

Report 

## Severe problems facing American health sector

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, hospitals in nearly half of American states are close to near full capacity as the highly transmissible Omicron variant of the Coronavirus sweeping across the country hits a record numbers of infections.

President Joe Biden has ordered the deployment of more military health personnel to “hard-hit” states to help with staff shortages and provide relief efforts.

Biden announced the phased dispatch of 1,000 military health personnel saying “I know we’re all frustrated as we enter this new year”, reiterating his message that COVID-19 remains a “pandemic of the unvaccinated.” He says the military deployment would help hard-pressed hospitals “nation-wide”.

Hospitals that are set to receive the military deployments have cautioned the teams ranging in size from seven to 25 might not be enough to slow the surge.

Bob Riney, the president of healthcare operations at Detroit’s Henry Ford Health System, which has already received some federal help and expects to receive more military medics says “We have systemic challenges (with) incredible volume and very, very tired medical practitioners ... and that is true of all health systems that have been in the middle of this surge”, adding “there is not a silver-bullet solution”.

The military will assist health care systems in states where patients suffering from other diseases that are being deemed “not urgent” will get their treatment postponed to make space for covid infections. They will also fill staffing gaps as more and more infected health care workers themselves are taking days off to recover, while patient demand grows. ▶ Page 5

## MP says Iran can use SCO capacity to neutralize sanctions

TEHRAN — A member of the National Security and Foreign Policy Committee of the parliament has said that Iran can use the capacity of the 25-year cooperation program with China and membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) for economic, trade, monetary and banking exchanges to neutralize sanctions.

China and Russia are two heavyweight members of the SCO. They are also permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.

“China and Russia are both members of the United Nations Security Council and have veto power,”

“Our relationship with these two countries is a strategic one. Iran cooperates with Russia and China on regional, international and global security issues.” Hossein Nooshabadi told IRNA on Sunday. ▶ Page 2

## Chief negotiators will return to Vienna on Monday

TEHRAN — The eighth round of the Vienna talks will continue on Monday with a return of the heads of the Iranian and P4+1 negotiating delegations to the Austrian capital.

Negotiations for the revival of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) began on November 29 in Vienna at the level of deputy foreign ministers. The parties, despite many differences in various discussions, have been able to reach significant solutions to resolve differences.

Tehran has repeatedly said that “nothing is agreed upon until everything is agreed upon.”

EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell spoke in a news conference on Friday after an informal meeting of the Foreign Affairs Council in France that a comprehensive joint action plan with Iran was likely to be agreed. ▶ Page 2

# McKenzie: Iran is Invincible

▶ Page 3



## Rail transit through Iran hits new record high

TEHRAN - Transit of goods through Iran’s railway network rose over 200 percent during the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 21, 2021) to register the highest year on year increase over the past 10 years, IRIB reported.

Based on the data released by the Iranian Transport and Urban Development Ministry, over 1.39 million tons of commodities were transited via Iranian rail network in the mentioned nine months, 202 percent more than the previous year’s same period in which the figure stood at 460,000 tons.

According to the mentioned data, prior to this record, the highest volume of transit had been registered in the Iranian calendar year 1396 (ended in March 2018) when 1.2 million tons of commodities had been transited.

During the first nine months of the current year, 955 locomotives and 27,602 freight wagons were active in the country, the number of which has increased by 0.1 percent and two percent, respectively, compared to the previous year.

Since the Islamic Revolution in 1978 up until the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March

2021), the number of freight wagons active in the country has increased from 12,150 to 26,978 which indicates more than 200 percent of growth, based on the Transport Ministry data.

The amount of cargo transmission has also increased from seven million tons in 1978 to 51 million tons in 2021.

Earlier this month, the spokesman of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced that transit of goods via Iran rose 53 percent during the ninth month of the current Iranian calendar year, as compared to the same period of time in the past year. ▶ Page 4

## 59 Iranian universities among world’s top for academic quality

TEHRAN – A total of 59 Iranian universities are listed among the top 3,000 institutions in the world in terms of academic quality, according to the 2021-2022 report released by University Ranking by Academic Performance (URAP).

The URAP ranking system’s focus is on academic quality. URAP has gathered data about 3,000 Higher Education Institutes (HEI) in an effort to rank these organizations by their academic performance based on several indicators, including article, citation, total document, article impact total, citation impact total, and international collaboration.

Data for 3,000 HEIs have been processed and the top 2,500 of them are scored. Thus, URAP covers approximately 12% of all HEIs in the world, which makes it one of the most comprehensive university ranking systems in the world. ▶ Page 7

## Four ancient windmills added to national heritage list

TEHRAN - Four ancient windmills, which are located in Iran’s South Khorasan province, have been registered in the national list for cultural heritage.

“Four Asbads (vertical windmills), located in the cities of Birjand, Nehbandan, and Darmiyan, have been registered as national cultural heritage,” a local tourism official said on Sunday, IRNA reported.

Experts believe such primitive yet great machines bear testimony to the human being’s adaption with nature by transforming environmental obstacles into opportunities.

Earlier this year, eight Asbads underwent restoration in Darmiyan intending to strengthen their walls, domes, and repair their gutters.

From Inside 

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Interview 

## U.S. insane if it imagines it can and should confront Russia over Ukraine: ex-Senate candidate

By Zahra Samimi

TEHRAN - A former U.S. Senate candidate says that the idea of a clash between Russia and the U.S. over Ukraine is foolish.

“The United States’ leadership is certifiably insane if it believes it can and should confront Russia using Ukraine as the pretext,” Mark Dankof tells the Tehran Times.

Some American critics warn that the United States has no compelling historic national security interest in Ukraine, a country considered historically as Russia’s backyard.

Russia’s reaction to recent NATO expansionist moves on its doorstep, reminds one of the strong American reaction in October 1962 to the installation of medium and intermediate range nuclear missiles in Cuba.

“The United States has no business continuing to recruit new members to NATO, and positioning American military assets and military exercises ever closer to Russian borders in Eastern Europe, the Baltics, the Black Sea, the southern underbelly of Russia, and the ‘Stans’ countries,” Dankof argues.

Following is the text of the interview:

**How do you see the Western media’s hype over the Russia-Ukraine dispute?**

In my entire life, I have never seen the American and Western media selling a more ▶ Page 5

## We want to make history in AFC Women’s Asian Cup: Koudaei

TEHRAN – Iran’s women’s football team goal-keeper Zohreh Koudaei says that they want to make history once again in the Asian football stage.

Iran pulled off a stunning upset in late September to qualify for their first ever AFC Women’s Asian Cup.

Maryam Irandoost’s girls defeated Jordan 4-2 on penalties after a goalless draw to book their place in India. Koudaei saved two penalties and helped Iran to qualify for the 2022 Women’s Asian Cup. The match had ended in a goalless draw but was decided on penalties.

“We are well-prepared for the competition and want to make history once again. Our team held a nine-day training camp in Kish Island prior to the campaign. I think the camp was very helpful,” she added.

The goalie was accused of being a man by the Jordan Football Association after the qualifying match and they submitted a “gender verification check”, which was then rejected by the AFC.

“I would like to thank all the people who supported me during the tough times. Now, it’s over and I am looking forward to do my best in the AFC Women’s Asian Cup.

“We have been drawn along with China, who are eight-time winners. India, as hosts, will be a difficult opponent and Chinese Taipei are also strong. But we want to make our nation proud in the competition,” Koudaei stated.

Iran will start the competition with a match against India in Group A on Jan. 20.



### Two unknown martyrs buried in courtyard of Interior Ministry

TEHRAN - Two unknown martyrs of the Sacred Defense were buried in the courtyard of the Interior Ministry on Sunday. A number of the families of martyrs, Tehran Friday prayer leader Mohammad Hassan Aboutorabi-Fard and Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi participated in the funeral procession.

## MP says Iran can use SCO capacity to neutralize sanctions

From page 1 ► The representative of Varamin in the parliament emphasized that these two countries, which play influential roles at the international stage can defend and support the positions of Iran, and this has happened many times.

He added, "Regardless of the type of our relations in political and international spheres with the Chinese and the Russians, Iran also has a very good relationship with these two countries in economic and trade fields. With Iran's compliance to the Shanghai organization, this role has become much more prominent, and Iran can use the capacity of China, Russia and the Shanghai organization countries for economic, trade, monetary and banking exchanges in order to neutralize sanctions."

Regarding President Ebrahim Raisi's looming visit to Russia, the MP said that the president will go to Russia as the highest executive official of the country, and he will definitely hold talks about the negotiations with the P4+1 countries, the role of the Russians in the developments in West Asia, sanctions, the Syria crisis, the Caucasus conflict, and issues related to regional security.

Emphasizing that the Russians are main actors in the region in terms of politics, intelligence and security, Nooshabadi said, "The Islamic Republic of Iran had a good relationship with this country during its dealings with the Takfiris of ISIS."

The parliamentary committee member also said that Raisi's trip to Russia could lead to an increase in Russian activity in building nuclear power plants in Iran.

He also said the role of the Russians are very effective in Iran's negotiations with P4+1 group.

Russia, China, and the European troika (France, Britain and Germany) are the remaining members of the 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

The group is referred to as 4+1 because four of them are permanent members of the UN Security



Council. Germany is the only party that is not a permanent member. However, it exercises great influence in Europe.

**'Until sanctions are not lifted, we won't negotiate nuclear activities'**

Nooshabadi went on to say that in the parliamentary committee meetings with the Iranian negotiating team in Vienna, especially chief negotiator Ali Bagheri Kani, it was emphasized that resolving the issue of sanctions should come first because if sanctions won't be lifted, there is no reason to discuss nuclear issues.

One year after Donald Trump pulled the U.S. out of the nuclear agreement and returned sanctions, Iran decided to gradually reduce bans on its nuclear program in accordance to paragraph 36 of the JCPOA. Iran did this as the European parties to the agreement did nothing to compensate Iran for the sanction.

"Iran will negotiate to increase its nuclear commitments only when the West fulfills its sanctions-removal obligations and that this issue will be proven verifiably. The first principle for the Islamic Republic of Iran is the lifting of sanctions," the MP remarked.

Nooshabadi pointed out that Iran was fully committed to the nuclear agreement and acted within the 2015 nuclear deal, but it was the other side that broke the pact.

