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# Iran Rules Out Prospect for Interim Agreement

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## Report

### Yemen massacre sparks global outrage

A series of airstrikes by the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen that left more than 200 casualties has triggered an outpour of global condemnation directed at Riyadh.

The attacks by Saudi warplanes on two locations, in particular, marked another ugly episode in the seven-year war. Footage shows bystanders searched through rubble with their bare hands to rescue those trapped at a temporary holding facility in the city of Saada and a telecommunications center in the port city of Hodeidah.

The airstrike at the holding facility for migrants killed nearly 90 people and Doctors Without Borders initially said the number of injured was "around 200" but added the true number is feared to be much higher.

At the time of writing, Yemen's Ministry of Health put the casualties in Saada at 266, including 87 dead, with the process of exhuming the victims still continuing.

Medics say at least six civilians have been killed and 18 others injured in the attack on Hodeidah.

The United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres condemned the air raids.

Guterres's spokesperson, Stephane Dujarric, said further deadly airstrikes had been reported elsewhere in Yemen with children among those killed.

The Yemeni capital Sanaa has also been the scene of another night of heavy airstrikes across the city.

In a statement, Dujarric denounced the airstrike on telecommunications facilities in Hodeidah saying it "has also significantly disrupted vital internet services across much of the country. The Secretary-General calls for prompt, effective, and transparent investigations into these incidents to ensure accountability." ▶ Page 5

### Iran strongly condemns airstrikes on Yemen, says arms supplier are accomplice

TEHRAN — Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman on Saturday condemned deadly airstrikes on Yemen.

Saeed Khatibzadeh offered condolences to the bereft families and expressed sympathy with them.

The continuation of the coalition's attacks on Yemen amid the silence and indifference of the international community, uncontrolled arms sales to the aggressors coupled with the adoption of a biased approach and double standards at international bodies during the 7-year aggression against the Yemeni people have made it more difficult than ever before to establish a fair peace in the country, Khatibzadeh stated.

The spokesman went on to stress that the countries that supply destructive bombs and weapons to aggressors that kill Yemeni women and children are accomplices in the crimes and must be held accountable before the public opinion and Yemeni people. ▶ Page 2

## Agricultural, foodstuff exports exceed \$3.8b in 9 months

TEHRAN — Iran exported 6.263 million tons of agricultural and foodstuff products worth \$3.878 billion in the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 21, 2021), Deputy Agriculture Minister Mohammad Ghorbani said.

According to Ghorbani, Iranian farmers exported 795,000 tons of watermelon, 617,000 tons of fresh or chilled tomatoes, 598,000 tons of fresh apples, 528,000 tons of fresh or chilled potatoes and 284,000 tons of onions, shallots and garlic in the mentioned period, IRIB reported.

The above-mentioned products were the top exported items during the mentioned nine

months in terms of weight, the official said.

He also noted that in terms of value, pistachio, tomatoes, watermelons, dates, and apples were the top exported items, respectively.

In the mentioned period, over 23.411 million tons of agricultural and foodstuff products were also imported into the country, Ghorbani noted.

The five major imported items in the said time span in terms of weight were livestock corn with 6.893 million tons of imports, wheat with 5.28 million tons, barley with 2.678 million tons, soybean meal with 1.971 million tons and soybean with 1.823 million

tons of imports.

The country's livestock and poultry sectors exported 443,000 tons of products worth \$406 million during the said period, while fishery export stood at 88,000 tons worth \$159 million, export from agricultural sector was \$4.11 million tons worth \$1.409 billion, and orchards exported 1707 million tons of products worth \$1.877 billion.

The total value of Iran's non-oil trade rose 38 percent during the first nine months of the current year as compared to the same period of time in the past year, the head of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) has announced. ▶ Page 4

## Opinion

### Persepolis, Esteghlal in the league of their own

By Morteza Mohases

TEHRAN — Iranian football community was rocked and surprised by the most significant story with the news that Persepolis and Esteghlal. The teams could be even out of the AFC Champions League (ACL) 2022/23.

The competition will not be as exciting as it used to be, as the two Iranian powerhouse football clubs, Persepolis and Esteghlal, will be massively missed.

Football has by far the largest fan base in real life, with around 3.5 billion fans globally. It is complicated to know which sports disciplines have the biggest fan base in Iran, but Persepolis clearly established as the most popular and enjoying the largest number of followers in Iran; it is estimated that more than 70% percent of Iranian people are either Persepolis' fan or Esteghlal's fan, while the two football clubs share the same city, they could not be more opposite. ▶ Page 3

## Iran ranks 11th in intellectual property worldwide

TEHRAN — Iran ranks 11th in the world in the field of intellectual property, according to the World Intellectual Property Indicators 2021 report.

World Intellectual Property Indicators is an annual report published by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), providing a wide range of indicators covering the areas of intellectual property. It draws on data from national and regional IP offices, the WIPO, the World Bank, and UNESCO. The WIPO has published the reports annually since 2009.

## Ten Iranian classics picked for review at Fajr Film Festival

TEHRAN — Ten films from renowned Iranian directors, including Abbas Kiarostami, will be reviewed at the 40th Fajr Film Festival as the organizers announced the lineup for the Classics Preserved section on Saturday.

The festival, which is Iran's most important film event, will take place from February 1 to 11 in Tehran.

"Where Is the Friend's House", Kiarostami's 1987 movie, is one of the classics.

It tells the story of Ahmed, an 8-year-old boy who has mistakenly taken his friend Mohammad's notebook. He wants to return it, or

## Foreign travel agencies to explore East Azarbaijan on fam tour

TEHRAN — The northwestern Iranian province of East Azarbaijan is ready to host tour operators and travel insiders from neighboring counties on familiarization tours, the provincial tourism chief has announced.

Tours like these will promote tourism in the region and introduce the province as a top tourist destination, CHTN quoted Ahmad Hamzazadeh as saying on Saturday.

It will also promote tourist exchanges between Iran and its neighbors, he noted.

Back in December, the official said that a suitable platform can be provided for the development of the tourism industry by having fam tours in the province and taking advantage of the existing capacities in the sector.

Holding fam tours is the best strategy for developing tourism in top countries, the official added.

To accomplish this goal, the province's tourism department is planning to organize fam tours for tourism activists and media members of the neighboring countries early next year, he noted.

Soaked in history and culture for millennia,

Tabriz, which is the capital of East Azarbaijan, embraces several historical and religious sites, including the Jameh Mosque of Tabriz and Arg of Tabriz, and UNESCO-registered Tabriz Historic Bazaar Complex to name a few. The city became the capital of the Mongol Il-Khan Mahmud Gazan (1295-1304) and his successor, Timur (Tamerlane), a Turkic conqueror, took it in 1392. Some decades later the Kara Koyunlu Turkmen made it their capital, it was when the famous Blue Mosque was built in Tabriz.

The city retained its administrative status under the Safavid dynasty until 1548 when Shah Tahmasp I relocated his capital westward to Qazvin. During the next two centuries, Tabriz changed hands several times between Persia and Ottoman Empire. During World War I, the city was temporarily occupied by Turkish and then Soviet troops.

The ancient city was declared a world craft city of carpet weaving by the World Craft in 2016. It also bore the title of 2018 Islamic Tourism Capital. ▶ Page 6



## Iranian, Afghan children celebrate kite festival

TEHRAN — A group of Iranian and Afghan children gathered at the Abbas Abad cultural, tourism area in Tehran on Friday for a kite-flying festival.

The event was held on the occasion of the International Kite Day, an annual observance celebrated on January 14th of each year.

