department Masoud Setayeshi, the Head of Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) Masoud Khansari, and the TCCIMA Deputy Head for Business and Trade Affairs Houman Hajipour, as well as



the representatives of the province private sector.

At this meeting, the representatives of the private sector criticized one of the recent resolutions of the INTA Supreme Tax Council and called for its amendment. After hearing the criticisms, Setayeshi noted that the mentioned resolution was legally problematic and suggested

the private sector to file a lawsuit against it in the Administrative Court of Justice.

Elsewhere in the meeting, Khansari mentioned the schedule for the preparation of the next year's national budget that is ahead of the 13th government, saying that the government should prepare and compile a budget that is not inflationary.

“The most serious issue that the government needs to consider is the problem of inflation in the Iranian economy, which in recent years, its increasing trend, has caused serious harm to people and businesses,” Khansari said.

## TEDPIX jumps 20,000 points on Monday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), jumped 20,192 points to 1.407 million on Monday.

As reported, over 6.11 billion securities worth 44.19 trillion rials (about \$1.052 billion) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index rose 15,724 points, and the second market's index gained 37,746 points.

TEDPIX rose 58,000 points (4.1 percent) to 1.456 million in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

During the past week, the indices of Isfahan Refining Company, National Iranian Copper Industries Company, Mobarakeh Steel Company, Social Security Investment Company, Bandar Abbas Refining Company, Iran Khodro Group, and Saipa Company were the most widely followed ones.

In a meeting with the representatives of over 30 major companies active in the capital market, on November 1, to exchange ideas for resolving issues and developing the economy, Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Ehsan Khandouzi said his ministry plans to make the economy more predictable and eliminate pricing systems that are harmful to the capital market and the stock exchange industry.

The official noted that the government will follow new strategies to compensate for the budget deficit by making government assets more productive and also by selling surplus properties.

“The task of the Economy Ministry and the Securities and Exchange Organization is to develop tools and institutions in order to create a transparent, efficient, and predictable market,” Khandouzi stated.

## E-Commerce Development Center seeks to make foreign trade procedures fully electronic

TEHRAN – Head of the Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry's E-Commerce Development Center has said almost all the procedures related to the country's foreign trade are currently being carried out electronically and the center is seeking to make them all electronically, IRIB reported on Monday.

According to Ali Rahbari, the Industry Ministry's E-Commerce Development Center seeks to minimize the role of the human factor in operations with the smartening of trade systems.

“In issuing a business card, part of the process is currently done with human intervention and part electronically, but soon this process will become completely electronic and without human intervention,” the official said.



# Western powers weaponizing UN against Third World: law professor

From page 1 ► How do you evaluate the UN performance when it comes to sensitive files like Palestine and genocide against the Bosnian people during the Balkan War? Apparently, these bodies never move unless the Western powers' interests are in danger.

The United Nations sponsored the destruction of Bosnia and the Bosnians at UN Headquarters in Geneva. Their Owen-Stoltenberg Plan called for the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina to be carved up into three little pieces of land; for Bosnia's Statehood to be destroyed; for Bosnia's United Nations Membership to be robbed from them, and for 1.5 to 2 million more Bosnians to be subjected to ethnic cleansing when we already had 2 million victims of ethnic cleansing, thus the United Nations finishing off the job of genocide against the Bosnians. As their Lawyer, I stopped the United Nations from exterminating and eliminating people and the state of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The United Nations sabotaged the English language translation of the original Arabic Language Palestinian Declaration of Independence of November 15, 1988. The Palestinians asked me to figure out how to counteract this UN sabotage against the Palestinians, which I did immediately. But by then the damage had already been done to the Palestin-



ians by the United Nations.

Apparently there is no international guarantees to force certain countries to abide by their obligations. For example, the Trump administration breached international agreements without any facing any punishment. What is your comment?

He who pays the piper calls the tune. When the United States ambassador to the United Nations tells the United Nations to jump, the United Nations secretary-general and UN secretariat say: "How high?"

"United States is quickly moving towards World War 3."

How do you describe the current world order? A bipolar state or a

multi-polar one?

The United States is quickly moving towards World War 3 with either Russia or China or both and maybe Iran.

Do you confirm that some autocratic regimes like Saudi Arabia and other wealthy Arab states can penetrate international bodies by spending money and funding them to achieve their own goals?

Of course, they do! Once again, he who pays the piper calls the tune at the United Nations.

## Time for the U.S. to really leave Afghanistan alone

From page 1 ► Calls have been made urging the easing of financial sanctions on Afghanistan. Regional countries as well as Human Rights Organizations have urged the White House to the release frozen Afghan assets saying the plight of ordinarily people and rising poverty should not be linked to politics.

The U.S. administration however refuses to budge from its, straightforward diplomatic approach to the Taliban saying "legitimacy & support must be earned by actions to address terrorism, establish an inclusive government, & respect the rights of minorities, women & girls – including equal access to education & employment."

The reality is Afghanistan's economic problems grew significantly following the U.S. invasion and subsequent 20-year occupation where violence, poverty and unemployment levels all increased as a result of America's military presence.