"However, Iran has planned and is working to resolve the impasse created by the West," he concluded.

## MP says Iran doesn't seek interim nuclear agreement



TEHRAN — Alireza Salimi, a member of the Iranian parliament presiding board, has dismissed some rumors that Iran is seeking a temporary agreement in the Vienna negotiations, calling a temporary agreement "a deception".

Salimi added that Iran is not seeking interim agreement in negotiations with the P4+1 countries in Vienna.

The new round of negotiations to revive the 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, started on November 29.

"In interim agreement, no guarantee can be taken from the other side and this model of agreement

cannot meet our demands," Salimi remarked.

The MP stated that interim agreement cannot bring economic prosperity to Iran or lure investors.

"I call on the negotiating team to continue their work with more common sense and precision, as they have done so far in the negotiations, and to take note of the obstacles that may be thrown in their way," the lawmaker suggested.

In conclusion, he also suggested that the Iranian negotiators should notice that if they reach an agreement with the negotiating partners from the West, they must get the necessary guarantees that the nuclear agreement will not be reneged on again.

In line with an agreement between the heads of negotiating teams, the chief negotiators of Iran and the three European countries on Friday returned to their capitals for more consultations and will resume talks after two days.

However, expert talks will continue non-stop and the return of chief negotiators to their countries does not mean that the 8th round of talks has stopped.

## MP: We must make good use of neighboring countries' capacities

TEHRAN — A member of the National Security Committee of the Iranian parliament has said that concluding a long-term agreement between Iran and China could help circumvent sanctions on Iran.

"We must make good use of the capacity of neighboring countries," Fada Hossein Maleki said on Sunday.

About the launch of the implementation of the 25-year strategic agreement between Iran and China, Maleki said it is one of the most important developments.

"The two countries are supposed to use only their own capacities in this agreement, and the implementation of this agreement has nothing to do with the outcome of the Vienna talks and will not be affected by it," he added.

He added that the implementation of the 25-year agreement sends an important message to the West that

they can no longer escalate their oppressive sanctions against Iran, the MP said.

Maleki, a former Iranian diplomat, said Iran is determined to use its special geographical location and capacities to strengthen economic and trade relations with the outside world, saying, "China is a powerful country in the field of trade. Of course, the Chinese know very well that Iran is also a powerful country and they need us."

Maleki stressed, "In the agreement between Iran and China, there is no way that whatever the Chinese government wants will be implemented, and Iran's demands must be carefully implemented."

Noting that the Iran-China agreement is based on the interests of the two countries, he continued by saying that after the issue of concluding a long-term agreement between Iran and

China was first reported in the media, the Westerners became angry because they are well aware that trade relations between the two Asian countries could seriously weaken the status of the West, especially in the economic field.

Regarding Iran's expectations from China, the representative of Zahedan in the parliament said, "The Chinese should accept and implement a series of commitments, especially regarding the purchase of oil from Iran. There are also other serious issues that need to be examined skillfully and implemented in the Iran-China agreement. Both countries need each other and we need trade and economic relations with China."

Maleki outlined that the agreement could lead to circumvention of sanctions on Iran, referring to concerns among certain Western countries about a long-term agreement between

# Iran diplomat meets UN, Norwegian officials

TEHRAN — Ali Asghar Khaji, the Iranian foreign minister's senior advisor for special political affairs, met on Saturday with UN Special Envoy for Syria Geir O. Pedersen and Norway's special envoy for Yemen Kjersti Tromsdal.

Khaji and Pedersen discussed the latest developments regarding the Syria crisis, the Syrian constitutional committee's negotiations, the fight against sanctions and the dispatch of humanitarian aid to the Syrian people. The Iranian foreign minister's senior advisor said Tehran has always supported and will continue backing the UN's efforts to preserve Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as the world body's encouragement of dialog between Syrian factions, the Iranian Foreign Ministry said.

Khaji pointed out the people and government of Syria have been standing up against Daesh and other terror groups since more than ten years ago and the country has now achieved relative stability while its ties with regional nations are improving. He added that it is necessary that the UN as well as other regional and international players to take account of the situation of the Syrian government and people and step up their efforts to lift the Syria sanctions, send aid to the country and help displaced Syrians return to Syria and help with the country's reconstruction.

Pedersen, who is visiting Tehran at the head of a delegation, appreciated Iran's efforts in cooperation with the

UN and within the framework of the Astana peace talks to strengthen the negotiated settlement of the Syria crisis. Pedersen also thanked Tehran for supporting national dialog in Syria and stressed the need for the continuation of cooperation between Iran and the UN in this regard.

In the end the two sides underlined the need to increase the bilateral consultations in future.

Khaji also met with Norway's special envoy for Yemen. In the meeting, the latest developments inside and outside Yemen were discussed and talks were also held over areas of mutual cooperation between Iran and Norway with regard to the Yemen crisis.

The two sides also exchanged views over various issues and aspects of the Yemen crisis and explored ways of achieving peace and ending the crisis.

Khaji referred to the catastrophic situation of the resistant Yemeni people and the dire conditions caused by the war as well as the oppressive economic blockade on Yemen. He called for the UN and the international community to make more efforts to stop the war and lift the inhumane siege. Ms. Kjersti Tromsdal also spoke of Norway's non-permanent membership at the UN Security Council, stressing that the Yemen crisis tops the agenda of the council.

She added that Norway will continue efforts to resolve the Yemen crisis peacefully and reaffirmed



Oslo's support for the efforts of the UN Secretary General's special envoys for the Yemeni affairs.

As part of Iran's continued international consultations to resolve the Yemen Crisis, Khaji has also held talks with the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg.

In this phone call, the two sides discussed the new developments regarding the Yemen crisis.

The Iranian foreign minister's senior advisor noted that the final decision about Yemen's fate lies with the country's people, saying the removal of the oppressive siege of Yemen is the prelude to the political settlement of the crisis.

He also spoke of the UN's role in the Yemen crisis. Khaji said the current mistrust is the missing link in the progress of talks, adding that restoring trust must be accompanied by practical measures specially in the field of humanitarian issues.

The UN chief's special envoy for Yemen for his part said he is currently assessing different views. Grundberg added that he is seeking to take the concerns of different Yemeni factions into consideration in his future plans and to advance his short-term priorities at the same time within the framework of long-term objectives.

In late December, Khaji told TASS on the sidelines of an international meeting on Syria that Iran, Russia, and Turkey had agreed to hold a summit in Tehran in February or March 2022 depending on the

coronavirus situation. The Iranian diplomatic official also said that the summit would be preceded by a meeting between the three countries' top diplomats, slated for January or early February 2022.

In November, Khaji met with the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Yemen, Hans Grundberg, in Tehran. Khaji and Grundberg discussed the different aspects of the Yemeni crisis and the latest developments in the country, the Iranian Foreign Ministry said.

In the meeting, the senior advisor to Iran's foreign minister noted that the final decision as to the fate of Yemen lies with the Yemeni people. Khaji suggested that the first step toward resolving the Yemen crisis through political means is a lifting of the oppressive siege on the country.

Khaji also spoke about the UN's role in Yemen. He said the current mistrust is the missing link of progress in negotiations aimed at ending the Yemen conflict. The senior advisor also underlined that rebuilding confidence must be accompanied by practical measures, particularly in humanitarian affairs.

Khaji reaffirmed Iran's support for any fair effort by the UN to resolve the Yemen crisis. Meanwhile, the UN chief's special envoy for Yemen reiterated that only the Yemeni people can decide their future. Grundberg however described the role of regional countries in supporting the peace process in Yemen as highly important. He added that backing by Iran in this regard is a key issue.

## Chief negotiators will return to Vienna on Monday

From page 1 ► "I think we're coming to the end of a very long process that occupied me and my colleagues," he said.

"After the United States, we want the agreement back," Borrell continued, noting that the deal worked well before President Trump decided to pull out of it.

Lifting all sanctions, taking nuclear steps and ensuring that the United States will not pull out of the agreement again have been the most important points of discussions between Iran and the P4+1 countries, as well as the United States.

Although some reports indicate that the parties have made progress, there are still serious disagreements over some issues that the sides

need to consult with their capitals.

It was announced on Friday that, according to the agreement reached between the heads of the delegations, the senior negotiators of Iran and the three European countries (France, the UK, and Germany) will return to the capitals for further consultations. However, the expert talks continue unceasingly in Vienna, and the return of the senior negotiators does not mean the end of the eighth round of talks.

The heads of the negotiating delegations will return to Vienna on Monday to continue the talks. The negotiations will be held in the framework of bilateral and multilateral meetings with the

presence of Enrique Mora, the coordinator of the Iran-P4+1 talks.

According to AFP, Julia Masterson from the Arms Control Association think tank has said the deal can be restored if both sides "are creative and flexible."

According to Politico, Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, has also said, "While President Biden and his team should have moved earlier and faster last year to re-engage with Iran on the steps necessary to restore mutual compliance with the JCPOA, it is still possible — and necessary — for the Iranian and U.S. negotiators to reach a win-win arrangement that heads off a major nuclear crisis."

Russia is taking part in talks to revive a 2015 nuclear agreement between Iran and world powers — the United States, Russia, China, France, Britain, Germany and the European Union — that lifted economic and financial sanctions against Tehran in exchange for restrictions on its nuclear program.

## Putin to host Iranian president next week

TEHRAN — President Vladimir Putin will host his Iranian counterpart Ebrahim Raisi for talks in Moscow next week as Russia tries to help salvage

a nuclear deal between world powers and Tehran, state television channel Rossiya-1 reported on Sunday.

Rossiya-1 did not disclose when precisely the meeting between the two leaders would take place, nor the issues they would discuss, according to Reuters.

Iran and China.

He added, "Iran no longer puts all its capabilities in the basket of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and relations with the West and we must make good use of the capacity to communicate with neighboring countries."

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA, is the official name for the 2015 nuclear deal.

The MP added that conclusion of long-term agreements between Iran and neighboring countries will force the Westerners to abandon their misconception that Iran would be in trouble without them.

"The Westerners should know that so far they have not taken any positive action towards Iran and have only aggravated the problems and troubles of our country, so we should not wait for them," the former diplomat concluded.

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TEHRAN – The outgoing commander of the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), Gen. Frank McKenzie, spent his tenure in the West Asia region grappling with Iran's growing military capabilities. He watched Iran downing a U.S. expensive drone, striking a U.S. base in western Iraq with missiles and flying state-of-the-art drones, and then he topped it all off with a bitter confession for America: Iran is stronger than ever.