Kites are usually found to be colorful, lightweight, decorated, which creates lift and drag on the air. The existence of kites is found several centuries ago in different parts of the world.

## Expert: Putin's invitation to Raisi shows Iran's geopolitical importance



TEHRAN — An expert on international affairs said on Saturday that the official invitation of Russian President Vladimir Putin to his Iranian counterpart Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi is a sign of Iran's geopolitical position and also as an important and influential country.

Hassan Hanizadeh referred to the visit of Iranian president to Russia at the invitation of President Putin, saying that the visit can be analyzed in the framework of Iran-Russia consultations during the previous years.

Raisi visited Russia on Wednesday and Thursday. He was accompanied by key ministers of foreign affairs, oil and economy.

Hanizadeh also referred to Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian to China on January 13-14, saying, "After Amir Abdollahian's visit to China, in which the implementation of the strategic document of the 25-year Iran-China agreement took effect, naturally, Russia, as the other side of the China Iran and Russia triangle is of great importance in terms of regional cooperation between the three major countries in the region, and this visit proved so."

Emphasizing that the Raisi trip to Moscow has very important consequences and will lead to the formation of a joint economic and political bloc in the region, Hanizadeh said Russia is a security, military, political and economic partner to Iran.

Amir Abdollahian said Raisi's visit to Russia marks a turning point in the policy of good neighborliness and "looking to the East". He also said the principled position of Iran is that the security of the region must be provided by the countries of the region.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran has always emphasized its principled policy of strengthening good neighborliness, building trust and dialogue with its neighbors, and considers lasting security possible only through cooperation, partnership and peace," Fars reported.

According to Al Jazeera, analysts say Tehran's relations with Moscow will be bolstered following Iranian president's visit to Russia, regardless of the fate of the nuclear deal.

Given Iran's geopolitical position outside the U.S sphere of influence, the relationship with Tehran makes sense for Chinese leaders who know they can engage with a willing partner, Scott Harold, an expert on Chinese foreign policy at the RAND

Corporation, told Foreign Policy.

Bradley Bowman and Zane Zovak, writing in Foreign Policy, believe it's a relationship Washington should keep a close eye on.

Russia, which has a veto right at the United Nations Security Council, is a party to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the official name for the 2015 nuclear deal.

Hanizadeh said over the years Russia has played an influential role in the JCPOA and the continuation of the Iran-P4+1 talks in Vienna to revive the nuclear pact.

"This trip can have very positive consequences," the expert asserted.

Iran, China and Russia held a one-day joint naval exercise in the northern part of the Indian Ocean.

According to Hanizadeh, the maneuver can help form a non-offensive set for joint cooperation while protecting the interests of all three countries.

"Mr. Raisi's visit to Russia can have very important consequences for the stability and establishment of the region and the economic prosperity of the three countries of China, Iran and Russia," Hanizadeh emphasized.

He also said, "Russia is facing a dramatic situation in Ukraine and the United States and NATO are trying to bring Ukraine into the NATO alliance, and this will be very dangerous for Russia's national security."

According to the expert, the recent crises in Kazakhstan, and the fact that the United States is provoking some movements in this country, is another security threat to Russia, and all of these issues can increase Russia's level of fragility in face of NATO.

He added that Iran with an important geopolitical position and economic capacity, especially in the energy sector, can form a joint economic, security, political and military bloc with Russia and China.

### China and Russia need Iran

The expert further stressed that considering that Iran has the most focal position in the North-South corridor and is located in the Silk Road belt, it is considered one of the most pivotal countries in the region and the world in terms of geopolitics and geostrategy.

"Iran's political, economic and military capabilities are needed to withstand the threats of arrogant powers. Therefore, before Iran needs Russia and China, these two countries with veto power also need to cooperate with Iran in terms of Iran's position among Islamic countries and can effectively help reduce trans-regional threats against these two countries," the expert concluded.

## MP: Iran neutralizes sanctions regardless of Vienna talks

TEHRAN — A member of the presidium of the parliament said on Saturday that Iran continues to neutralize sanctions regardless of what happens in Vienna.

Negotiations are already underway in Vienna to lift illegal sanctions against Iran by reviving the 2015 nuclear agreement.

"In this period of negotiations, we have more confidence in our country's negotiating team, and we are not worried that the positions and principles of the country, the establishment and the interests of the nation will be reiterated in the negotiations," Hosseinaji Haji Deligani said.

The MP pointed out that the president has repeatedly stated that the parliamentary ratification, under the name of Strategic Act to Lift Sanctions, will help the diplomatic service and that negotiations will be pursued accordingly.

"Of course, the Majlis (parliament) also believes that this law should never be violated, and if negotiations are to continue, the Strategic Act to Lift the Sanctions should be on the agenda of the negotiators," he asserted.

Haji Deligani further said that if Iran is to accept a decision about the percentage of enrichment, the other side must decide today

Also, they should officially and transparently prepare the necessary coordination between the Central Bank of Switzerland and the Central Bank of Iran in order to conduct bank



transactions.

"Some of the dues we have should enter our country through the official channel," he reiterated.

The member of the parliament presiding board said that Iran will never accept credit and "we only consider the agreement of cash for cash as a criterion for action."

The MP stated, "Currently, there is a headquarters to lead the negotiations so that diplomacy is in the service of the battlefield and the battlefield is in the service of diplomacy, and these two issues will move together."

He added that there is also another headquarters to neutralize the sanctions, which happens to be more active than before.

"If the Westerners do not want to comply with our demands, we have planned accordingly so that we do not need to beg them," he concluded.

# Hopes rise for a new chapter in Iran-Turkey ties: Atlantic Council

TEHRAN - In a commentary on January 20, the Atlantic Council said hopes have been raised for a new chapter in relations between Iran and Turkey as Ebrahim Raisi has ascended to power whose administration favors "neighbors first" policy.

The commentary says the policy that President Raisi's administration is following is to reduce tensions between Iran and its most immediate neighboring countries, such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The text of the article, which does not necessarily represent the view of the Tehran Times, is as follows:

The relations between Iran and Turkey have been characterized by recurrent patterns of amity and enmity in the past two decades. Despite divergent foreign policy priorities and conflicting interests, the two regional powers have managed to compartmentalize their relations by handling geopolitical and economic issues in isolation from each other. With Ebrahim Raisi holding power in Iran, this compartmentalization strategy is expected to continue to determine the future direction of bilateral ties.

On November 15, 2021, Turkey's Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu met Raisi and his Iranian counterpart, Hossein Amir Abdollahian, in Tehran, where they deliberated over economic relations, concerns over their shared border, and ongoing developments in the region. In a joint press conference with Amir Abdollahian, the Turkish foreign minister talked about the two countries' willingness to work on "a roadmap for a long-term comprehensive cooperation upon Iran's proposal."

Two weeks later, on November 29, 2021, the presidents of Iran and Turkey met for the first time on the sidelines of the 15th Economic Cooperation Organization summit held in Turkmenistan. During the meeting, the two countries signed a memorandum on a comprehensive improvement of bilateral relations and agreed to convene the seventh meeting of the High Level Cooperation Council during Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's next visit to Tehran.

With the ascendancy of Raisi in Iran, it has raised hopes that a new chapter in ties between Iran and Turkey may be opened. This follows the new president's "Neighbors First" policy, which is aimed at reducing tensions between Iran and its most immediate neighboring countries, such as Saudi

Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Meanwhile, President Erdogan is also seen as engaging in a reset as part of his regional "charm offensive" with Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.