When Washington talks about the Taliban addressing terrorism to "earn support," Washington might need a reminder that terrorism grew in Afghanistan because of America's 20-year occupation. The Daesh terror group did not exist in the country before the U.S. invasion. Now it is bombing Mosques on a regular basis, other terrorists who had no presence before the U.S. invasion have wreaked havoc during and after the 20-year American occupation.

Unemployment, children out of school and poverty levels have never been higher because of the violence the country witnessed during the U.S. occupation. And as with any occupying power; under international law it should have provided security for Afghans. But it failed to do so, the U.S. military left the country in a terrible state of affairs. According to the Food and Agricultural Organization, prices are skyrocketing and the people's needs continue to outpace the resources that are being flown in. The FAO says "the situation is disastrous. Every farmer we've spoken to has lost almost all of their crops this year, many were forced to sell their livestock, they have accumulated enormous debts and simply have no money. No farmer wants to leave their land. But when you have no food, you have no grain from the previous harvest, there are no seeds in the fields and your livestock are gone, you have no choice." The UN agency says that 18.8 million Afghans are unable to feed themselves every day, and that this number is set to rise to nearly 23 million by the end of the year.

The reality is Afghanistan's economic problems grew significantly following the U.S. invasion and subsequent 20-year occupation.

The Taliban say "as the cold winter months are fast approaching in Afghanistan, and in a state where our country has been hammered by the coronavirus, drought, war, and poverty, American sanctions have not only played havoc with trade and business but also with humanitarian assistance."

More than \$9 billion of the Afghan nation's foreign assets are frozen, sitting in the U.S. following the Taliban takeover in August. Is America punishing Afghan people for its disastrous withdrawal from the country?

In essence, this is a shame on the administration of U.S. President Joe Biden as international bodies are calling for large donations to avert a humanitarian catastrophe the White House is instead reverting to its now common tactic of sanctions.

As with many nations under U.S. sanctions; the punitive measures are just a form of common warfare with aim of hurting ordinary people and the goal of pressuring the government. In other words, it can be argued that America is still at war with Afghanistan so long as its sanction are imposed on the country.

International agencies say 667,903 Afghans have been internally displaced in 2021 because of violence while hundreds of thousands of Afghan asylum-seekers continue to make their way to neighboring Iran; again because of violence and terrorists that many accuse Washington of using as proxies to continue destabilizing the country.

According to UNICEF, the dire humanitarian conditions in Afghanistan are deeply affecting children in the country. This month, the United Nations Development Program in Afghanistan, stated that the country is "fac-

ing the worst humanitarian disaster" ever witnessed, adding that 97% of the 38 million population are at risk of sinking into poverty. Also, this month, the World Food Program reported that almost 24 million people in Afghanistan, or 60% of the population, suffer from acute hunger. An estimated 3.2 million children under age 5 are also expected to suffer from acute malnutrition by the end of the year. Many vulnerable families across many Afghan provinces are relying on assistance from the World Food Program.

The U.S. led the way in damaging Afghanistan and has a duty to prevent Afghans from starving; while according to experts, poverty in the country will strengthen the role of terrorists. And there has been an increase in deadly terrorist attacks so Washington has a duty to try and protect Afghans by not interfering in the country's affairs any longer. The first way it can do that is by releasing all the Afghan people's frozen assets. The second priority now should be for the U.S. and its allies to pay the UN the money they had promised that would go to UN led humanitarian agencies and missions.

Having done so much damage, a third step would be to compensate the Afghan people for the damage, horror and violence they witnessed and Washington inflicted on them for twenty years. As the U.S. led the war and occupation, a fourth positive step would be for the U.S., this time, not to lead the effort on how to approach Afghanistan in the future. Maybe that should be conducted by Afghan's neighbors and regional countries as has been the case with several conferences on Afghanistan already. It's clear Washington had no idea what it was doing for 20 years, it would be wise for the U.S. to take the backseat now and allow others to handle the tragic mess it left behind.

Two of the most important challenges facing Kabul today is poverty and security, something Washington could not successfully achieve in two decades; and that's when it had a major presence and role in the country.

## U.S. threatens Iran: 'All options' is code for war crimes

By Kevin Barrett

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin recently issued yet another "all options" threat to Iran. If Iran doesn't do what the U.S. wants, Austin said, "then we will look at all options necessary to keep the United States secure."

Taken literally, Austin's threat is nonsense. Iran is thousands of miles away from threatening U.S. security. Iran doesn't send fleets of warships to threaten the U.S. Atlantic and Pacific Coasts. It doesn't send nuclear-armed submarines into the Gulf of Mexico, the Mississippi and Hudson Rivers, Puget Sound, San Francisco Bay, and the Great Lakes. It doesn't put its military bases, armed to the teeth with enough weapons to destroy human civilization, just across the U.S. border in Canada and Mexico.

It is the U.S. that threatens Iran by sending its nuclear-armed armada into the Persian Gulf, and by stationing heavily-armed forces at dozens of military bases close to Iran's borders. Anyone who glances at a map of U.S. military bases surrounding Iran, even following the humiliating American retreat from Afghanistan, can see that it is the U.S. that is threatening Iran's security, not the other way around.