McKenzie's tenure as the commander of CENTCOM is reaching its end, with President Biden nominating Army Lt. Gen. Michael E. Kurilla to be the next head of U.S. Central Command. McKenzie's tenure is set to end this spring. Incompetence has been the main reason for replacing McKenzie, who, unlike many other U.S. generals, is accustomed to issuing politically-motivated statements about the state of things in the West Asia region. And Iran has been a common theme in most of his statements.

McKenzie has an incompetent streak. Despite his braggadocio, McKenzie's track record in the region is marked by incompetence and duplicity. And they are best evidenced in his in-private conversations.

He and CENTCOM in general often proclaim that their mission in the region is two-pronged: countering terrorism and preserving peace. But this is not the case, according to McKenzie himself.

In a recent private meeting, McKenzie shed light on the real objectives of CENTCOM. He said clearly said that the duty of CENTCOM is not securing peace as per the motto Peace is our Profession. Instead,



the real task that CENTCOM wants to accomplish is to prepare military options for the U.S. when need be.

"I always have discussion with STRATCOM about the motto 'peace is our profession' and I challenge that," the commander of CENTCOM said in the meeting. "Actually, I think in CENTCOM, we are not saying peace is our profession; rather the ability to deliver powerful combat effects when the United States needs. It is the nature of our profession."

This stands in stark contrast to what McKenzie has been trying to portray over the course of his tenure. For instance, in late December of 2020, as the first anniversary of the U.S. assassination of Iran's top general, Qassem Soleimani, rolled around, the U.S. began posturing militarily in the region. It flew two American B-52 bombers over the Persian Gulf.

McKenzie sought to depict this show of force mission as a move to protect regional "security and stability."

"The ability to fly strategic bombers halfway across the world

in a nonstop mission, and to rapidly integrate them with multiple regional partners, demonstrates our close working relationships and our shared commitment to regional security and stability," he said at the time, according to the New York Times.

But McKenzie miserably failed to deliver "powerful combat effects" for America versus Iran. And by his own account in the private meeting, Iran is now more powerful militarily than ever before.

In that meeting, McKenzie told his interlocutors that despite U.S. "withering economic" pressure against Iran, it has managed to build "a first-rate ballistic missile force" while under U.S. economic pressure.

The American general described how was his first real encounter with Iran's "accurate missiles. And it was at the Ain al-Assad base in western Iraq. After the U.S. assassinated General Soleimani in the early days of 2020, Iran took a first-of-its-kind military action against the United States. Iran launched a retaliatory missile strike against the Ain al-Assad base in revenge for General Soleimani.

In the meeting, McKenzie admitted that Iran hit "within tens of meters" of its target. The only reason the U.S. didn't take more casualties, McKenzie confessed, was because its troops in the base had the ability to redeploy before the strike.

Describing Iran's growing military capabilities, McKenzie said these capabilities have given Iran an "overmatch ability."

He pointed to this fact in recent remarks to the New Yorker. He told the publication that Iran achieved "overmatch"—a level of capability in which a country has weaponry that makes it extremely difficult to check or defeat. "Iran's strategic capacity is now enormous," McKenzie said. "They've got overmatch in the theatre—the ability to overwhelm."

In other words, Iran is invincible. And that was achieved at a time when McKenzie and his CENTCOM colleagues were doing everything in their power to undermine Iran's capabilities and influence in the region.

McKenzie is wrapping up his tenure with remarkable failures. He was sort of fired due to his incompetence in a theatre where he was long operating. He will join the long list of other U.S. officials and commanders who wanted to undermine Iran. They all went while Iran stands tall and will remain so. The case of McKenzie is a lesson for his successor who is expected to face even more daunting challenges than McKenzie faced. McKenzie's confessions also put the focus on the fact that the U.S. presence in the region has become much costlier. And that, withdrawal may be the best option for the U.S.

Former Iran volleyball federation president Yazdani Khorram dies

TEHRAN – Former Iranian federations of volleyball and wrestling Mohammadreza Yazdani Khorram passed away early Sunday.

Yazdani Khorram died at the age of 75 due to a heart attack.

Yazdani Khorram served as head of Iran volleyball federation from 1989 to 2006 and made fundamental changes to the sport.

He also was president of the wrestling federation from 2006 to 2011.

Tehran Times extends deepest sympathy to the Yazdani Khorram family, loved ones, and friends over his demise.

Iran's women's football need support: Maryam Irandoost

TEHRAN – Head coach of Iran's women's football team Maryam Irandoost says that if the football federation and people support her team, they will qualify for the FIFA Women's World Cup in the next five years.

Iran have traveled to India to participate at the 2022 AFC Women's Asian Cup India.

The Team will take part in the competition for the first time ever.

"In terms of the results achieved by our team, I am the most satisfied person on the planet. But from a technical point of view, our team has many areas to improve on and we are trying to solve these shortcomings during our training camps, so that we can be in better condition in the future and minimize our weaknesses," she told the-afc.com.

"Everyone knows that the women's football team in Iran has just been formed and we cannot solve all the shortcomings and problems in a short time, but I must say that we are all trying to solve these problems with more work, efforts and training harder," she added.

It is clear that Iranian women's football has made extraordinary strides, particularly when Irandoost – the daughter of former Iranian player and coach Nosrat Irandoost – reflects on where it began.

"I have gone through these 42 years and have often been asked why a girl should play football, (and it is) better to cook Ghormeh Sabzi," she said, referring to the popular Iranian herb stew.

"Do you believe that I hate Ghormeh Sabzi and I do not eat it anymore? You no longer need to say who we are because all Iranians have seen our videos and photos and I am sure everyone knows about us and they know about Iranian women's football."

Iran's qualification has supercharged the awareness of the women's national team within their football-loving nation, but it is only the beginning of a larger story if Irandoost's long-term vision is to be fulfilled.

"When your team is among the top 12 in Asia and will soon participate in the most prestigious national women's football tournament, then it will definitely have a positive impact on Iranian women's football," she declared.

"I expect that, with proper planning, our women's national teams will be organized in other age groups and a five-year plan for the growth and development of women's football will be implemented.

"If the support from the Football Federation of Iran and the people of Iran continues, I promise you that we will reach the FIFA Women's World Cup in the next five years."

Iran to send three skiers to 2022 Winter Olympics

TEHRAN – Three skiers will represent Iran at the 2022 Winter Olympic Games.

The 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics are slated to begin Feb. 4. And will run until Feb. 20.

The opening ceremony of the Games will be held at the Beijing National Stadium (also known as the Bird's Nest).

Seyed Sattar Seyd will compete at cross-country skiing and Hossein Saveh Shemshaki and Atefeh Ahmadi will participate in alpine.

Iran has sent male and female athletes to the Winter Games 11 times since 1956, but none has returned home with medals.

Iran rowing federation to benefit from international partnership program

TEHRAN – The International Canoe Federation and British Canoeing are delighted to announce that the Iranian Canoe, Sailing and Rowing Federation is to be the first nation to benefit from the recently launched International Partnership Program (IPP).

This program is the result of the combined efforts of Dr Cecilia Farias (Vice President of the ICF), and British Canoeing who have teamed together to plan, develop and deliver the Program to support the development of National Federations (NFs) within the ICF. The Program benefits from the financial support and experience of UK Sport's International Relations department who have run a number of similar programs with other sports, canoeicf.com reported.

The IPP aims to inspire and support National Canoeing Federations around the world to improve their governance, strategic planning and sport delivery, so that by 2024 there are more participants, members and more countries entering athletes into international competitions.

Delivery of the program will commence in 2022 by Webinar but it is hoped that some face to face delivery can take place later if Coronavirus restrictions permit.

"The ICF is delighted that the Iranian Canoe, Sailing and Rowing Federation are taking part in this new program. Our hope is that with improved governance, strategic planning and sport delivery more National Federations can join the worldwide growth of canoeing and improved international performances," Farias said.

President of the Iranian Canoe, Sailing and Rowing Federation Alireza Sohrabian is happy with the program.

"This is an exciting opportunity for canoeing in Iran. We are keen to learn from other nations and improve our overall delivery of the sport along with achieving increased international success. We would like to thank the ICF, British Canoeing and UK Sport for supporting us," he said.

Esteghlal to hold camp in UAE or Qatar

TEHEAN – Iran Professional League (IPL) leaders Esteghlal are going to hold a training camp in the UAE or Qatar.

Esteghlal finished in the first place in the halfway point of IPL with 35 points, three points above their archrivals Persepolis.

The Blues are chasing to win the IPL after nine seasons, Tasnim news agency reported.

Esteghlal are scheduled to meet Paykan in Iran's Hazfi Cup Round of 16 on Tuesday.

The team will leave Tehran during the winter break to hold their training club in one of the above-mentioned countries.

China and Iran announce launch of comprehensive cooperation plan

TEHRAN – China and Iran on Friday announced the launch of the implementation of the 25-year comprehensive cooperation plan between the two countries, China Global Television Network (CGTN) reported.

The announcement was made during a meeting between Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian in Wuxi, east China's Jiangsu Province.

The two countries signed the plan for China-Iran comprehensive cooperation in March 2021. The partnership is viewed as a milestone in bilateral relations.

The foreign ministers agreed to step up cooperation in energy, infrastructure, production capacity, science and technology, and medical and health care, according to a statement of the meeting.

Bilateral cooperation will also be expanded to agriculture, fisheries, cybersecurity and the third-party market, as well as people-to-people and cultural exchanges in education, film and personnel training, said the statement.

China will continue to do its utmost to provide vaccines to Iran and is ready to expand cooperation in all areas to elevate the China-Iran comprehensive strategic partnership to a new level, Wang said.

Writing on his Twitter account on Saturday, Iranian Ambassador to Beijing Mohammad Keshavarzadeh said one of the most important achievements of Amir Abdollahian's visit to China was implementing the 25-year cooperation program.

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian on Sunday met with the United Nations Special Envoy for Syria Geir Pedersen.

During the meeting, Amir Abdollahian thanked the special envoy for helping the national dialogue and peace and stability in Syria, stressing that the Islamic Republic of Iran sincerely works to help him succeed in following up on the process to restore peace and stability to the country, the Iranian Foreign Ministry said.