While it appears that Iran and Turkey are reconciling their differences and developing strong bonds, the realities determining the future direction and dynamics of bilateral relations are far more complex.

### Turkish-Iranian ties over the years

Broadly speaking, relations between Iran and Turkey over the past two decades can be divided into four main phases. In the first phase (2001-2010), Tehran and Ankara's friendship grew stronger as a number of developments—such as the U.S. war in Afghanistan, Turkey's mediatory role in Iran's nuclear file, and the 2010 Mavi Marmara aid flotilla incident—provided the impetus for the duo to align together conspicuously. In the second phase (2011-2015), the patterns of amicable bilateral relations were replaced by a period of intense geopolitical rivalry, mostly due to the 2011 Arab uprisings and the ensuing Syrian civil war. In the third phase (2016-2017), relations showed signs of improvement as a result of Iran's opposition to the 2016 failed coup attempt in Turkey, the mutual condemnation of the Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government's passage of a controversial independence referendum in 2017, and the formation of the Astana Peace Process on Syria. In the fourth phase (2018-present), the relations between the two countries have vacillated between cooperation and conflict, mainly because of the tensions over Syria, Iraq, and the South Caucasus.

Syria remains a bone of contention as the fate of northwestern Idlib province is uncertain. Turkey's military offensives in the last major rebel stronghold of Idlib since October 2017 have reinforced the patterns of competition between Iran and Turkey. Iran-backed militias clashed with Ankara-backed forces in late February and March 2020 in Idlib province. Although the situation in Syria has evolved into a "frozen conflict," the unstable equilibrium in Idlib has turned the province into a tinderbox.

In addition, northern Iraq—particularly the disputed Sinjar district—remains a focus of immense geopolitical rivalry between external actors, most notably between Iran and Turkey. In Sinjar, Iran is using its Shia proxies to entrench their military presence, whereas Turkey seeks to

get the Kurdistan Workers' Party—recognized as a terrorist organization by the U.S., European Union, and Turkey—and Iran-backed militias out of the disputed district.

In the South Caucasus, where the status quo was changed in favor of Turkey and Azerbaijan due to the second Karabakh War in 2020, both Iran and Turkey are seen competing for a greater economic and geopolitical footprint. As a direct consequence of the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia in 2020, Iran has increasingly-limited room for geopolitical maneuvering north of its border, while Turkey has gained a land corridor that connects Azerbaijan with Nakhchivan to the detriment of Iran's regional interests.

Despite the volatile situation in the three zones of conflict cited above, the compartmentalization strategy still remains relevant. In other words, the current state of affairs between Tehran and Ankara can be characterized as a form of conflictual cooperation, with economic issues and geopolitical rivalries acting as a guiding principle that prevents the negative spillover of certain disagreements into areas of bilateral cooperation.

In the realm of economic ties between Iran and Turkey, although the trade volume is far behind the targeted goal of \$30 billion—standing at a meager \$3.4 billion in 2020—the fact remains that a compartmentalization strategy has helped the two countries to develop a transactional relationship guided not by a durable strategic partnership, but by short-term pragmatism and realpolitik.

Having said this, while compartmentalization is likely to regulate bilateral ties between Iran and Turkey for at least the foreseeable future, the durability and success of this strategy have yet to withstand the test of time. Put differently, just because Iran and Turkey have managed to act based on the principle of compartmentalization in bilateral ties, this doesn't necessarily mean that the list of disagreements over regional spoils will be a short one.

### The compartmentalization strategy

Whether the compartmentalization strategy succeeds will also depend on the outcome of the détente between Iran-Turkey and the United Arab Emirates-Saudi Arabia, respectively. Four rounds of talks have been held in Baghdad since April 2021 to defuse tensions that first sparked in January 2016, when Iranian protesters attacked



Saudi Arabia's diplomatic missions in Tehran and Mashhad following the execution of a Saudi Shia cleric. In the latest sign of rapprochement between Turkey and the UAE, Erdogan and Emirati Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed met in Ankara on November 29, 2021 and signed several cooperation and investments deals. Similarly, in a further sign of de-escalation of tensions between Tehran and Abu Dhabi, Tahnoun bin Zayed, the UAE's national security advisor, met with high-ranking Iranian officials in Tehran in early December 2021.

The conciliatory gestures between Iran-Turkey and the UAE-Saudi Arabia mean that the region appears to be witnessing a vertical rapprochement, as Tehran's and Ankara's reset with the Arab states on the southern shores of the Persian Gulf help "depressurize" the Middle East (West Asia), particularly the Persian Gulf region. Nevertheless, that is not to say that tensions in the Middle East (West Asia) have subsided.

The salience of this argument is that just as both Iran and Turkey seek to bury the hatchet with their Arab neighbors, it is likely that their regional rivalries heat up anew. This is simply because the potential depressurizing effects of a Tehran-Riyadh détente may result in further aggravation of geopolitical competition between Tehran and Ankara somewhere else in the region.

However, it remains to be seen whether talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia will lead to the aforementioned direction. Nevertheless, the outcome of Iran's and Turkey's negotiations with the UAE and Saudi Arabia will have important implications on their bilateral ties.

Another significant factor that adds an additional layer of complexity to Turkey-Iran relations is the Joe Biden administration's decision to decrease the United States' military footprint in the region. Given that the U.S. has reverted back to the policy of "offshore-balancing" and the Middle East (West Asia) and North Africa is absent a power with order-making capabilities, the likelihood of Turkey and Iran further penetrating zones of conflicts will increase.

While Iran and Turkey may have too many geopolitical differences, both are expected to maintain their compartmentalization strategy so that divergences of interests at the regional level do not irreparably harm the core of bilateral relations.

## Raisi, Putin discussed nuclear cooperation: AEOI

TEHRAN — The spokesman for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) has commented on the recent meeting between Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in Moscow, saying nuclear cooperation was "one of the most strategic issues" on the negotiating table.

"The subject of nuclear industry may be separated into two sections: energy-related and non-energy-related enterprises," Kamalvandi said in an interview with Press TV.

"The relationship between the two countries is excellent in both spheres. We get our radioisotopes from... numerous sorts of radioisotopes that are

employed in medicine, business, agriculture, and other fields," he noted.

He added that the collaborative effort to build further units at the Bushehr nuclear plant was in keeping with Iran's goal of generating at least 10,000 megawatts of electricity from nuclear power.

Despite delayed payments to the Russians, the procedure was moving ahead, he said.

"As you are aware, Iran is working on a plan to increase nuclear power capacity to at least 10,000 megawatts... The Russians can make a significant contribution to this effort. The two presidents have

discussed it, and we intend to trade delegations in the near future to begin implementing the new projects," Kamalvandi stated.

"A power plant with a capacity of 1,000 megawatts is operational, as you are aware. The technology has been passed on to Iranian specialists. Engineers from Iran are in charge of it. We are currently building two more units, each with a capacity of 1,000 megawatts."

Despite payment troubles between Iran and Russia, Kamalvandi stated that work at the Bushehr power facility "is continuing".

He added, "It's not going to stop."

## Iran strongly condemns airstrikes on Yemen, says arms supplier are accomplice

From page 1 ▶ Khatibzadeh added the continued siege and bombing of Yemen show lack of serious will to push for a political settlement of the Yemen crisis.

It is also indicative of insistence on the destructive military approach which will have no outcome but the devastation of the great country of Yemen and the destabilization of the wider region, he regretted.

At least 70 people were killed and dozens of others wounded in an air raid on a prison in northern city of Saada on Friday morning.



Footage released by Ansarallah on Friday showed rescue workers were pulling bodies out of the rubble.