What Austin really meant is that the U.S. will consider "all options" for threatening Iran's security if Iran fails to obey U.S. orders. What options might he be referring to?

The only way to answer that question is to consider what the U.S. has done to other nations that refused to obey its orders: It has perpetrated a long list of war crimes, including aggression (the supreme war crime), mass murder of civilians, and even genocide.

In fact, the U.S. has repeatedly used the genocide "option". The Native American nations that resisted U.S. expansion were obliterated, and in many cases, most of their people, including women and children, were mass murdered. The 1890 Wounded Knee massacre is one of the best-known examples.

Today, the U.S. is the main sponsor of the Zionist genocide of Palestine. It is in fact Iran's efforts to resist that genocide that have put it in the U.S. crosshairs.

Since the U.S. became a trans-oceanic imperial power it has mass murdered civilians all over the world. According to a 2008 study published in British Medical Journal (BMJ), more than three million Vietnamese died in the 1955-1975 American-sponsored onslaught on their nation. And it wasn't just bombs from on high. Untold numbers of civilians were murdered up close and personal, including tens of thousands tortured to death by Operation Phoenix and associated US-run death squads.

Indeed, American death squads, whose modus operandi is to torture civilians to death while extracting names of other civilians, who are then tortured to death while being forced to name other civilians, ad nauseam, have operated in many countries throughout Latin America and Asia. In Indonesia, more than a million civilians were tortured to death by US-organized death squads in 1965. Those death squads were told who to target thanks to the information provided by people like future president Barack Obama's CIA-employed "anthropologist" mother, Stanley Ann Dunham.

Another American "option" is to burn whole cities full of civilians using incendiaries or nuclear bombs. Numerous German and Japanese cities, and millions of their innocent civilian inhabitants, were burned to death in U.S. bombing holocausts during World War II. Then during the Korean War, U.S. bombs obliterated every North Korean city, town, and village, forcing survivors to live in caves. Vietnamese cities were similarly dec-

imated, while rural people and forests were annihilated with napalm and Agent Orange. More recently, a hybrid version of this "destroy whole cities and murder their civilian population" strategy was unleashed against Fallujah, the "City of Mosques," during Bush Jr.'s criminal U.S. invasion of Iraq.

But U.S. "options" aren't limited to nuclear weapons, chemical weapons, city-burning incendiaries, and death squads. Nicholson Baker's book Baseless: My Search for Secrets in the Ruins of the Freedom of Information Act offers evidence that the U.S. has covertly attacked a long list of countries with biological weapons, targeting crops, livestock, economies, and people. Korea, China, Cuba, Russia, and several Eastern European countries have been victims of U.S. biological warfare.

The U.S. itself has repeatedly suffered blowback from its biowar aggression. America once lost much of its wheat crop to wheat rust released in biowar tests. It later accidentally unleashed the Lyme spirochete, which was created by confessed biowar-accident mass killer Willy Burgdorfer, as documented in Kim Newby's Bitten.

Africa, too, has been in the American biowar crosshairs. American-allied mercenaries sowed anthrax all over Zimbabwe during that country's war of liberation, and that anthrax is still killing people today. Some knowledgeable observers even suspect that AIDS and Ebola are U.S. bioweapons that emerged from the string of biowar labs the U.S. maintains on that continent.

The U.S. biological warfare "option" may have been exercised against China and Iran in the autumn of 2019, with its blowback eliciting the subsequent COVID-19 pandemic. Robert Kadlec, a rabid neocon proponent of anti-economy biological warfare, was promoted to head all U.S. biological warfare programs under President Donald Trump, and a number of suspicious circumstances—including apparent biowar attacks that decimated China's chicken and pork industries in 2018 and 2019, and the Defense Intelligence Agency's November 2019 foreknowledge that a pandemic was brewing in Wuhan—suggest that Kadlec did precisely what his history suggests he would do. (The argument that a bio-attack by U.S. neocons launched the COVID-19 pandemic is developed in Ron Unz's e-book Our COVID-19 Catastrophe, available free online at <https://www.unz.com/ebook/covid-catastrophe-ebook/>.)

Setting aside as-yet-unproven cases like the COVID pandemic, the U.S. has murdered roughly 60 million people in military and CIA actions since World War II, according to Noam Chomsky and Andre Vltchek's on Western Terrorism. That wave of global terror was termed "the American Holocaust" by the late international relations scholar William Blum.