The foreign minister reiterated the Islamic Republic's viewpoint concerning a political solution to the crisis in Syria, from the very beginning that the crisis emerged, stressing that the United Nations is part of the follow-up to the political resolution in Syria.

Amir Abdollahian went on to say that the illegal presence of American forces in Syria and the Israeli attacks against the country disrupt the political process there, underlining that it is necessary that the international community

and the United Nations pay attention to this issue.

The top diplomat added that one cannot navigate through the crisis in Syria correctly without attending to the issues of refugees and the sanctions imposed on the country.

During the meeting, Pedersen also described the situation in Syria as stable, stressing that under the current circumstances no involved party is talking about regime change in the country.

He also underlined the

Partnership deal is 'win-win' game

Amir Abdollahian said on Saturday the comprehensive strategic partnership will be a "win-win" for both Iran and China.

"In this agreement, we have included anything that is in line with the interests of the two nations. Tehran and Beijing will benefit from the deal, which will today enter its implementation phase," he told CGTN.

"Tehran-Beijing relations and bonds are expanding in all areas and the 25-year strategic partnerships and cooperation will pursue a win-win approach," Amir Abdollahian remarked.

China is Iran's leading trade partner and was one of the biggest buyers of the country's oil before then-U.S. president Donald Trump reimposed sweeping unilateral illegal sanctions in 2018.

Beijing has long sought to boost ties with Tehran, with Chinese president Xi Jinping describing Iran as "China's major partner in the Middle East" on a rare visit to the country in 2016.

Iran defends one China policy

According to the joint statement, Amir Abdollahian also said Iran firmly supports China in safeguarding its core interests and upholding the one-China policy. He added Iran highly appreciates and will take an active part in jointly building the Belt and Road.

Iran is firmly committed to promoting Iran-China cooperation, looks forward to learning from China's development experience and advanced technology, and is willing to become a trustworthy and long-term cooperative partner of China, he said.

The chief diplomat added Iran firmly supports

China's FM says the U.S. bears the main responsibility for the current situation surrounding the JCPOA.

## Rail transit through Iran hits new record high



From page 1 ► Ruhollah Latifi said that 1.057 million tons of goods were transited via the country during the seven-month period.

Iran is one of the countries that have a special status in trade and transit

relations due to its strategic location and special geography, as the country is the passage of several important international corridors.

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

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

The country, also, borders Iraq, Turkey, Pakistan, and Afghanistan to the west and east.

## ICCIMA criticizes national budget bill for next Iranian year

TEHRAN – Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) has criticized several aspects of the government's proposed budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year (begins on March 21), ICCIMA portal reported.

Making the remarks in a meeting of the ICCIMA Board of Representatives on Sunday, Gholam-Hossein Shafeie mentioned some of the aspects of the budget bill which can create serious challenges for the country's private sector in the coming year.

Lack of collaboration and communication with the private sector in preparing the budget bill was the first issue raised by the ICCIMA head, saying: "First, the private sector has been completely absent from the next year's budgeting process. Unlike in previous years when the private sector was formally invited to meet with those involved in preparing the budget bill, this year private sector was completely ignored in the process."

The second issue regarding the mentioned bill was the incomes' structure, especially the imbalance of tax increases for the private sector and state-owned entities. According to the government's proposed bill for the next year's budget, the total amount of taxes expected to be collected from the private sector in the next year has increased by 146 percent, while the increase for the government-owned entities is only 83 percent.

This entails that the private sector is expected to shoulder the major part of the government's tax revenue burden in the coming year, which according to Shafeie will have serious negative impacts on this



sector and on the country's economy in general.

"In addition to this increase in pressure on the private sector [through direct tax increases], we see that in various sections of the budget bill, eliminating existing tax exemptions is also on the agenda, which will intensify the pressure on the private sector even more," Shafeie said.

Abrupt elimination of tax exemptions, such as export tax exemptions, will lead to widespread changes in the planning of enterprises operating in the private sector and consequently reduces economic predictability, the official added.

Finally, the use of oil and gas resources was another issue that the ICCIMA head pointed out, saying that the government plans to borrow half of the oil and gas resources that should be deposited into the National Development Fund (NDF) in the next year for balancing its incomes and expenditures, while this can reduce the resources accessible to the private sector.

The NDF resources are to be invested in the country's development projects, especially through private companies; so, the question remains as to whether the use of these resources by the government is justified.

## Fadaei appointed as head of Iran Fara Bourse

TEHRAN – The board of directors of Iran's over-the-counter exchange market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), have elected Meisam Fadaei as the new head of IFB, IRNA reported on Sunday.

Fadaei had been appointed as the acting head of IFB on December 5, 2021, following the resignation of the IFB's former Managing Director Amir Hamouni, and now he has been elected to take the position permanently.

Hamouni had served as the head of Iran Fara Bourse since September 2012.

Iran Fara Bourse, one of the four Iranian exchanges, operates under supervision of Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO), a member of IOSCO. IFB was established on November 12, 2008, to be a gate for the majority of companies to enter the capital market and enhance their corporate governance and their businesses by providing easier listing requirements.

Emphasizing that necessary infrastructure for investment is now established in the zone, the official said that 57 projects in the industry sector, 16 projects in the agriculture sector, and seven projects in the tourism sector of the zone are being implemented at the moment.

He said that jobs have been created for 1,879 people in the first phase of the

## TEDPIX loses 11,000 points on Sunday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), lost 11,682

# Annual petchem production capacity expected to reach 100m tons by March 2023

TEHRAN- Iran's annual petrochemical production capacity is predicted to reach 100 million tons by the end of the next Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2023), the managing director of National petrochemical Company (NPC) announced.

Morteza Shahmirzaei said that 68 production complexes with the annual nominal capacity of about 90 million tons are currently active in the country, and regarding the planning the figure is forecast to reach 100 million tons by the end of the next year.

Iran's petrochemical industry has a clear vision and promising outlook for its development, the NPC managing director further stressed.

Petrochemical production has risen eight percent in Iran during the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22, 2021), compared to the same period of time in the past year, according to an official with the NPC.

Jalal Mir-Hashemi, the NPC's director for the production control,

put the six-month petrochemical output at 32.8 million tons, and highlighted that the petrochemical plants operated with a good capacity during this period, Shana reported.

According to the official, considering the country's current needs for the production of healthcare products like face masks, the petrochemical industry is continuing to increase output to supply feed in such areas.

With the measures taken and the sustainable supply of feed in the current year, the production of various products in petrochemical complexes has increased and while meeting the needs of domestic markets, the export programs have also been realized, Mir-Hashemi noted.

Emphasizing that Iran's petrochemical industry is one of the most important pillars of the country's development and the driving force of the economy, he



said: "The main approach of the National Petrochemical Company is to complete the production chain, diversify the products, provide feedstock for domestic industries and increase the added value of the products in this industry."

Mir-Hashemi stated that according to the plans made, the growth and leap of production of Iran's petrochemical industry is on the agenda, adding: "All conditions and infrastructure have been

provided to achieve a leap in production in the Iranian petrochemical industry in the current year; with the measures taken this year, the idle production capacities of some existing complexes will also be revived."

The petrochemical industry plays a crucial role in Iran's non-oil economy, as the petrochemical export is the second-largest source of revenue for the country after crude oil. Petrochemical

exports already constitute nearly 33 percent of the country's non-oil exports.

According to the former Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh, the country is currently producing nearly 70 million tons of petrochemical products annually and by the end of the industry's second development leap, the country's petrochemical production capacity is projected to reach 100 million tons per year.

The minister has pointed to the diversification of products, greater use of liquid feedstock, and land preparation, as some of the important factors to be taken into account for the future development of the petrochemical industry, and said: "In this industry, great work has been done in creating knowledge, indigenizing technologies, and cooperation with universities."

The production capacity of Iran's petrochemical industry is expected to be increased from 100 million tons to 133 million tons at the end of the third leap.

## 1st part of SP phase 11 project expected to go operational by late Sep.

TEHRAN – Managing Director of Iran's Petropars Company, which is in charge of developing Phase 11 of the giant South Pars gas field in the Persian Gulf, has said the company is going to take all the necessary measures to complete the first part of the mentioned phase's development project by the third quarter of the next Iranian calendar year (starts on September 23).

As Shana reported, Seyed Shamsedin Mousavi made the remarks on Sunday, in a ceremony held for his introduction as the new head of the company.

The ceremony was attended by Head of National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) Mohsen Khojasteh-Mehr.

Speaking at the ceremony, Khojasteh-Mehr said: "National Iranian Oil Company trusts Petropars and we have very high expectations from this company and hope that they will be able to implement all projects, especially priority ones as scheduled."

"Phase 11 of South Pars and South Azadegan [development projects] are among the priorities of the National Iranian Oil Company and even a day delay in the implementation of these projects will not be accepted," Khojasteh-Mehr stressed.



NIOC Head Mohsen Khojasteh-Mehr (L) and Petropars' new Head Seyed Shamsedin Mousavi

Earlier this month, Petropars' former Head Hamidreza Masoudi had announced the implementation of two new contracts which would accelerate the development of the mentioned phase.

According to Masoudi, the mentioned deals were concerned with the construction of an off-shore pipeline as well as the installation of the phase's SDP11B platform.

"The engineering, procurement and implementation activities corresponding to these two contracts have officially started since the beginning of the current [Iranian calendar] month [December 22, 2021]," Masoudi said.

When fully developed, the South Pars phase 11 project will have a production capacity of two billion cubic feet per day or 370,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day. The produced gas will be fed into Iran's gas network.

Iran had previously awarded the development of phase 11 project to a consortium comprised of France's Total, China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), and Petropars which is a subsidiary of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), however Total and CNPC pulled out of the project in 2019 due to the U.S. sanctions.

Currently, Petropars is developing the phase 11 project after its partners left the contract.

The drilling operation for the first well of mentioned phase was officially started in December 2020. In the early production stage, the output of this phase will reach 500 million cubic feet (equivalent to 14 million cubic meters) per day.

South Pars is the world's largest gas field, covering an area of 3,700 square kilometers of Iran's territorial waters.

The giant field is estimated to contain a significant amount of natural gas, accounting for about eight percent of the world's reserves, and approximately 18 billion barrels of condensate. The field is divided into 24 standard phases.