Taha al-Motawakel, the health minister in the Yemeni National Salvation Government, which controls

the country's north, told The Associated Press that 70 detainees were killed at the prison. He said the death toll was expected to rise since many of the wounded were seriously hurt.

A Doctors without Borders (MSF) spokesperson told the AFP news agency at least 70 people were killed and 138 others were wounded in the attack.

The figures came from one hospital in Saada, the spokesperson said, adding, "Two others in the city have received many wounded as well and the rubble is still being searched."

# Iran rules out prospect for interim agreement

TEHRAN – Iran has once again ruled out any prospect of hammering out an interim agreement with the United States in Vienna, underlining that such a deal would stop short of securing its interests.

Despite progress made in talks in Vienna, speculations about an interim agreement being under discussion have come to the surface again. On Saturday, NBC News reported that Russia proposed to Iran an interim agreement with U.S. knowledge that would see Iran scaling back some of its nuclear activities in exchange for getting limited sanctions relief.

According to NBC News, the proposed agreement stipulates that Iran stops enriching uranium up to 60 percent and puts restrictions on enrichment at 20 percent and its advanced centrifuges. In exchange, Iran would receive some \$10 billion in sanctions relief from unfrozen assets in South Korea, Japan and Iraq. The agreement had a six-month duration, with the option to extend after it expired, NBC News claimed.

Iran rejected the proposal outright. "Iran seeks a reliable but also durable agreement that is consistent with the promises made in the JCPOA, and any agreement that does not meet these



two criteria is not on the agenda for us," NBC News quoted Iran's mission to the United Nations as saying in a statement on Friday.

Also, Fars News rejected the alleged interim agreement. Citing a source close to the Vienna talks, Fars News said, "At present, there is no question of an interim agreement in the Vienna talks, and the Iranian delegation is focused on reaching a lasting and definitive agreement."

This is not the first time the interim agreement is being touted by Western and non-Western media outlets. Last year in November, Axios claimed that National security adviser Jake Sullivan raised with his Israeli counterpart the idea of an interim agreement with Iran to

buy more time for nuclear negotiations.

Two weeks ago, the London-based Rai Al-Youm online newspaper floated a similar allegation, saying an interim agreement was reached in Vienna that would last for two years. A source familiar with the talks rejected this allegation in remarks to Fars News at the time.

Right from the start, Iran said it will not accept any interim deal and that the only option on the table is reviving the 2015 nuclear deal, formally called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The main reason for Iran to reject the idea of an interim deal seems to be a deep-rooted Iranian distrust of the U.S. honoring its commitments. "The

interim deal is a code name designed by the Biden administration to evade fulfillment of JCPOA commitments while at the same time notching up a dramatic achievement within the framework of Democrats' slogans in the 2020 presidential election," wrote Nour News, a website close to Iran's Supreme National Security Council, in reaction to the NBC News report.

If true, the interim deal would be the latest effort on the part of the Biden administration to delay discussing such thorny issues as guarantees and verification measures that are now stymieing the talks.

Iran's rejection of the Russian-brokered interim agreement has been portrayed as representing a schism between Tehran and Moscow. But some observers believe it should by no means be seen as such. Analysts believe that the rejection of the deal should be put in the broader context of the U.S. unwillingness to fully return to the original deal and that the rejection of the provisional deal has nothing to do with interactions between Iran and Russia. The interim agreement has been floated after the U.S. refused to show flexibility in terms of fully returning to the JCPOA in the first place.

## UN Holocaust resolution is Zionist abuse of international mechanisms: Iran

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Ministry on Friday reacted to a resolution on the Holocaust by the United Nations General Assembly, saying the resolution has nothing to do with Iran.

Iran's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that the resolution issued on the Holocaust at the United Nations General Assembly and its articles are unrelated to the Islamic Republic, calling it an abuse of international mechanisms by the Zionist regime to cover up its crimes, and declared it completely null.

"As our country's Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York has in an explanatory statement officially proclaimed the Islamic Republic of Iran's stance on the Holocaust resolution, it is reiterated that the racist Zionist regime abuses international bodies to cover up its daily crimes against Palestinians. This move by the Zionist regime is another attempt at abusing international mechanisms to cover up the regime's daily crimes, which unfortunately have the unconditional support of the West these days," the statement said.

It added, "As is clear to all, the atrocities during the Second World War took place with the two motives of racism and expansionism, two satanic traits inherited and represented now by the Zionist regime. The regime's racist approach has been affirmed in numerous international documents, and in spite of the solid will of the international community, Israel remains the sole racist regime with an expansionist ideology."

According to the statement, Iran has considered genocide an act to be condemned and unjustifiable under any circumstances, and that is the reason why, during the Second World War, Iran hosted people displaced by the conflict in some European countries. "This is while the faux Zionist regime has constantly attempted to exploit victims of the World War II and Jews as justification for its egregious and aggressive acts," the statement continued.

It noted, "This regime and its leaders have over the past seven decades committed all acts of criminality and especially crimes against humanity against the people of Palestine and the peoples of regional countries by violating international law. Genocide, assassinations, ethnic cleansing, the demolition of houses, and siege are some of the crimes that the Zionist regime is constantly in the process of committing."

The statement concluded, "The Islamic Republic of Iran once again stresses that historical research is needed to avoid the repetition of historical catastrophes, which should be conducted

without political prejudgments; and thus, such constrictive approaches are not acceptable, and such a resolution is not deemed based on consensus, and is thus null."

Iran's Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York issued a statement on Thursday to explain the Islamic Republic of Iran's stance toward the Holocaust. The Mission's statement said, "We strongly reject the deceitful attempt by the Israeli regime, the main sponsor of draft resolution L.30, to misuse the concepts affiliated to agenda item 16, entitled the 'Culture of Peace.'"

It noted, "The fires of the Second World War, which brought untold sorrow to humankind, were spread on two main drivers: 'racism' and 'expansionism'. These sinister intentions have still continued in felon minds. Most notably, the Israeli regime is the symbol of both of those dreadful motives and has applied them in its policies and practices in well over seven decades and continue to do so now. The United Nations General Assembly Resolution 34/103 adopted 14 December 1979, 'resolutely condemns imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, apartheid, racism including Zionism'. Also, in its resolution 3151 (XXVIII) of 14 December 1973, the Assembly condemned, inter alia, the unholy alliance between the [former] South African racism and Zionism. Furthermore, the Political Declaration and Strategy to Strengthen International Peace and Security and to Intensify Solidarity and Mutual Assistance among Non-Aligned Countries adopted on 30 August 1975, has severely condemned Zionism as a threat to world peace and security and called upon all countries to oppose this racist and imperialist ideology. Declaration of Mexico on the Equality of Women endorsed by the World Conference of the International Women's Year, in 1975, has also called for 'the elimination of colonialism and neo-colonialism, foreign occupation, Zionism, apartheid and racial discrimination in all its forms'."

The statement continued, "Despite these outstanding calls by the international community, the Israeli regime has remained as the only apartheid regime in the world, with racist and expansionist ideology, policies and practices. This draft does nothing to promote the culture of peace. Indeed, the main driver of the Israeli regime in presenting this draft resolution is the same racist beliefs as well as its mischievous intentions to pursue its expansionist interests through all means. That regime has routinely attempted to exploit the sufferings of the Jewish people in the past as a cover for the crimes it has perpetrated over the past seven decades against the regional countries, including all its neighbors without

exception. So far, it has committed all four core international crimes, and in certain occasions, it has committed them simultaneously. Its brutal crimes against the Palestinians, include massacre, assassination, ethnic cleansing, collective punishment, inhumane blockade, demolition of houses, and forced eviction."