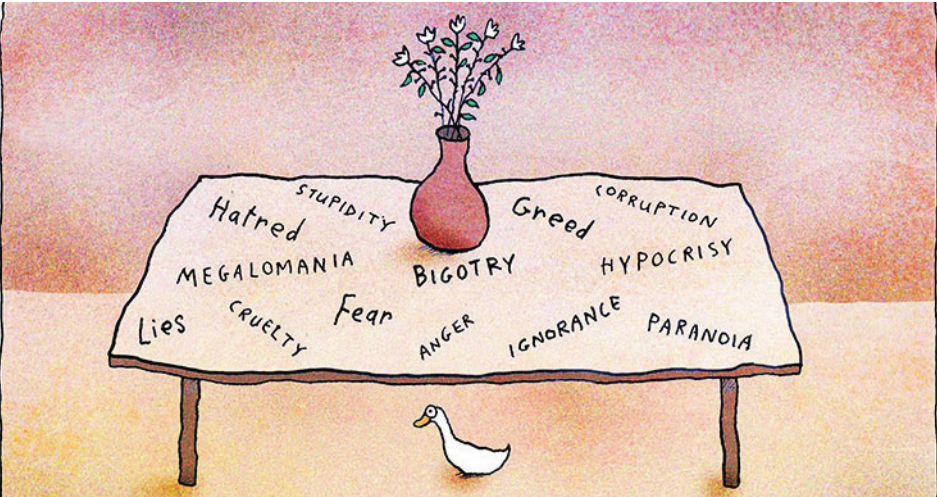
The above list of known and suspected U.S. war crimes is very far from being comprehensive. A complete account would fill volumes.

So when the U.S. Secretary of Defense says "all options" will be considered against Iran, those options obviously include atrocities and war crimes similar to those the U.S. has repeatedly committed in the past.

Such threats are unacceptable. Lloyd Austin and the rest of the U.S. Deep State leadership should be hauled to The Hague and prosecuted for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Dr. Kevin Barrett is an American author, journalist and radio host with a Ph.D. in Islamic and Arabic Studies. He has been studying the events of 9/11 since late 2003.

(Source: Press TV)





## Kizimkazi Mosque, a memento of Iranian culture in Africa

TEHRAN – Iran's southern city of Shiraz is a long way from East Africa, but it appears that some people walked this path hundreds of years ago.

With the expansion of Islam on the East African coast, Shirazi (Persian) culture expanded in East Africa due to the trade connections between the region and the Persian Gulf.

Among the relics and monuments on the East African coast that prove that Iranians once lived there, Kizimkazi Mosque is the second oldest mosque in Zanzibar, Tanzania, built by Shirazi people after the Great Mosque of Kilwa on the island of Kilwa Kisiwani.

The 900-year-old mosque is still used for prayers, and it is visited every year by many tourists.

According to an inscription installed at the mosque's mihrab, the Kizimkazi Mosque was built in 500 AH (over 940 years ago). Mihrab is a semicircular niche in the wall of a mosque that points out the qibla, the direction of the Kaaba in Mecca, and hence the direction that Muslims should face when praying.

While the inscription and some coral-carved decorations date from the time of construction, the majority of the present structure was rebuilt in the 18th century.

A similar design for the mosque's mihr-



ab can also be found in mosques in Tanzania and Kenya, built by Shirazi, Baluchi, Shushtari, Kazerouni, and Omani people.

The British archaeologist David Whitehouse (1941-2013), who studied in Iran and Africa, believed that the inscription in Kizimkazi Mosque is similar to the one in Siraf Port in southern Iran.

Mazunduchi Village residents, which is located near the mosque, introduce themselves as Shirazi and celebrate Noruz (Iranian New Year).

Shiraz and the southwestern coastal region of Iran are linked to the Shirazi people that inhabit the Swahili coasts of Eastern Africa.

Shirazis established Persian city-states on the eastern coast of Africa and its islands between the 13th and 15th centuries.

## Handicrafts centers to open in Gorgan



TEHRAN –Three houses of handicrafts are planned to be established in the northern city of Gorgan, Golestan province, by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2022), Gorgan's tourism chief has announced.

The centers aim to exhibit and promote Iranian handicrafts and traditional arts as well as promote and support the sale of products made by Iranian artisans, Rahman Farmani said on Monday.

A total budget of 8.5 billion rials (\$202,000 at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been invested into the projects, the official added.

The centers are expected to generate 20 job opportunities upon their inauguration, he explained.

### Wide-ranging handicrafts

With 14 entries, Iran ranks first globally for the number of cities and villages registered by

the World Crafts Council, as China with seven entries, Chile with four, and India with three ones come next.

In January 2020, the cities of Shiraz, Malayer, and Zanjan and the village of Qasemabad were designated by the WCC- Asia Pacific Region, putting Iran's number of world crafts cities and villages from ten to 14.

The value of Iran's handicrafts exports stood at \$120 million during the first eleven months of the past Iranian calendar year 1399 (March 20, 2020 – February 18, 2021), Mehr reported. The country's handicrafts exports slumped during the mentioned months in comparison to the same period last year earlier due to the damage the coronavirus pandemic has inflicted on global trade.

The Islamic Republic exported \$427 million worth of handicrafts during the first eleven months of the calendar year 1398. Of the figure, some \$190 million was earned via suitcase trade (allowed for customs-free and tax-free transfer) through 20 provinces, according to data compiled by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts.

Ceramics, pottery vessels, handwoven cloths as well as personal ornamentations with precious and semi-precious gemstones are traditionally exported to Iraq, Afghanistan, Germany, the U.S., the UK, and other countries.

## Persian handicrafts: Gereh-chini

TEHRAN – The art of "Gereh-chini", literally meaning to arrange the knots, is one of the traditional decorative and useful handicrafts of Iran. It relies on the art of laying finely cut pieces of wood on a surface according to a design.