# 80 investment projects underway in Maku Free Zone

TEHRAN- As announced by a provincial official, 80 projects for making investment in different sectors are currently being implemented in Maku Free Trade Zone (FTZ), in Iran's northwestern province of West Azarbaijan.

Arash Yousefzadeh, the director for investment attraction, banking and insurance affairs in Maku Free Trade Zone Organization, said that through proper planning and creation of proper investment condition, these projects are now underway in the zone.

Emphasizing that necessary infrastructure for investment is now established in the zone, the official said that 57 projects in the industry sector, 16 projects in the agriculture sector, and seven projects in the tourism sector of the zone are being implemented at the moment.

He said that jobs have been created for 1,879 people in the first phase of the

mentioned projects, and put the domestic investment for the projects at over 10 trillion rials (about \$34.5 million) and foreign investment at \$13 million.

As announced by the managing director of Maku Free Trade Zone Organization, commodities valued at \$2,030 billion were exported from the zone during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22, 2021).

Mohammadreza Abdol-Rahimi said that the export of non-oil products worth nearly \$2.1 billion, and gas export worth \$1.1 billion, imports of goods worth \$620 million, and \$132 billion worth of transit has been done through Bazargan customs in the zone.

He also stressed the high capacity of Bazargan Customs in facilitating the country's international trade and trade between the countries of the region.

Maku is one of the seven major free zones of Iran.

It has 140 kilometers of border with Azerbaijan Republic and 130 kilometers of border with Turkey.

As Maku is among the most newly-established and also the largest free zones of the country, there is a high need for the creation of infrastructures in this zone.

The establishment of free trade zones in Iran dates back to the Iranian calendar year 1368 (March 1989- March 1990) following the fall in the country's oil income in the preceding year which prompted the government to promote non-oil exports.

The first two free trade zones of Iran were established in the south of the country. The first one was Kish Free Trade Zone established in 1368 on Kish Island in the Persian Gulf and the second one was Qeshm Free Trade Zone established the year after on Qeshm Island in the Strait of Hormuz.

Some five other free trade zones have been also established in the country since

then, including Chabahar in southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan Province, Arvand in southwestern Khuzestan Province, Anzali in northern Gilan Province, Aras in East-Azarbaijan Province and Maku in West-Azarbaijan Province, both in the northwest of the country.

Considering the important role that the free zones play in promoting the country's export and employment, Iran is seriously pursuing the development of its existing zones and the establishment of new zones as well.

More development measures in this field have been taking since the U.S. re-imposition of sanctions on the Iranian economy in November 2018, as Iran is reducing its dependence on the oil income while elevating its domestic production and non-oil exports.

Although the sanctions have disrupted Iran's economic activities, they could not impede the development of Iranian free

points to 1.31 million on Sunday.

As reported, 4.73 billion securities worth 23.459 trillion rials (about \$80.893 million) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index lost 11,932 points, and the second market's index

dropped 12,025 points.

TEDPIX lost 29,000 (2.1 percent) to 1.334 million in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

During the past week, the indices of Mobarakeh Steel Company, Bandar

Abbas Oil Refining Company, Iran Khodro Company, Saipa Company, Social Security Investment Company, National Copper Company, and Barekat Pharmaceutical Group were the most widely followed ones.

From page 1 ► diabolical package of lies than in this situation, with the literal survivability of the planet potentially at stake if a Third World War should ignite. The entire face-off over Ukraine is entirely due to the illegitimate and illegal overthrow of the duly elected government of that country by the United States and the European Union in February of 2014. This coup d'état with key players Obama, Biden, Hilary Clinton, and Victoria Nuland, was motivated by the desire of Western central banks to preempt a legitimate deal offered to Ukraine by Russia in both banking and trade. The other unmistakable motivation is the ongoing encirclement of Russia by NATO and the continued deployment of its naval forces, conventional troops, and missiles ever closer to the Russian homeland.

The situation in Crimea and the breakaway independent republics of Donetsk (DNR) and Luhansk (LHR) are entirely due to the events of February 2014 in Ukraine fully the responsibility of the United States and the EU. Crimea merely returned to its historic relationship with Russia by the overwhelming vote of its people, some 97% out of some 85% eligible voter turnouts. Crimeans obviously saw a return to Russia as far preferable to control by a puppet regime in Kiev installed by the covert actions of Western black operational intelligence agencies at the behest of central banks and the American military-industrial complex. As for the

talk of a Russian “invasion” of Crimea, the former’s military presence at Sevastopol with its Black Sea Fleet is a presence of long standing. It had nothing to do with events after February of 2014.

It is essential for our readers around the world to understand that the leadership of the United States assured Mr. Gorbachev upon the dissolution of the former Soviet Union and the dismantling of the Berlin Wall that the American government and NATO would never take this as an opportunity to expand NATO and recruit ex-Warsaw Pact members to join NATO.

Do the mathematics: After 1991, 14 new members of NATO were added, most of them ex-Soviet Republics. Now we hear today from NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg that NATO has already decided to grant new memberships to Ukraine and Georgia. This would represent a new and dangerous tripwire as this move would cross a public Russian red line. The Russians will understandably not allow this latest provocation to stand without a response. Every indication is that a military move they would otherwise wish to avoid, will be forced upon them.

**To what extent is the U.S. ready to confront Russia under the pretext of Ukraine?**

The United States’ leadership is certifiably insane if it believes it can and should confront Russia using Ukraine as the pretext. Pat Buchanan and David Stockman both emphasize

# U.S. insane if it imagines it can and should confront Russia over Ukraine: ex-Senate candidate



the truism that the United States has absolutely no compelling historic national security interest in that country, which is in the Russian backyard, not ours. Even worse, the United States has no business continuing to recruit new members to NATO, and positioning American military assets and military exercises ever closer to Russian borders in Eastern Europe, the Baltics, the Black Sea, the southern underbelly of Russia, and the “Stans” countries. We must remember the understandable American reaction in October of 1962 to the placement of medium

**The rhetorical support for confronting Russia over Ukraine and potentially going to war with China over Taiwan should tell us that major tragedy for innocent people everywhere lies ahead.**

and intermediate range nuclear missiles in Cuba as a threat to the United States. In this context, how do the government and media of this country expect Russia to react to some 30 years of broken promises by NATO and the establishment of a serious military presence on Russia’s doorstep? What would the American reaction be to the establishment of a Russian infantry and air force presence throughout Canada and Mexico, the reestablishment of a Russian military presence in Cuba and in Venezuela?

David Stockman also places in perspective the ridiculous notion that Russia is a national security threat to the United States and Western Europe as was the case during the salad days of the Soviet Union. He states that:

“The GDP of the New York City metro area is about \$1.7 trillion, which is well more than Russia’s 2020 GDP of \$1.6 trillion. And that, in turn, is just 7% of America’s \$22 trillion GDP.

“In terms of manufacturing output Russia’s annual manufacturing value added is currently (2020) about \$197 billion, which amounts to just 8% of the \$2.35 trillion figure for the U.S. economy.

“Basically, Russia’s economy cannot support a military establishment anywhere near to that of Imperial Washington. To wit, its \$65 billion of military outlays in 2020 amounted to less than 32 days of Washington’s current \$755 billion of expenditures for defense.

“Moreover, the canard

that Washington’s massive conventional armada is needed to defend Europe is ludicrous nonsense. Europe can and should take care of its own security and relationship with its neighbor on the Eurasian continent. After all, the GDP of NATO Europe alone is \$17 trillion or 11X greater than that of Russia, and the current military budgets of European NATO members total about \$300 billion or 4.4X more than that of Russia.

“But more importantly, the European nations and people really do not have any quarrel with Putin’s Russia, nor is their security and safety threatened by the latter. All of the tensions that do exist and have come to a head since the illegal coup in Kiev in February 2014 were fomented by Imperial Washington and its European subalterns in the NATO machinery.” (Emphasis Dankof)

What the United States needs to consider in all of this lunacy is the fact that since World War II, the bloated American military establishment has not won a single war. The spectacle of the rout in Kabul in 2021 needs to be firmly in the mind of these “experts” who think that Russia, Iran, and China can be handled by military means in this context. The \$32 trillion national budget and the most internally divided domestic populous since the American Civil War are additional factors to be figured in the calculations of these warmongers and war profiteers.

Lastly, the Russians, Iranians, and Chinese would fight with a national resolve not seen in the United States since the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, and would carry a global contest to the death to the American homeland itself. Are we up to that task? And for what national purpose?

**Do you think NATO has been empowered since Biden took office?**

Biden has clearly returned United States foreign policy to the malignant notion that the entire world must be remade by coercion in the image of a globalist, post-Christian West devoted to consumerism, sexual decadence, atheistic technocracy, the Zionist State of Israel, and the monolithic

control and supremacy of the Petro-Dollar, central banks, and an American mainstream media and social media under the control of the agenda of its political elite. It would be unfair however, not to tag the Republican “opposition” as full participants in this evil vision. A Trinity of Russophobia-Iranophobia-and Chinaphobia and the inculcation of fear in the populations of the United States and Europe leading to possible international conflict seems to be the answer of politicians and national security demagogues who profit by these tragedies, even as they possess absolutely no solutions to the intractable problems of debt, cultural decadence, educational and infrastructure decline, the destruction of the family, the astronomical increase in crime, and the metastasis of incivility and trust in basic institutions of government specifically and society generally.

**How are the U.S. media outlets striving to show China and Russia as real threats?**

The basic technique being employed by the media involves the Orwellian demonization of these countries and their leaders, accompanied by the rationalization of all kinds of crimes on the part of American political leadership by the insidious and constant subliminal reinforcement of the false ideology of “American Exceptionalism.” Accompanied by the falsification of history, the endgame is a dangerously Manichean worldview which casts others as absolutely evil in motive and action, while seeing one’s own motives and actions as absolutely and inherently good.

I delivered a lecture to homeschooling parents and students in Texas, warning them of the deceptive and evil character of these notions at this stage in American and world history. Quite contrary to the ideology of “American Exceptionalism,” I argued that the American Empire has become intrinsically evil. Russia Insider and Russian Faith reprinted that lecture, which I hope the readers of the Tehran Times will avail themselves of. It is entitled, “Christian Martyrdom and the American Empire: Mark Dankof on the New World Order.”