The statement said, "During World War II, my country hosted many refugees from certain European countries. My government has continuously condemned genocide including on racial, ethnic or religious grounds, as a crime against humanity. In our view, there is no justification for the genocide of any kind and under any circumstances. Nor can be any justification for any policy or practice, like those undertaken by the Israeli regime, to exploit past crimes as a pretext to commit or justify new genocides or crimes. The occupation of Palestine and parts of Syria and Lebanon as well as the continued gave systematic violation of the human rights of the Palestinians, including their inherent right to self-determination and to establish their independent State with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital constitute a crime against humanity and cannot be justified whatsoever. Rather, such crimes entail international responsibility of the Israeli regime, and all its officials and the perpetrators of such crimes must be held accountable and brought to justice. The international community should take strong action against the atrocious crimes of that regime and not allow this opportunistic regime to pursue its illegitimate goals through manipulating humanitarian sentiments."

It concluded, "Moreover, this text exerts an awkward approach towards historical studies. Many heinous cases of genocide that have occurred throughout history, including those perpetrated during the Second World War, necessitate a thorough and comprehensive consideration in order to eliminate any possibility of future repetition. Imposing an obstructive approach on such an examination will certainly not serve this purpose. Undoubtedly, addressing such historical events requires a proportionate degree of research, scrutiny, and rigor. The seriousness and sincerity of that endeavor will indeed be undermined by rendering political judgments on such events and interdicting any inquiry on their characteristics, scope, and extent. For the reasons elaborated above, my delegation fully dissociates itself from the draft resolution L.30 in its entirety including definitions therein; and would like to remind that this text shall not be considered or quoted as a consensus-based text in the future."

## Raisi voices hope trip to Russia be turning point in relations

TEHRAN – Iranian President Ayatollah Seyed Ebrahim Raisi has expressed hope that his recent visit to Russia would be a turning point in improving relations between Tehran and Moscow.

Upon returning from a two-day visit to Russia, Ayatollah Raisi spoke to reporters about the achievements of the visit, saying, "The topics of discussion

in this visit were in line with the realization of the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy, which is maximum interaction with world countries, especially allies."

Noting that a fundamental agreement was reached during the visit to expand comprehensive, stable and beneficial relations between the two countries, the president added, "Undoubtedly,

the development of relations with Russia will contribute to the security and welfare of the two nations."

He said, "I hope that the visit to Russia will be a turning point in improving relations with the friendly and neighboring country of Russia, and that the combination of these relations will help improve the level of security

in the region and resolve regional and global crises," according to the official website of the Iranian presidency.

Raisi further stated that the Islamic Republic of Iran has very good capacities in the field of transit and transportation, saying, "During this trip, it was agreed to activate the North-South corridor."

## SPORTS

### Persepolis, Esteghlal in the league of their own

From Page 1 ▶ The Reds made it into the final of the AFC Champions League twice, 2018 and 2020, Esteghlal by contrast, won the AFC competition twice in the previous format.

Esteghlal also were runners-up in 1998-99, AFC Club Championship in Tehran.

With the upcoming national team encounters against Iraq and the UAE, knowing the importance of solid domestic clubs will lead to national team's success.

The correlation between two clubs Esteghlal and Persepolis can strengthen Iran National Team.

### Iranian women footballers win hearts

By Kat Khosrowyar

TEHRAN – Just two days ago Iran did the unthinkable. They tied a team that had a near perfect schedule of friendly games leading up to the tournament, constant flow of investment, and immense support.

That is exactly what a host nation should have since all of Asia's top teams will be traveling to compete at the highest level.

The Iran and India game showed passion, determination, and defending abilities that were last seen during the men's Iran against Morocco in the 2018 World Cup in Russia. They are a team to beat at the moment. It has been a wild road for the female footballers, but they are winning hearts and gaining momentum in this tournament.

The India and Iran game had some of the most beautiful scenes ever witnessed by spectators. If you have not seen Zohre Koudai's save by now, you will have it on repeat, because it was the most perfect and timely save for the team. In Farsi you can call her save as "chak zad be toop".

Then there is youngster Ghazale Banitalebi, who only started playing football a few years ago, made a tackle in the penalty box so smooth, that it is considered world class.

Midfield line also had some daring moves like when Sana Sadeghi had to think quick given the speed of India's counterattack. She made the timeliest tackle and was even yellow carded but saved the team from a critical situation.

Next game against China will be tough, especially as China have decades of experience playing in the Olympics, World Cup, and a constant team playing at the Asian Championships. The female players and the brilliant staff are ready to take on the Asian giants.

The key to success for this game and for this tournament are having confidence, keeping composure and more importantly take advantage of the opportunities.

The coaching staff have been working around the clock to make sure the best game plan is set and that the players understand their role on the field. It will be a difficult game, but Iran shine under pressure, and I am sure the team are ready to play against China.

Good luck Team Melli!

"There's no substitute for hard work. If you work hard and prepare yourself, you might get beat, but you'll never lose." – Nancy Lieberman

### IPL: Persepolis beat Foolad, Sepahan beaten by Mes

TEHRAN – Persepolis football team edged past Foolad 1-0 courtesy of Mehdi Abdi's first-half goal on Matchday 16 of Iran Professional League (IPL).

Abdi found the back of Foolad's net four minutes into the second half after receiving a good pass from Mehdi Torabi.

Two teams created several goalscoring opportunities but their strikers failed to capitalize on their chances.

Persepolis went top with 35 points but sit behind leaders Esteghlal due to inferior goal difference.

Elsewhere, Mes came back from a goal down to beat Sepahan 3-1 in Kerman.

Shahriar Moghanlou gave the visiting team into the lead just one minute into the match but Godwin Mensha levelled the score in the 19th minute. The Nigerian forward made a brace in the 36th minute from the penalty spot. With eight minutes remaining, Mohsen Azarbad scored Mes's third goal.

### Majid Honarjoo elected as head of Iran's skating federatio

TEHRAN – Majid Honarjoo was elected as president of the Islamic Republic of Iran Skating Federation (IRISF) on Saturday for a four-year term till 2026.

In the elections held at the Iran's Academy Olympic in Tehran, Honarjoo secured 30 of 55 votes cast.

Reza Shajie finished in second with 25 votes.

IRISF is the governing body of ice hockey, inline hockey and roller sports in Iran.

### Iran edge Iraq at 2022 Asian Handball Championship

TEHRAN – Iran earned a narrow 28-25 win over Iraq in Group II of the 2022 Asian Handball Championship on Saturday.

It was Iran's fourth win in the competition. The Persians had defeated Australia, India and Saudi Arabia in the preliminary stage.

Iran are scheduled to play Kuwait and Bahrain on Monday and Wednesday, respectively.

All the matches take place at the Ministry of Sports Hall in Dammam, Saudi Arabia.

The top five teams from the Championship will directly qualify for the 2023 World Men's Handball Championship, to be held jointly by Poland and Sweden.

Saudi Arabia was awarded the tournament after the Championship was moved in September by the Asian Handball Federation due to the spread of COVID-19 in the initial host country, Iran.

### Iran ready for China match: Behnaz Taherkhani

TEHRAN – Captain of Iran's women's football team Behnaz Taherkhani says that her team is ready to face powerhouse China in the AFC Women's Asian Cup India 2022.

Iran will play the tournament's most successful team on Sunday in Group A in Navi Mumbai.

Iran stole the show in their opening match, holding host India to a goalless draw.