Gereh is composed of geometric knots that are repeated beautifully and rhythmically. Isfahan is its birthplace, and the Seljuk dynasty is known to be the first time Gereh-chini was used. However, the exact date of the craft's origin cannot be determined. The art flourished during the Safavid era.

In Gereh-chini, wood pieces are used in their natural color and no paint is applied to them. Gereh is made best from plane trees, according to masters of the art.

Wood from other trees such as



walnut, beech, morus, almond, silverberry, zelkova, pear and jujube is also used to make shrine doors, pulpits, doors, frames, decorative dividing panels, etc.

Tond, Kond, Shol, Kond o Shol, Pili and Doroodgari are the seven types of knots or Gereh, and each of these has its own background and design.

Three main categories can be

distinguished among Gereh Chini: 1. All wood 2. Moshabbak (lattice trelliswork) and 3. Orosi or Sash window.

Orosi is a type of window made by Gereh and colored glass. They are beautiful and were most frequently used during the Zand and Qajar dynasties. In terms of artistic value, Orosi is very significant.

In Gereh-chini, a Gereh or knot

# Kish Island ready to host Qatar World Cup spectators

From page 1 ► The goal is to increase accommodation capacity and standards on Kish until the World Cup to provide at least Iranian travelers with reasonable prices and a far better experience than Qatar, he noted.

It's important to have foreign travelers and teams in Kish, but our priority is Iranian travelers, he mentioned.

Back in October, the deputy tourism minister Ali-Asghar Shalbafian announced that Iran should benefit from the 2022 World Cup as a considerable opportunity to promote its distinctive travel attractions.

"With the World Cup being held in a neighboring country, Iran can benefit from this important event, which if carefully planned, can bring significant wins for various sectors, especially the tourism industry in the country," he noted.

The geographical position of Iran and its unique tourist attractions make it a potential destination for the World Cup spectators, the official added.

Therefore, proper policy-making and management in collaboration with the private sector can pave the way for the widespread use of this event,

he noted.

Increasing the number of flights between Iran and Qatar during the event as well as showcasing and introducing distinctive tourist attractions of the country to the spectators at this event is on the agenda of the tourism ministry, he explained.

Back in September, Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Minister Ezzatollah Zarghami announced the issuance of tourist visas and the flow of foreign tourists to Iran would resume as per President Ebrahim Raisi's order following 19 months of suspension.

However, now that the tourist visas are once again being issued to cultivate good grounds of hope for travel insiders.

Months of steep recession has taken its toll. Many travel insiders, hoteliers, and tour operators have faced big dilemmas such as bankruptcy, unemployment, debts, and the prospects of not being competitive on the international level.

Some experts believe Iran is still somehow "unknown" for many potential travelers due to Western "media war". Several estimates have been released so far on the extent of the tour-



ism-related losses incurred by the pandemic. Only months into the outbreak, Zarghami's predecessor, Ali-Asghar Mounesan, lamented that the number of foreign travelers to Iran was drastically plunged due to the pandemic.

"Tourism of the country was growing before the corona [outbreak], its revenues reached \$11.7 billion in 2019, which accounted for 2.8% of GDP, nearing the average share of tourism in the world GDP, which was 3.2 percent," Mounesan said. He added 8.7 million foreign nationals visited Iran during the [Iranian] year (1398), adding that Iran was ranked as the second fastest-growing country in tourism based on data compiled by the World Tourism Organization.

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

The Islamic Republic expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madra-

sas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 26 are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, Iran aims to increase the number of tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2025.

### A peek into Kish Island

Amongst the Persian Gulf islands, Kish is the more luxurious and developed. Except for its unique nature such as waters and shallow beaches, the tourist attractions of this charming island are due to its rich historical background as well as kind and hospitable people.

The pristine and beautiful nature, the meeting of land and sea, the clear sky, the pleasant air, and the pleasurable reverberation of the waves create such a sense of calm that one cannot even distinguish between imagination and reality.

Nowadays, about one million foreign and domestic tourists travel to the island every year and it is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Iran as it has magnificent attractions such as Kariz Underground City, Harireh Ancient City, Marjan Beach, Bird Garden, Ocean theme park, and Grand Recreational Pier.

## Iranian tour leaders take part at Dubai Expo

TEHRAN – A team of Iranian tour leaders has participated at the Expo 2020 Dubai, which is currently underway in the UAE, the deputy tourism minister has announced.

Fluent in English and Arabic, tour guides introduce visitors to the country's attractions and tourism capacities, Ali-Asghar Shalbafian said, IRNA reported on Monday.

During the six months of the expo, they will also be in charge of guiding the visitors of the Iran Pavilion, the official added.

Visitors to the pavilion are offered to soak up the ancient land in terms of rituals, handicrafts, cultural heritage, and travel destinations. The pavilion also reveals more about medical tourism, novel startups, and off-the-beaten tracks.

The pavilion is showcasing each Iranian province's strengths and assets in tourism, cultural heritage, handicrafts, as well as its natural sites, traditional ceremonial practices, and historical significance.