**Many critics say Biden is continuing Trump policies. What is your comment?**

I think the observation is a valid one. The problem is that American interventionists and militarists permeate the thinking and rhetoric of most of the leading members of both major political parties and their prospective Presidential candidates in 2024. The bipartisan Congressional

support for the most bloated national security and intelligence budget in history underscores this, as do the sanctions regimens aimed at Russia, Iran, and China. And the rhetorical support for confronting Russia over Ukraine, attacking Iran at the behest of Israel, and potentially going to war with China over Taiwan should tell us that major tragedy for innocent people everywhere lies ahead.

## Severe problems facing American health sector

From page 1 ► The Pentagon says it has around 1,000 additional active-duty medical troops ready for deployment to civilian hospitals around the country if needed.

In addition to the active-duty assistance, more than 15,000 National Guard troops have been activated in 49 states to help with the pandemic response in areas including clinical care, testing and vaccinations.

The announcements are strikingly similar to the earlier days of the pandemic in the United States when the active-duty military was called up, hospitals struggled to treat waves of patients sick with COVID-19. The only difference is that during those difficult times, vaccines had not been approved yet.

Alabama, Missouri, New Mexico, Rhode Island, Texas and Wisconsin have been reported to be among the states suffering from a particular shortage of ICU beds.

Texas had the fewest free ICU beds available at around seven percent. Data suggests Southern and Midwestern states have been disproportionately affected.

In Washington state, Governor Jay Inslee says hospitals will temporarily stop nonurgent procedures “so as much capacity and staff can be dedicated to emergent needs, the people who need this right now.”

In Wisconsin, Governor Tony Evers says National Guard members will be trained as certified nursing assistants to support hospitals and nursing homes. He says “we’re estimating the first round of staffing and relief rollout will allow skilled nursing facilities to open up 200 or more beds by the end of February” as the state announced a record number of confirmed cases.

Alabama state reported a record number of children hospitalized with coronavirus this week, due to the highly transmissible Omicron variant. At least 60 children had been hospitalized with 13 receiving treatment in intensive care.

The state has recorded a number of record case highs throughout January as state health officials told the media they were “extremely concerned” about the rise of hospitalizations among children and parents to get their children inoculated.

As the surge ripples from state to state, the impact on health systems has been worsened by the exhaustion of even the reserve of traveling nurses who are also becoming infected in droves.

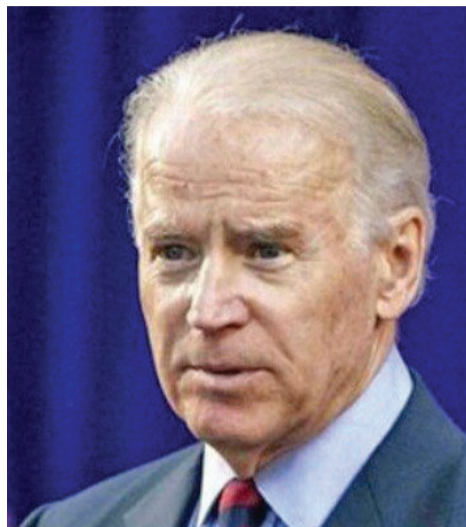
Lisa Greenwood, the associate dean of nursing at Madison College, which is training the Guard members has warned that “our health care providers are beyond exhausted. We simply do not have enough staff to care for all those who are ill.”

Data from the department of Health and Human Services shows at least 85% of adult intensive care unit beds were in use across 19 entire states, while in 24 states at least 80% of staffed hospital beds were occupied.

More than 5.5 million new cases were recorded over a seven day timeframe, by far surpassing all previous records. The number of people hospitalized with the virus has also hit new highs.

According to U.S. media, more than 2,224 deaths from COVID-19 were recorded on January 13. The daily average in deaths is 1,873, twice as high as at the end of November 2021. Experts say these trends are strongly expected to continue with the fast spread of infections.

The average in new cases has reached over 800,000 per day, an unprecedented pandemic high. On January 13, more than 889,000 new cases were reported, and more than nine million cases have been logged



since the New Year. At the present rate, the U.S. can expect to have documented 70 million COVID cases anytime now depending on which data being published that the American public deem as a reliable source.

The cumulative death toll has reached 870,000. However, according to the Economist, excess deaths are now over 1.1 million. In historical terms, the scale of death is reaching the proportions of death that occurred in the population during the 1918 influenza pandemic.

Meanwhile, according to Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center, the national infection rate has reached 26 percent, which underscores the massive undercounting being announced and the scale of infection that continues to run rampant across the country.

Biden has also promised he would direct his administration to procure an additional 500 million COVID-19 home tests to help meet surging demand. The White House had previously pledged to make 500 million tests available starting in January.

The U.S. President won the Presidential race pledging to lift the threat of the pandemic and promising to handle the virus much better than his predecessor. Having finished his first year in office, things are not going to plan. Over the past few weeks, Covid-19 cases have reached record levels; deaths are rising nationally and the number of Americans hospitalized with the disease is higher now than at any previous point during the pandemic.

Long lines to get a Covid test and low availability of at-home tests have sparked criticism of the White House’s readiness, while different guidelines and confused messaging from public health officials has left the disease-weary public both frustrated and confused.

That has led to a significant drop in public confidence with the new White House coupled with a drop in Biden’s overall approval ratings.

Despite attempts by the Biden administration to downplay the dangers posed by Omicron, the pressure on health systems is creating a severe health crisis in America led by the staff shortages to which the White House has no serious response apart from pledging to deploy more medical troops.

The U.S. President blames too many Americans for still “sitting on the sidelines” of the pandemic fight because they haven’t taken the vaccine. “If you haven’t gotten vaccinated, do it” he says. “But as long as we have tens of millions of people who will not get vaccinated, we’re going to have full hospitals and needless deaths” Biden added.

Critics argue the administration has not done enough to convince the public to take the vaccine.

This comes as the Supreme Court last week dealt another blow to the president’s vaccine-only plan by rejecting a national vaccine-or-test requirement for large US businesses.

## Four ancient windmills added to national heritage list



TEHRAN - Four ancient windmills, which are located in Iran's South Khorasan province, have been registered in the national list for cultural heritage.

"Four Asbads (vertical windmills), located in the cities of Birjand, Nehbandan, and Darmiyan, have been registered as national cultural heritage," a local tourism official said on Sunday, IRNA reported.

Experts believe such primitive yet great machines bear testimony to the human being's adaption with nature by transforming environmental obstacles into opportunities.

Earlier this year, eight Asbads underwent restoration in Darmiyan intending to strengthen their walls, domes, and repair their gutters.

So far, more than 100 Asbads have been identified in Darmiyan, which are being restored one by one due to a possible registration of the windmills on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Iran seeks UNESCO recognition for arrays of its ancient windmills that can

be found in the provinces of Sistan-Baluchestan, South Khorasan, and Khorasan Razavi.

UNESCO says Asbad is a smart technique to grind grains, a technique which goes back to ancient times when the people living in the eastern parts of Iran, in an attempt to adapt themselves to nature and transform environmental obstacles into opportunities, managed to invent it.

Constructed of clay, wood, and straw, those ancient gears which are inherited from preceding generations, are perched on a cliff overlooking the village, milling grain for centuries.

Technically speaking, unlike European windmills, the Persian design is powered by blades arrayed on a vertical axis in which the energy of wind is translated down without the need for any of the intermediary gears found on the horizontal axis windmills.

The development of Asbads took place due to strong and continuous 120-day winds, which annually sweeps through the east and southeast of the Iranian Plateau from late May to late September.

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, the earliest known references to windmills are to a Persian millwright in 644 CE and windmills in Seistan [Sistan], Iran, in 915 CE. In the early second millennium, some Eastern and Western states acquired the technology of making mills from Persia, though the prototype design constantly underwent amendments over time.

Such primitive yet great machines bear testimony to the human being's adaption with harsh nature.

# Tehran smooths Iraqi travel flow, deputy tourism minister says

From page 1 ► The vast majority of Iraqi travelers only know a few Iranian provinces, so the potential of the many other provinces often goes overlooked, Shalbafian said.

Environmental advertising in important Iraqi cities, production of joint cultural products, and the introduction and serious presence of Iran on Iraqi TV channels are all necessary to solve this problem, he added.

Collaboration with the private sector could be used to implement these measures, he concluded.

In December 2021, a group of Iraqi tour operators and tourism activists along with their Iranian



fellows visited several Iranian provinces on familiarization tours.

Moreover, several Iraqi travel insiders have requested Iran to

waive visa requirements for Iraqi nationals who want to enter the Islamic Republic via land borders.

Last year the two neighbors

agreed to abolish visa requirements for air travelers.

The announcement came after Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi met in Tehran, discussing various issues including visa waiver, a joint railway project, and increasing the level of trade.

Iran is potentially a booming destination for travelers seeking cultural attractions, breathtaking sceneries, and numerous UNESCO-registered sites. 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.

## Quake shakes ancient monuments on Iranian island, no damage reported



TEHRAN - A medium-sized 4.8 magnitude earthquake that struck Kharg Island, Bushehr province on Saturday caused no damage to historical sites across the southwestern province.

Based on field visits conducted by the cultural heritage experts, no serious damage to historical sites and monuments has been reported so far, the deputy provincial tourism chief said early on Sunday.

Fortunately, the monuments of this island were restored, organized, stabilized, and strengthened this year in order to prevent possible destruction due to natural

disasters, Nasrollah Ebrahimi said.

Palmyrene burial chambers, Nasturi Church and Achaemenid Inscription are among the historical sites of the island which have been registered on the national heritage list, he added.

Back in October, the official announced that this natural phenomenon has been happening in this region continuously since the beginning of the Iranian new year 1400 (started March 21).

The province has made efforts to stabilize and restore most of its historic monuments, but the continued earthquakes may pose a threat to these structures, which will require technical planning, and this matter will be discussed by the province's cultural heritage department, the official added.

Kharg Island is a continental island in the Persian Gulf south of Iran. The island is located 25 km off the coast of Iran and 483 km northwest of the Strait of Hormuz. Administered by the adjacent coastal Bushehr province, Kharg Island provides a

seaport for the export of oil.

With over 6,000 years of history and significant monuments from the Elamite, Achaemenid, Parthian, and Sassanid eras, Bushehr is one of Iran's most important historical centers.