"It was a great experience for us," said the defender. "It was obvious that India had a lot of training camps and friendly matches, which we didn't have, but we gave all of our efforts towards getting three points.

"We all know that China are one of the strongest teams in Asia. Eight times they have won this tournament, but we are prepared for this game, and we'll do everything we can to get the best result," she added.

## Agricultural, foodstuff exports exceed \$3.8b in 9 months



From page 1 ► Alireza Moghadasi said that Iran has traded over 122.5 million tons of non-oil products worth \$72.1 billion with other countries in the mentioned period.

According to Moghadasi, the weight of trade in the mentioned period also grew by 11 percent in comparison to the figure for the previous fiscal year.

The official put the nine-month non-oil exports at 92.3 million tons valued at \$35.1 billion, with a 40-percent rise in value and eight percent growth in weight.

## Inflation rate down 1%

TEHRAN - The Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) has put the average inflation rate in the twelve-month period ended on January 20, which marks the end of the tenth Iranian calendar month Dey, at 42.4 percent, falling one percent from the figure for the twelve-month ended to the ninth month.

SCI has put the country's point-to-point inflation rate at 35.9 percent in the tenth month of this year, which means families have paid an average of 35.9 percent more for purchasing the same package of commodities and services in that month, compared to the same month in the previous year.

The point-to-point inflation rate has risen 0.7 percent in comparison to the figure for the preceding month.

The point-to-point inflation rate for urban households was reported to be 35.8 percent, which is 0.8 percent more than the figure for the previous month. The figure was 36.5 percent for the rural households, with 0.3 percent rise from the figure for the previous month.

The Statistical Center of Iran had put the inflation rate in the twelve-month period ended on March 20, 2021 (the end of the previous Iranian calendar year) at 36.4 percent, rising 2.2 percent from the figure for the twelve-month period ended on the last day of the preceding year.



In late November 2021, the head of Iran's Budget and Planning and Budget Organization (PBO) had said, "Considering the recent data provided by the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) the inflation is expected to be curbed in the next Iranian calendar year (begins in March 2022)."

"No Money creation has taken place in the last three months, and a recent report by the Statistics Center of Iran shows that inflation is declining, these are indications that the inflation could be curbed by the next year," Masoud Mir-Kazemi said at the time.

Referring to the current economic problems, the PBO head stated: "The problem of people today is livelihood, business situation, household income, and inflation, and solving problems in these areas is one of the tasks of the Planning and Budget Organization. Over the three-month, since the 13th government took office, PBO's priority has been economic stability to restore confidence in the economy."

# NDF deposits new resources into capital market stabilization fund

TEHRAN - Head of Iran's Capital Market Development and Stabilization Fund Amir-Mahdi Sabaei said on Friday that part of the allocations by the National Development Fund (NDF) has been deposited into the stabilization fund to support the stock market.

Sabaei had previously announced the allocation of 120 trillion rials (about \$430 million) of NDF resources for the Capital Market Development and Stabilization Fund, IRNA reported.

The official said the rest of the funding will also be paid based on a mutually agreed schedule, adding: "We hope that the rest of the deposits, like the deposits made yesterday, will be made regularly according to the agreed schedule."

Sabaei noted that in addition to the resources received from the NDF, the fund can also be financed through



the money and capital markets.

The allocation of financial resources from NDF to the Capital Market Stabilization Fund is one of the measures that the government has been taking since the stock market started a downward trend.

Following the 13th government's new strategies to improve the stock market, the Government Economic

Coordination Headquarters convened a meeting on November 2, 2021, chaired by President Ebrahim Raisi, during which a decision was made to inject new resources from NDF into the Capital Market Development and Stabilization Fund.

Based on the statute of Capital Market Development and Stabilization Fund, the resources

of this fund can be provided from three main sources, the first is the government investment which should be foreseen in the national budget bill, the second is the allocation of one percent of the NDF resources for this fund, and the third source would be the allocation of a part of the trades commission received by the Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO).

According to Sabaei, currently, 30 percent of the SEO commissions are deposited directly to the account of this fund on a daily basis.

The Capital Market Development and Stabilization Fund's mission is to support the Iranian stock market. The money loaned from NDF should be repaid over a specified period and the maturity can be extended. The Capital Market Stabilization Fund is responsible for paying the principal amount plus interest.

## Passenger transport via railway up 110% in 9 months on year

TEHRAN - The number of passengers carried on Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (known as RAI) in the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 21, 2021) increased by 110 percent on year, the nine-month report released by Transport and Urban Development Ministry shows.

The report said that 14.7 million passengers were transported by rail across Iran during the nine-month period of this year, while the figure was seven million in the same time span of the past year.

Meanwhile, transit of goods through Iran's railway network has risen over 200 percent during the first nine months of this year, to register the highest year-on-year increase over the past 10 years.

Based on the data released by Transport and Urban Development Ministry, over 1.39 million tons of commodities were transited via the 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 the 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.

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.

## Natural gas consumption hits new record high

TEHRAN - Following the significant temperature drop over the past few days, the consumption of natural gas by Iranian domestic and commercial sectors reached 662 million cubic meters (mcm) to register a new record high in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20), an official with the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) announced.

According to Head of NIGC Dispatching Department Mohammadreza Jolaei, although domestic sector's current gas consumption has decreased to 640 mcm, the figure is still significantly higher than the previous year, IRIB reported.

"Currently, 80 percent of the natural gas produced in the country is consumed by the domestic and commercial sectors, and therefore, for the stability of the gas network, consumption must be managed and reduced in these sectors," he



stressed.

Jolaei stated that due to the continuous cold weather in the coming days, natural gas consumption by the domestic and commercial sectors is expected to increase further by 10 percent, adding that if people do not manage their consumption, gas supply to some regions will be disrupted and NIGC would be forced to limit the supply to the industrial sector.

"Of course, to date, despite

the increase in gas consumption, none of the provinces in the country have faced gas shortages," he said.

Back in November 2021, Iranian Gas Transmission Company (IGTC)'s Managing Director Mehdi Jamshidi Dana had said his company was completely prepared for sustainable gas supply throughout the country during winter.

He said major overhaul operations have been carried out

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

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

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

## Commodities worth over \$486m traded at IME in a week

TEHRAN- During the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday), 1.725 million tons of commodities worth 141 trillion rials (about \$486.2 million) were traded at Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME).

The exchange experienced trade of 1.353 million tons of commodities valued at more than 85.025 trillion rials (about \$293.18 million) on its metals and mineral trading floor.

Furthermore, the IME saw on both domestic and export pits of its oil and petrochemical trading floor 354.836 tons of commodities worth nearly 53 trillion rials (about \$182.7 million).

Last but not least was the IME's side

market with 16,713 tons of commodities traded on it.

The value of trades at Iran Mercantile Exchange in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20, 2021) rose 108 percent compared to the preceding year.

During the past year, about 3.5 quadrillion rials (about \$83.5 billion) worth of commodities were traded at the mentioned market.

In the past year, several new records were achieved in terms of the volume and value of transactions in the mentioned market's various floors including the industrial, petroleum, and petrochemical floors.

IME is one of the four major stock



markets of Iran, the other three markets are Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market known also as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), and Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX).

## Tehran's private sector discuss issues with govt. representatives

TEHRAN - The 83rd meeting of the dialogue council of the government and the Tehran Province's private sector was held on Saturday, in which the representatives of some companies raised issues facing their businesses, the portal of Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) reported.

The meeting was attended by Governor-General of Tehran Province Mohsen Mansouri and TCCIMA Head Masoud Khansari, as well as the representatives of the province's private sector.