### Dubai Expo

Expo 2020 originally was scheduled for October 20, 2020 –April 10, 2021, but due to the outbreaks of the coronavirus, the



event has been postponed. However, the organizers keep the name Expo 2020 for marketing and branding purposes.

Throughout the years, World Expos have been global events dedicated to sharing top-notch innovation, showcasing ground-breaking inventions, and discovering resolutions to fundamental challenges by facing humanity. They are organized every five years and last for six months.

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 ar-

chitecture 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.

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## Museum of Iranian ethnic groups in Garmsar



House was put in the list of national monuments in 1999.

On February 10, 2011, it was inaugurated as a museum of ethnicities (anthropology) with the aim of displaying the ethnic diversity.

The most important and

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – The city of Garmsar is known as "the island of tribes" due to the presence of five great and important Iranian ethnic groups there.

For this reason, the content plan of Garmsar's museum builds on anthropology and ethnology.

The Museum of Ethnic Groups (Bagheri building) was founded by late Mirza Ali Bagheri, a benefactor of the city, in 1921 in the early Pahlavi I era. The main part of the museum was in the past in the form of a garden (kooshk) and a house for tropical areas during the Qajar era.

The historical Bagheri

populous ethnic groups of Garmsar are Turkic-speaking, Lor, Kurdish, Arab and Elikai tribes.

The majority of the population of the villages in Aradan and Garmsar are different clans of the Elikai nomadic tribes.



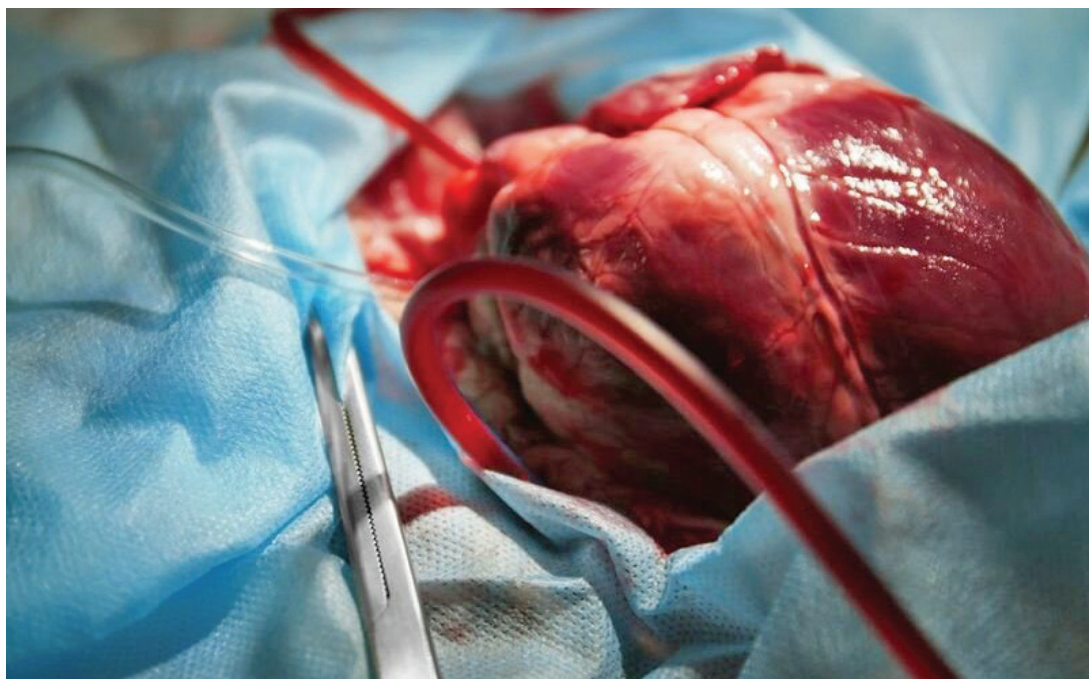
# Organ donation rises %66 in 6 months

TEHRAN – While the outbreak of coronavirus caused a significant drop in organ donation over the past [Iranian calendar] year (March 2020–March 2021), it increased by 66 percent in the first six months of this year.

Some 14,000 people in the country are waiting for organ transplants; 7 to 10 of whom die every day due to the lack of a transplanted organ, Mehdi Shadnough, head of the transplant management and treatment center of the Ministry of Health, said.

In Iran, the organ donation rate reached 14.7 two years ago, which was the highest rate in the long run. But the ideal point is the organ donation of 26 brain dead patients per a million population, he noted.

According to the Iranian Society of Organ Donation, there are two types of death in the medical world; Heart death (common



death), which accounts for 99 percent of deaths worldwide, and brain death, which accounts for one percent of deaths.

Organ donation is an altruistic decision that can be made by the family members after brain death. Although many organizations and medical centers have implemented various interventions and training courses to increase satisfaction with organ donation, a lack of organs for donation still is a serious problem in the world.

In Iran, about 5,000 to 8,000

people die each year from brain death, half of whom, or about 3,000, have transplanted organs. Unfortunately, 1,000 families, or one-third, are satisfied with organ donation.