Besides its cultural heritage, beautiful beaches and lush palm groves make it an attractive destination for world travelers.

The historical and architectural monuments of Bushehr include Islamic buildings like mosques and praying centers, mansions, old towers, castles, as well as gardens.

When it comes to cultural attractions, there are many historical mounds in Bushehr including Tall-e Khandaq with Sassanid architectural style, Tall-e Marv located near an Achaemenid Palace, and Qajar era Malek al-Tojar Mansion. Qajar era Kazeruni Mansion, which has been inscribed on the World Heritage List, is another attraction that world travelers love to see among various ancient sites.

## Call for Chemicals Suppliers

Polypropylene Jam Company (Public Joint Stock Company) intends to outsource the supply of the required chemicals to domestic or foreign suppliers or manufacturers with sufficient expertise and experience. Therefore, qualified and experienced companies in preparing chemicals are invited from the date of publication of the notice until the end of 2022 feb 02 (2022-02-02) to submit their application with the required documents to the Company security unit at 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, NO 5, Nex to Tejarat Bank, North Flamek St, Ivanak Boulevard, Tehran.

Required Chemicals	Tonnage
GM590 (Atmer129)	180 tons
A.O. B215	265 tons
A.O. B225	108 tons
M.S. 168	108 tons
A.O.B215 & DMDBS(with blue pigment)	34 tons
A.O.B215 & DMDBS(no with blue pigment)	34 tons
NA BENZOATE	32 tons
UV770	24 tons

Required Chemicals	Tonnage
TEAL	58 tons
DONOR C	14 tons
DONOR D	6 tons
WHITE OIL V-70	44 tons
GREASE VASELINE	13 tons
ATMER 163(A.S 163)	52 tons
A.O.3114	52 tons

Applicant companies that have the ability to supply the above chemicals should send the following documents along with the letter of declaration of readiness to the above address.

1. Company registration documents including a copy of articles of association, official gazette with the latest changes, economic code, resume
2. Other offers, information and documents confirming the applicant's expertise and experience, previous customer contracts, technical specifications of the catalyst, country of manufacture, expiration period, proposed conditions, payment and proposed semester of catalyst delivery, etc.

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Note 2: Polypropylene Jam Company is free to accept or reject any or all bids at any stage of the tender without stating a reason.

Should you need technical information, kindly please call us at 077-37323774 – ext.: 501 (Process Unit).

Public Relations and International Affairs, Polypropylene Jam Company (public joint stock Co.)

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Required Chemicals	Tonnage
DONOR C	7 tons
DONOR D	3 tons
GREASE VASELINE	13 tons
A.O.B215 & DMDBS(with blue pigment)	24 tons
A.O.B215 & DMDBS(no with blue pigment)	24 tons

Applicant companies that have the ability to supply the above chemicals should send the following documents along with the letter of declaration of readiness to the above address.

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# Seemingly mild Omicron still murderous

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN – Reporting the first three lives claimed by apparently mild coronavirus variant can bring back the dark days of three-digit deaths so that it should be taken more seriously.

It was in late December 2021 that a new corona strain began to invade some countries, a variant that was thought to be milder, and this perception led some to abandon the observance of protocols and even the use of masks.

Despite public optimism for Omicron, health experts and virologists have warned from the outset about the abnormality and seriousness of the new variant, and the need to continue to follow health protocols, complete vaccinations, inject the third dose, and even tighten the restrictions.

On Saturday, Health Ministry reported three deaths from the



highly contagious Omicron strain.

“The number of Omicron infection in the country has reached 1,162. Cities of Tabriz, Yazd, and Shahrekord have each reported a death due to the new variant, while a critically ill patient is hospitalized in Ahvaz,” health ministry official Mohammad Hashemi said, warn-

ing people to take it seriously.

“The people who lost their lives of Omicron were elderly and had not been fully vaccinated (three doses).

Also, in old age, there is a high risk of various diseases such as high blood pressure and diabetes, and this makes the need to

pay more attention, he further stressed.

Meanwhile, deputy health minister Saeed Karimi said that the number of positive tests for “Omicron” has increased, raising the alarm for Omicron in the country while stressing the need for medical centers to be ready.

Also, the cheapest, safest, and most accessible way to prevent virus transmission and infection is to follow health protocols, so that people must stick to the hygiene principles to survive from the new strain.

The number of Omicron infections in the country has reached 1,162.

## Labor Ministry allots \$18m to support nanotech companies



TEHRAN – The Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare allocated 5 trillion rials (nearly \$18 million) facilitating the process of creating specialized employment through the support of nanotechnology companies.

A joint cooperation agreement was signed on Sunday between Deputy Labor Minister Mahmoud Karimi Biranvand, and secretary of the Nanotechnology Innovation Council, Saeed Sarkar.

Under the agreement, the two organizations will commit to using each other's capacities to promote employment in the country through nanotechnology. In addition to the benefit of private nano-sector companies from the facil-

ities provided, the possibility of developing the domestic market as well as the export market of nano-products.

It also contributes to sustainable employment and the path of job creation can be provided towards the use of university graduates and the development of knowledge-based businesses active in the nanotechnology sector. It is also possible to prevent the migration of graduates by creating a suitable business environment in the country.

The agreement seeks to support companies that have the potential to produce nano products.

Identifying, evaluating, and introducing competent technological projects to the Ministry of Labor, implementing empowerment programs for companies to enter the semi-industrial or industrial production stage, assisting the development of the domestic and foreign market, providing incentives to export products, empowering and creating employment for university graduates to reduce elite migration, providing consulting services to qualified applicants, are among the responsibilities of the Nanotechnology Council.

### Unemployment hits lowest rate in 25 years

According to the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI), the unemployment rate for people aged 15 and above fell to 8.9 percent this fall (September 23-December 21, 2021), recording the lowest rate in 25 years.

Accordingly, 63.1 million of the country's population are in the age group of 15 years and older, 40.9 percent of whom, equal to 25.8 million people, have been economically active, i.e. they are in the group of employed or unemployed.

An examination of the changes in the economic participation rate shows a 0.5 percent decline compared to the same period last year.

The SCI said the figure was the lowest on record for Iran's labor market since 1996 although it insisted that a lower jobless rate did not necessarily mean that Iran had created more jobs over the past year.

“This declining trend does not mean more employment but it is due to the spread of the coronavirus disease which has caused many young adults to leave the labor market after failing to find a proper job,” said the report.

“We are witnessing a reduction in active population and as a result, the jobless rate has been declining,” it added.

## IFRC allocates 500,000 CFH to flood-stricken provinces

TEHRAN – The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has agreed to provide 500,000 Swiss francs in emergency aid to flood-hit southern provinces of Iran.

The Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is responding promptly to national populations to help victims of disasters immediately based on the population's history and effective engagement with the IFRC.

The fund has agreed to provide 500,000 Swiss francs to the Red Crescent Society of Iran to help 13,750 flood victims, Hassan Esfandiari, director of international operations and humanitarian programs of the IRCS said.

The aid will be provided only to the flood victims in the southern provinces of Fars, Sistan-Baluchistan, Kerman, and Hormozgan and will be distribut-

ed only in the form of food items, relief, and health goods, he stated.

In early January, torrential rain triggered flooding in southern provinces of the country, claiming eight lives. Provinces of Fars, Kerman, Hormozgan, and Sistan-Baluchestan were affected by flooding.

A sum of 62 billion rials (around \$220,000) has been allocated by philanthropists to the flood-stricken provinces, IRNA reported on Saturday.

### 20% of areas at high risk of flood

Twenty percent of areas across Iran are highly prone to flooding, Khosro Shahbazi, former head of the Forests, Range, and Watershed Management Organization (FRWMO) said in January 2020.

“Precipitation in Iran is one-third

of the world's average, as the country is located in a dry and fragile region where we experience 11 millimeters decrease in precipitation every 10 years and an increase in evaporation of more than 50 millimeters every year,” he explained.

Rainfall fluctuations usually lead to flood and devastation, so comprehensive planning for watershed management and flood control is required, he noted.

Since most of the water supply is extracted from groundwater resources, the country is in a critical condition in terms of groundwater resources, he stated, highlighting, because intake is less than water withdrawal from the aquifers, the best way to store rainwater is watershed and aquifer projects.

## 59 Iranian universities among world's top for academic quality

From page 1 ► Three Iranian institutions are ranked below 500, namely, the University of Tehran, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, and Tarbiat Modares University.

Harvard University tops the list, followed by the University of Toronto, University College London, Stanford University.

Previously, in the 2020-2021 report of this ranking system, 56 Iranian universities were included.

### Iranian universities among world's top ones

Most recently, a total of 51 universities from Iran have been listed in the Islamic World University Rankings 2021 announced by the Islamic World

Science Citation Center (ISC).

Also, fifteen universities from Iran have been listed among the best institutions worldwide, by the U.S. News and World Report Best Global Universities rankings 2022.

The Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) Graduate Employability Rankings 2022 list has been released, which included three Iranian universities out of a total of 550 institutes worldwide that highlighted graduate employment processes.

Meanwhile, 41 Iranian universities in engineering sciences and 12 universities in computer sciences have made a place among the top 1,188 universities in the world with the

announcement of Higher Education World University Rankings 2022 by subject.

It also has introduced 59 Iranian universities among the top institutions in World University Rankings 2022.

The THE Education Young University Rankings 2021 listed 26 Iranian institutions among the world's best universities that are 50 years old or younger.

Moreover, 34 Iranian universities and institutions were listed among the top 1,000 in the world, according to Shanghai Ranking's Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) 2021.

## Plants at risk of extinction as climate crisis disrupts animal migration

The decline of seed-dispersing animals is damaging plants' ability to adapt to climate breakdown, a study has found.

Almost half of all plant species depend on animals to spread their seeds, but scientists fear these plants may be at risk of extinction when animals are driven to migrate to cooler areas, as plants cannot easily follow.

Researchers used machine learning from more than 400 seed dispersal networks worldwide to examine what would happen when animals left areas affected by global heating, the Guardian reported.

They found these plants' capacity to adapt to climate change has already dropped by 60% globally. The researchers warn this may lead to the permanent loss of some species.

“The goal of this project is to understand what we are losing when we move species from their ecosystems and the roles those species are playing that are going to be lost when they disappear,” said Dr Evan C Fricke,

an ecologist at Rice University in Texas and lead author of the paper published in the journal Science.