During the gathering, the government and private sector representatives analyzed the raised issues and came up with some solutions to resolve them.

Furthermore, Mansouri made some phone calls to related government organizations including the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry, in order to solve some of the problems mentioned by the private sector representatives immediately.

Also, Deputy Chief of Tehran Province Justice Department Masoud Setayeshi proposed some legal solutions to the problems raised by business owners.

Some problems regarding the issuance of industrial operation licenses, re-injection of export revenues, registering requests at the Comprehensive Trade System, and high electricity tariffs for industrial units were among the issues discussed at the meeting.

Back in December 2021, the 82nd meeting of the dialogue council of the government and the Tehran Province's private sector was held, in which the attendees had discussed issues related to the province's agricultural sector.

During the December gathering, the government and private sector representatives had analyzed the province's agricultural sector and called for reforming the water consumption in agriculture as well as focusing on services and exports of agricultural products in the province as priorities for this sector.

Speaking in this meeting, Khansari had also mentioned the national budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year (starts on March 21, 2022) and noted that some decisions made in the budget bill like reducing the government costs and eliminating the allocation of subsidized foreign currency are expected to have positive impacts in the country's economy if approved by the parliament.

## TEDPIX gains 2,000 points on Saturday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose 2,410 points to 1.281 million on Saturday.

Over 4.411 billion securities worth 35.245 trillion rials (about \$121.53 million) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index gained 4,080 points, and the second market's index rose 2,344 points.

TEDPIX lost 55,000 points (4.3 percent) to 1.279 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, Isfahan Oil Refinery, Tehran Oil Refining Company, Iran Khodro Company, Saipa Company, and National Iranian Copper Company were the most widely followed ones.

The government has applied several new changes in the national budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year (begins on March 21, 2022) which according to experts and analysts will ensure the stock market's stability and growth in the coming years, IRNA reported.

# China can fill much of the gap left by Western companies in Iran: professor

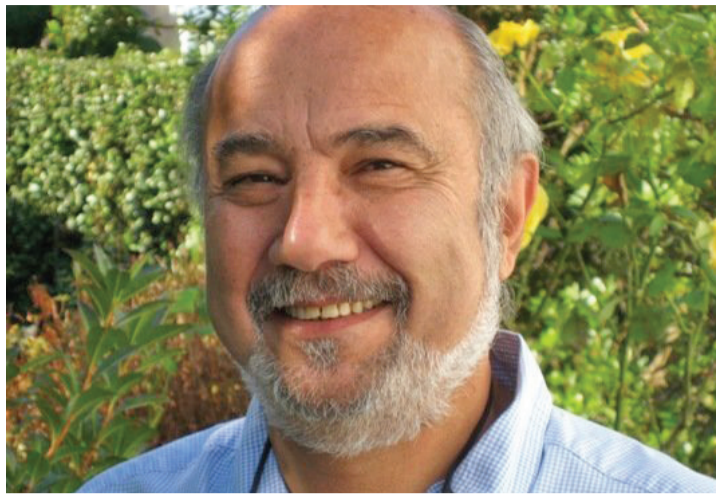
From page 1 ▶ That China can play a pivotal role in Vienna by supporting the U.S. position or frustrating it, as well as expand its own interests around the world. That China is not just a regional power but is now a global power with global interests and presence. It is telling the U.S. that if it messes around with Taiwan and Hong Kong, China can also mess with the U.S. around the world.

In the process, China is making it harder for the U.S. to pivot to the China Sea. Taiwan and Hong Kong matter more than the Persian Gulf to China. But it can use the Persian Gulf to both strengthen its position in Asia as well as develop deeper interests in the Persian Gulf. America cannot keep all the forces that it has in the Persian Gulf and be a threat to China in its backyard. It is putting pressure on the U.S. to moderate its pivot to Asia. All this at a time when the U.S. is facing threats from Russia.

**What is the main impact of the 25-year Iran-China partnership on Iran's economy? Can China fill the gap left by Western companies in Iran?**

The Partnership Agreement is a piece of paper. What matters are the details of the agreement and even more important the intentions of the two parties. Is China using Iran or does it see Iran as a long-term strategic partner that would be helpful in its struggle with the U.S.? Yes, China can help Iran and fill much of the gap left by Western companies but they invariably involve standing up to the U.S. and busting U.S. sanctions if the Vienna meetings do not lift most sanctions on Iran.

What Iran needs most from



China is capital, direct investment and access to Chinese banks to get around the restrictions imposed by U.S. sanctions that have restricted access of Iranian banks to receive and transfer funds through SWIFT. China has capital, technology and companies that could partner in Iran. But for China it would mean in turn becoming subject of U.S. sanctions—through secondary sanctions—unless there is a favorable outcome of the Vienna talks.

I believe that it is in China's interest to counter U.S. sanctions now and to take away this U.S. power if China wants to be a true global power. There would

be short-run costs for China but much long-term benefit if it takes on the U.S. now.

But I must add something. Iran can only truly benefit from any sanction relief and/or cooperation with China if it adopts tough economic reforms and puts its own economic house in order. I have been saying this for over thirty years but to no avail.

**Some critics blame**

**Biden's administration for a delay in restarting nuclear talks that pushed Iran into the arms of China. Do you think this claim is realistic given the hostility between Iran and the U.S.?**

I don't think so. The only reason why Biden might have done

this is that he thought economic conditions in Iran would deteriorate and make Iran more willing to compromise. On the other hand, with the passage of time, Iran could make more advances on its nuclear program. So on balance, I think Biden would like to get an agreement soon. But he also knows that if he accommodates Iran, he will get criticized in the U.S.

**How can China strike a balance between its ties with Iran and the Persian Gulf Arab states?**

It will be tough. China is trying to play both sides. An agreement with Iran and more missile technology to Saudi Arabia to keep a balance. Recall that China secretly sold Saudi Arabia missiles that could deliver nuclear warheads about thirty years ago. So this is not totally new, it helps Saudi Arabia with technology and better able to be independent.

But it will be tough for China to play the two sides. China's best would be to bring the two sides together, bridge their differences. This the U.S. did not do. Instead, the U.S. has sowed division between Iran and Persian Gulf Arabs. If China works to bring the two sides together and it succeeds, then China will be the "master" of the Persian Gulf.

**Given the alleged collaboration between China and Saudi Arabia to develop ballistic missiles, do you think China is going to expand its military influence and fill the power vacuum in West Asia, especially after U.S. withdrawal?**

Absolutely yes. China needs the Persian Gulf for energy but it also gives it leverage over the United States.

**"Iran can only truly benefit from any sanction relief and/or cooperation with China if it adopts tough economic reforms and puts its own economic house in order."**

## UN chief: World more unpredictable than during the Cold War

**Guterres says unlike Biden he thinks Russia will not invade Ukraine**

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said Friday the current world is "much more chaotic, much less predictable" than during the Cold War between the former Soviet Union and the United States, and it's dangerous because there are no "instruments" to deal with crises.

He said in a wide-ranging press conference that the Cold War was between two opposing blocs where there were clear rules and mechanisms to prevent conflict. It "never became hot because there was a certain level of predictability," he said.

He said he wouldn't call the dangerous situation today a Cold War or a Hot War but probably "a new form of tepid confrontation."

As he starts his second term as UN secretary-general, Guterres said in an Associated Press interview on Thursday that the world is worse in many ways than it was five years ago because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis and geopolitical tensions that have sparked conflicts everywhere — but unlike U.S. President Joe Biden he thinks Russia will not invade Ukraine.