## Top in Asia

Shadnough announced in June 2020 that Iran was ranked first for organ donation among Asian countries.

“The country’s organ donation rate is 14.34 per one million people,” he noted.

In February 2019, Shadnough said that the organ donation rate

has increased by 60 times over the past 18 years. Although Iran ranks 26 in organ donation in the world.

Organ donation of brain death has reached up to 60 percent, he said, lamenting that the country ranks 21st regarding organ donation from brain dead patients in the world while ranking 14th regarding organ transplant from alive patients.

According to the figures revealed by the International Registry in Organ Donation and Transplantation (IRODaT), Spain leads the world in organ donation.

Over 14,000 Iranian patients are waiting for organ transplants; 7 to 10 of whom die every day.

## Kolivand appointed new head of IRCS

TEHRAN – President Ebrahim Raisi has appointed Pir-Hossein Kolivand as the new head of the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) for four years, replacing Karim Hemmati.

Kolivand was the former head of the Medical Emergency Organization and the head of the relief and rescue department of IRCS.

In his decree, Raisi called on Kolivand to provide timely humanitarian services to those in need and victims of natural disasters with the participation of people, NGOs, and responsible bodies, and to interact with the International Committee of the Red Cross and related international institutions, highlighting that take action to offer services with a commitment to justice and law.

### IRCS among world’s top five societies

The IRCS, established in 1922, is one of the

first and oldest members of the movement and is currently one of the top five societies in the world due to its significant activities in the national and international arenas.

In 2005, the IRCS received the Henry Davison Award for outstanding humanitarian services, and the IRCS initiative of volunteers was selected as the best project (out of 50 projects from 45 national societies), by the General Assembly of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

In addition to offering services to the victims of natural disasters in the country, it has taken numerous missions in international disasters and incidents helping the people of Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq, Southeast Asia earthquake, Lebanon, Gaza, Somalia, and Yemen.

In case of natural disasters or for provi-



sion of medical services to the deprived, it dispatches medical teams, which consist of doctors, paramedics, nurses, social workers, and health experts who are sent to provide free health care to disadvantaged areas and villages identified and assessed by other volunteer groups.

## Health Ministry receives UNIATF award

From page 1 ► Al-Manzari stressed the need to transfer Iran’s knowledge and experience to other countries in the region, especially experiences related to the COVID-19 pandemic and non-communicable diseases by setting up regional and global networks.

### 300,000 Iranians die of NCDs annually

In February 2019, the health ministry announced that some 300,000 Iranians die of NCDs annually in Iran, which means that

The Health Ministry was awarded for demonstrating excellence in delivering mental health services during the COVID-19 pandemic.



one-fourth of the country’s population (standing at 80 million) are overweight or obese which also results in developing NCDs.

Diabetes, a non-communicable disease, is a serious threat to people’s health and is the fifth leading cause of death in the

country. Diabetes prevalence is 10 percent in Iran and is high among people aging 50 or more.

Cardiovascular diseases (mainly heart disease and stroke), which were the leading cause of death in 2012, diabetes, musculoskeletal disorders (especially osteoarthritis – a highly disabling degenerative disease of the joints), and some cancers (including endometrial, breast, ovarian, prostate, liver, gallbladder, kidney, and colon) are common health consequences of overweight and obesity, WHO warns.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## COVID19- lockdown moves most cities out of “red” zone

Strict COVID-19 restrictions which took effect on October 26 have caused 87 out of 89 infected cities to get out of the high-risk “red” zone.

The National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control started strict restrictions in 43 cities that had the highest rate of infection in the country. Ten days later, decisions were made to set new limitations on highly-affected areas for another 10 days, through which 46 cities undergone restrictions.

The plan divided cities into three levels of alert, namely red, orange, and yellow.

All of the cities, except for two, are now out of the red condition and have turned orange or yellow so that the hospitalization rate has decreased, said Alireza Raeisi, the National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control spokesman, expressing hope that the death toll will also drop within two to three weeks.

## اعمال محدودیت ها اکثر شهرها را از وضعیت قرمز خارج کرد

علیرضا رئیسی، سخنگوی ستاد ملی مقابله با کرونا گفت: از ۸۹ شهری که از پنجم آبان محدودیت‌های کرونایی در آنها اعمال شده است، ۸۷ شهر از وضعیت قرمز خارج شده اند.

او با اشاره به محدودیت های کرونایی در ۸۹ شهری که ( از ۱۵ آبان در ۴۳ شهر و از ۱۴ آبان در ۴۶ شهر) اعمال شده است، گفت: از این تعداد به جز دو شهر همه شهرها از حالت قرمز خارج و به نارنجی یا زرد تبدیل شده اند. با توجه به ورودی بیمارستان ها و اینکه میزان بستری هم کاهش یافته است امیدواریم روند فوتی ها هم تا حدود دو تا سه هفته دیگر آثار خود را نشان دهد و روند کاهشی پیدا کند.



# SOCIETY

NOVEMBER 23, 2021

Straight Truth  
TEHRAN TIMES

# 7

## How the chemicals industry’s pollution slipped under the radar

It’s one of the biggest industries in the world, consumes more than 10% of fossil fuels produced globally and emits an estimated 3.3 gigatons of greenhouse gas emissions a year, more than India’s annual emissions – yet the chemicals sector has largely slipped under the radar when it comes to climate.