“For example, birds and mammals are often hit hard by habitat loss and direct exploitation but they play an important role as seed dispersers. We wanted to understand what the decline of birds and mammals means for plants' ability to keep pace with climate change.”

“Climate change and the global decline of bird and mammal biodiversity [are] tightly linked,” said Fricke. “First, seed dispersers help plants' ability to track climate change. But that process is sufficiently disrupted, so much so that the plant species can no longer persist under an altered climate. The study shows that the decline of this biodiversity, on a global scale, puts our climate resilience at risk – the global resilience for forests and other plant communities to deal with climate change.”

## COVID-19 UPDATES ON JANUARY 16

New cases	2,292
New deaths	31
Total cases	6,221,033
Total deaths	132,075
New hospitalized patients	224
Patients in critical condition	1,345
Total recovered patients	6,064,646
Diagnostic tests conducted	43,410,121
Doses of vaccine injected	125,973,179



### Call for Catalyst Suppliers

Polypropylene Jam Company (Public Joint Stock Company) intends to outsource the supply of 4.880 kg of the required catalyst to domestic or foreign suppliers or manufacturers with sufficient expertise and experience. Therefore, qualified and experienced companies in preparing catalysts are invited from the date of publication of the notice until the end of 2022 feb 2 (2022-2-02) to submit their application with the required documents to the Company security unit at 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, NO 5, Nex to Tejarat Bank, North Flamek St, Ivanak Boulevard, Tehran.

Applicant companies that have the ability to supply the amount of 4.880 kg of catalyst should send the following documents along with the letter of declaration of readiness to the above address.

1. Company registration documents including a copy of articles of association, official gazette with the latest changes, economic code, resume
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Public Relations and International Affairs, Polypropylene Jam Company (public joint stock Co.)



JANUARY 17, 2022

## GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Wealth converts a strange land into homeland and poverty turns a native place into a strange land.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times» Noon:12:14 Evening: 17:36 Dawn: 5:45 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 7:13 (tomorrow)

## Iranian children's painting exhibit to celebrate Beijing Winter Olympics

TEHRAN – Iran's Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (Kanoon) will celebrate the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics by organizing a painting exhibition.

Paintings created by Kanoon members on the themes of sports, winter sports and Olympics will be put on view at the showcase entitled "Flying Dreams Iranian Children's Painting Exhibition".

The exhibit opening on Tuesday at Kanoon's Shahid Mohammad Taha Gallery will be organized under the motto "Together for a Common Future".

"The exhibition aims to cement the friendly relationship between people of Iran and China, and raise Iranian children's knowledge of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics and Paralympic Winter Games," Kanoon said in a press release published on Sunday.

The exhibition, which will run until February 19, will be held with contributions from the Iran-China Friendship Association and the Embassy of China in Tehran.

Children participating in the exhibition will be honored during the opening ceremony, which will be attended by Chinese diplomats and Iranian cultural officials.

## "Ahmed Bey" director Jamal Shurjeh honored for life's work at Film Museum of Iran

TEHRAN – Jamal Shurjeh, the director of the Iran-Algeria co-production "Ahmed Bey", has been honored for his lifetime achievements at the Film Museum of Iran.

A number of his colleagues in the Iranian cinema gathered for the honoring ceremony Friday evening at the museum to talk about the filmmaker who is most famous for his movies on the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war, which is known as the sacred defense.

Director Javad Shamaqdari, who is also a close friend of Shurjeh, was among those persons who delivered speeches at the honoring ceremony.

"Mr. Shurjeh was highly successful in his career and his name shines in the sacred defense and resistance cinema," he said.

He praised the director for "33 Days", a film on the Israeli 33-Day War of 2006 against Lebanon,



Jamal Shurjeh speaks at a ceremony held in Tehran on January 14, 2022 at the Film Museum of Iran to honor the filmmaker for his lifetime achievements.

and "Ahmed Bey" about the last Ottoman Bey who ruled Algiers during the 19th century.

Starring Gérard Depardieu, "Ahmed Bey", Shurjeh's latest project, began in 2018, however, its post-production was not completed due to a massive

stroke. He underwent several surgeries in 2019 and since then he has been confined to a wheelchair over the past three years.

"I hope he will soon recover to edit his film," Shamaqdari said and added, "Ahmed Bey"

cast members, including Gérard Depardieu, loved Shurjeh and he [Depardieu] would attend the ceremony if possible."

Sitting in his wheelchair, Shurjeh went on the stage with the help of a family member and thanked his friends and colleagues for their attendance and his family for their help.

"I also thank [cinematographer] Turaj Mansuri who was my best mate in the 'Ahmed Bey' project, encouraging me to bear, because 'Ahmed Bey' was a difficult project and I suffered the stroke two weeks after the completion of shooting," he noted.

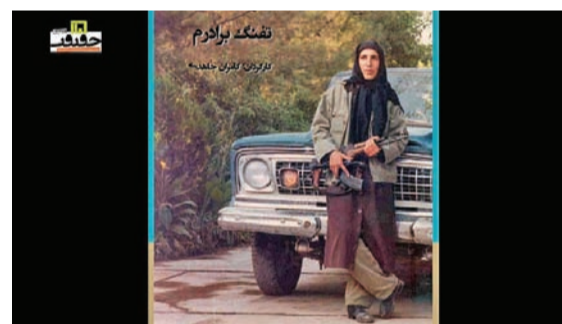
"One day I hope the film is screened in Iran, and I hope to stand before you to bow deeply to you," the 66-year-old director said in conclusion.

The ceremony ended with screening scenes from Shurjeh's 1993 war drama "The Epic of Majnun".



A poster for the Flying Dreams Iranian Children's Painting Exhibition.

## 40th Fajr festival announces lineups of shorts, docs



A poster for the documentary film "My Brother's Gun".

TEHRAN – The 40th edition of the Fajr Film Festival announced on Sunday the lineups for the documentary and short film competitions.

Nine documentary films and ten shorts will be competing in the festival, which will take place in Tehran from February 1 to 11.

"No One Is Waiting for You" by Mohsen Eslamzadeh is a highlight of the documentary competition.

The film is about Sepideh Alizadeh, the director of a center for homeless women in southern Tehran, and her assistant Mona who once was one of the women supported by the center. Now Mona and Sepideh want to track her two children she left 28 years ago, however, they don't have any trace of them.

Another entry to the documentary competition is "That Man Came by Bus" by Nima Mahdian.

Produced at the Documentary and Experimental Film Center, the doc is a study of the 100-year-long history of public transit by bus in Tehran.

Directed by Kamran Jahedi, "My Brother's Gun" is also among the documentaries.

The film is about Nosrat Khodayari, also known as "Sister Basiti", who refused to leave her hometown Gilane Gharb in 1980 when the Iraqi forces invaded the town. She stayed beside all men fighting the invaders until the end of the war in 1988.

The festival also features "Tonight's Homework" by Ashkan Nejati and Mehran Nematollahi.

The directors came to realize that homework is no longer a significant issue for students, parents and teachers, since it has been replaced by greater and more significant challenges, such as social class differences and their effect on students' learning interests, the disregard of parents in relation to their children's education, a lack of planning by the education and development system to promote enthusiasm in students, and many other issues.

Ten movies will be screened in the short competition.

"Deer" directed by Hadi Babaifar is one of the entries.

In quiet, poetic images of snow-covered, rural Iran, the film tells the story of a little boy who has to watch helplessly while his sick brother struggles to remain alive. When his parents take him away to stay with relatives, Ehsan sets off for home again through the snowy night, to defend his brother against the angel of death.

## Hafez's poetic art

Part 4

Whenever the takhallos is a conclusion in which the poet recapitulates the central theme of the poem, he is very often admonishing himself, and occasionally commanding himself to silence (e.g., 300: "Suffer the pain of love and be silent, Hafez").

Being divorced from his beloved, he exhorts himself to sing poems about separation (451: ghazal-ha-ye feraqi), or begs the beloved to return so that he may come to life again.

He also addresses the assembled friends, the cupbearer or the singer (169: "Sing a ghazal from Hafez's poetry"). In one poem he refers to his own grave (230: "When the wind of your presence passes over Hafez's tomb / one hundred thousand tulips bloom from the dust of his body").

The conclusion of a ghazal may also be a declaration of the poet's adherence to "debauchery" (rendi) and to the cult of the "ruins" (kharabat), e.g., 43 (sh'r-e rendana), 322 ("Hafez became renowned for his debauchery"), which sometimes introduces a brief panegyric.

### Language and rhetoric

Hafez is particularly renowned for his refined but quite

natural use of language and his effective application of rhetorical devices. Within this brief survey, this important aspect of his poetry can only be mentioned in passing.

To begin with, he is a learned poet whose familiarity with both Arabic and Persian becomes clear both through his use of tazmin (the insertion of quotations in both languages) and by his own composition of macaronic poems (molamma'at) in which Arabic and Persian verses alternate.

The Arabic insertions include verses from the Quran, pious maxims and proverbs, as well as lines of poetry. Most of these are incidental inserts in Persian poems. However, in some instances, a structural purpose can be discerned, as for example when they open and close a poem, when they are connected with the takhallos, or are part of a panegyric address.

Without the analysis of extensive examples, Hafez's use of rhetorical devices can only be treated briefly. At least one, and usually more, of the standard devices of sound and meaning can be detected in almost every line of his poetry.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica

To be continued

## Martyr Soleimani School and the New Islamic Civilization

سومین کنفرانس بین‌المللی  
مکتب شهید سلیمانی و تمدن نوین اسلامی

المؤتمر الدولي الثالث  
لمدرسة الشهيد سليمان والحضارة الإسلامية الحديثة

### Conference axes

- The role of Martyr Soleimani in building security, justice and peace in the region and the world
- Thought and management in the school of martyr Soleimani
- The new Islamic civilization and Martyr Soleimani
- Martyr Soleimani, the aspersion of Palestine, the fight against terrorism and the discourse of resistance

Timing: Feb 13 and 14, 2022 14:30 (UTC)  
Email: culturalconference@gmail.com

www.rubika.ir/iw\_Peace www.aparat.com/iwpeace/live www.salamnews.ir

web:www.iwpeace.com E-mail: CulturalConference@gmail.com Tel: +98 21 88538248 Fax: +98 21 88538247 +989933004147