This sprawling industry produces a huge range of products, many of which support other industries – pesticides for agriculture, acids for mining, lubricants for machinery, ingredients in cleaning agents, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals and plastics.

While the industry has an important role to play in moving to low-carbon economies – providing coatings for solar panels, lightweight plastics to reduce vehicles’ energy consumption and insulating materials for buildings – it’s also hugely carbon intensive and predicted to become more so. Oil companies have been betting on chemicals as a way to remain profitable as the world pledges to turn away from fossil fuel energy. The International Energy Agency predicted that petrochemicals could account for 60% of oil demand in the next decade.

The chemicals sector is the largest industrial user of oil and gas but it has the third-largest carbon footprint – behind steel and cement – because only about half of the fossil fuels that the industry consumes are burned for their energy. The rest is used as feedstock for products such as plastics with the emissions released only when these products reach the end of their lives, for example, when waste plastic packaging or an old mattress is incinerated.

Lowering the industry’s emissions is possible but technically daunting. Plus this large, complex industry, which supports millions of jobs worldwide, has significant political and economic clout. “They’ve become a bit of an untouchable sector for many politicians,” said Jan-Justus Andreas, who leads industrial policy at the Norwegian environmental non-profit Bellona Europa.

Yet the chemicals industry is finding itself increasingly under scrutiny – both from nations that need to meet ambitious emissions reduction targets and from researchers, scientists and campaigners calling on the industry to cut its polluting products.

### Moving away from dirty energy

One way to lower emissions is to focus on chemical plants – improving efficiency and switching to low-carbon energy.

Most of the industry’s direct carbon dioxide emissions come from burning fossil fuels to power chemical transformations, many of which take place at high temperatures and pressures. These emissions could be significantly reduced if the industry moves away from dirtier fuels such as coal.

If renewable wind or solar energy is available, certain chemical processes that are already driven by electricity, such as the production of chlorine used to make other materials such as PVC pipes or solvents like chloroform, could immediately become low carbon. And chemists continue to look for ways to power traditionally heat-driven chemical transformations with electricity instead – such as the process of converting nitrogen to ammonia, mostly used for fertilizer, which requires tem-

peratures of about 500C (932F).

While chemical companies are counting on efficiency improvements and investing in renewable energy to meet their climate goals, many chemical products themselves cannot be decarbonized because they are made of carbon, said Martin Scheringer, an environmental chemist at the public research university ETH Zurich.

Removing fossil fuels from the raw materials used to create carbon-based chemicals and materials is crucial, said Jonatan Kleimark of the non-profit ChemSec. Kleimark likens products made from fossil fuels – such as clothes, toys and paints – to a carbon debt, because the carbon embedded within them will only be emitted in the future. “The longer we wait to change, the larger debt we will build, and that will be very hard to do something about if we don’t start,” Kleimark said.

To stop adding to this debt, chemicals and materials could be made with sources of carbon that are already above ground, such as plants. Bioplastics – made with plant materials such as sugar, corn or seaweed – are booming, for example, as companies and scientists try to remove fossil fuels from plastic production.

Another idea is to turn waste products into raw materials for the chemical industry. Chemists have been using agricultural waste or waste plastics – even the ultimate waste material, carbon dioxide – as feedstocks. A Berlin-based startup, Made of Air, is attempting to create plastics from wood waste, while an Icelandic company, Carbon Recycling International, turns captured carbon dioxide emissions into methanol, used in fuels and for making other chemicals such as formaldehyde.

### ‘Why don’t you deal with someone else first?’

But all these ideas – especially those involving a shift in feedstocks – are very hard to implement.

Technologies to turn agricultural or plastic waste into new chemicals are still unproven on a large scale and using carbon dioxide as a raw material will require vast amounts of zero-carbon energy.

Manufacturers making products with plants rather than fossil fuels need to ensure that they do not create new problems through deforestation, destroying wildlife habitat, raising food prices or increasing the use of water or pesticides. Biomass resources also tend to be more spread out, whereas traditionally, chemical plants stay close to where fossil fuel resources are easily accessible.

“With renewable feedstocks, you will need to reestablish new supply chains,” said Zhanyun Wang, a senior scientists at ETH Zurich. In addition to delivering a steady stream of renewable raw materials to chemical plants, the new supply chains would need to be competitive with well-established ones making products from fossil fuels at low prices, Wang said.

The clean power infrastructure requirements alone are tremendous. Electrifying Europe’s chemicals sector would require 4,900 terawatts of renewable electricity, according to an estimate by the European Chemical Industry Council, almost double the total amount of electricity Europe generated in 2019.

## COVID-19 UPDATES ON NOVEMBER 22

New cases	5,427
New deaths	97
Total cases	6,082,865
Total deaths	129,053
New hospitalized patients	840
Patients in critical condition	3,393
Total recovered patients	5,795,060
Diagnostic tests conducted	37,887,368
Doses of vaccine injected	102,749,034