At the press conference, Guterres said his message to Russian President Vladimir Putin "is that there should not be any military intervention" in Ukraine.

"I am convinced it will not happen, and I strongly hope to be right," he said.

The UN chief spoke after U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov met in Geneva on the crisis over Ukraine which has seen Moscow deploy tens of thousands of troops on its border and Western nations sending military hardware to Kyiv. Expectations were low for a breakthrough and there was none, but the top U.S. and Russian diplomats



agreed to meet again.

"What for me is essential is that this dialogue leads to a good solution and that that good solution is that there is de-escalation and this crisis ends," Guterres said. "That is our objective. I've been saying that I strongly hope that diplomacy will prevail."

Guterres reiterated in the AP interview that the UN Security Council, which does have the power to uphold international peace and security including by imposing sanctions and ordering military action, is divided, especially its five veto-wielding permanent members. Russia and China are often at odds with the United States, Britain and France on key issues, including Thursday on new sanctions against North Korea.

The secretary-general reiterated at the news conference that splitting the world in two — with the United States and China creating rival economic systems and rules, each with dominant currency, its own Internet, technological strategy and artificial intelligence — must be avoided "at all costs."

"I always advocated for the need for a unified global market, a unified global economy," Guterres said. "At the present moment there are a number of differences and I've been advocating

both with the U.S. and China on the importance of a serious dialogue and a serious negotiation on the aspect of trade and technology in which the two countries have ... different positions."

He said his aim is to see the two leading economic powers "overcome those difficulties and to be able to establish that global market in which all can cooperate and all can benefit."

Guterres spoke to reporters after presenting his priorities for 2022 to diplomats from the UN's 193 member nations in the General Assembly and assessing the global landscape which he called "not a pretty picture."

"I see a five-alarm global fire," the secretary-general said.

"Each of the alarms is feeding off the others," he said. "They are accelerants to an inferno."

He cited inequity and injustice in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic, "a global economic system rigged against the poor," insufficient action on "the existential climate threat" and "a wild west digital frontier that profits from division."

Guterres said all these "social and economic fires" are creating conflicts and unrest around the world, and all of them are fueling mistrust and people's lost faith in institutions and their underlying values.

"In every corner of the world, we see this erosion of core values. Equality. Justice. Cooperation. Dialogue. Mutual respect," the secretary-general said.

He warned that injustice, inequality, mistrust, racism and discrimination "are casting dark shadows across every society" and said all nations must restore "human dignity and human decency" and "prevent the death of truth."

"We must make lying wrong again," Guterres said.

## Trump held secret meetings in days before Capitol attack, ex-press secretary tells panel

The former White House press secretary Stephanie Grisham told the House select committee investigating the Capitol attack that Donald Trump hosted secret meetings in the White House residence in days before 6 January, according to two sources familiar with the matter.

The former senior Trump aide also told House investigators that the details of whether Trump actually intended to march to the Capitol after his speech at the Ellipse rally would be memorialized in documents provided to the U.S. Secret Service, the sources said.

The select committee's interview with Grisham,

who was Melania Trump's chief of staff when she resigned on 6 January, was more significant than expected, the sources said, giving the panel new details about the Trump White House and what the former U.S. president was doing before the Capitol attack.

Grisham gave House investigators an overview of the chaotic final weeks in the Trump White House in the days leading up to the Capitol attack, recalling how the former president held off-the-books meetings in the White House residence, the sources said.

The secret meetings were apparently known by only a small number of aides, the sources

said. Grisham recounted that they were mostly scheduled by Trump's chief of staff, Mark Meadows, and that the former chief usher, Timothy Harleth, would wave participants upstairs, the sources said.

Harleth, the former director of rooms at the Trump International Hotel before moving with the Trumps to the White House in 2017, was once one of the former first family's most trusted employees, according to a top former White House aide to Melania Trump.

But after Harleth sought to ingratiate himself with the Biden transition team after Trump's defeat in the 2020 election in order to keep his

## Yemen massacre sparks global outrage

From page 1 ▶ Dujarric added "the Secretary-General reminds all parties that attacks directed against civilians and civilian infrastructure are prohibited by international humanitarian law. He further reminds all parties of their obligations under international humanitarian law to ensure that civilians are protected against the dangers arising from military operations, adhering to the principles of proportionality, distinction, and precaution"

According to Save the Children, at least three children were killed after reportedly playing in a nearby football field when the missiles struck Hodeidah.

The airstrike that damaged a vital telecommunication center in the city that controls Yemen's internet access, resulted in a nationwide internet blackout.

Aid workers continue to clear the rubble with more casualties including women and children expected to be discovered in both cities.

Save the Children's Director in Yemen, Gillian Moyes says "Yemen continues to be one of the most dangerous places to be a child today, and children are bearing the brunt of this crisis. They are being killed and maimed, watching as their schools and hospitals are being destroyed, and denied access to basic lifesaving services. They are asking us: does it matter if I die?"

Moyes added that the initial casualties report from Saada is horrifying. Migrants seeking better lives for themselves and their families, Yemeni civilians injured by the dozens, is a picture we never hoped to wake up to in Yemen."

"While all Save the Children staff are accounted for, the internet outage is expected to reduce our capacity to operate in the coming days if not fixed."

The humanitarian organization for children says Yemen's hospitals, schools, water infrastructure, and roads are in disarray after nearly seven years of conflict, further disrupting the lives of children and their families.

The escalation in attacks across Yemen resulted in a 60% increase in civilian casualties in the last three months of 2021, with 2022 already poised to have wider consequences for civilians.

This comes after member states of the UN Human Rights Council voted last year to end the body's mandate of experts investigating war crimes in Yemen.

The UN mission in Yemen said it is "gravely concerned" about the latest Saudi attacks in Hodeidah noting that "the consequences of continued military confrontation in Hodeidah could be catastrophic for Yemenis, given the importance of the Hodeidah ports, which remain a critical lifeline for the population."

Yemen is reliant on imports for nearly all its food and fuel; around 90% of which come through Hodeidah's Red Sea port.

The Norwegian Refugee Council said the strike was "a blatant attack on civilian infrastructure that will also impact our aid delivery."

The International Committee of the Red Cross said "It is essential that we protect the lives of people in armed conflict. The human toll that we witness in Yemen is unacceptable"

Meanwhile, the Yemeni force's spokesman Yahya Saree issued a warning to Abu Dhabi saying that "after the massacres committed by the Saudi coalition against our people, we advise foreign companies in the UAE to leave. The UAE is an unsafe state as long as its rulers continue their aggression against our country."

This comes as Yemen's Supreme Political Council condemns the "shameful international silence towards the crimes of aggression against the Yemeni people" and warned, "the massacres of the forces of aggression will not go unpunished."

The council noted that "targeting communications and cutting off Yemen's communication with the world is aimed at committing more crimes away from the international community"

The Supreme Political Council also warned



the Saudi-led coalition "if you think that with your crimes you will subjugate the Yemeni people, then this is out of reach. Despite your crimes, you will fail as before"

It added "the army, committees, and drones are in a position to deter aggression and siege, and they will respond forcefully to all aggressors. You are just murderers and you do not even have the morals of men of war"

The Supreme Political Council also slammed the Saudi-led coalition as "just dirty tools of the Zionists and the Americans. Saudi Arabia and the UAE are more cowardly than confrontation on the battlefields"

The Council further added that "we assure all of our patient and brave people that their steadfastness will yield honor and glory"

A member of the Political Council of the Ansar-Allah Movement Muhammad al-Bakhiti told al-Mayadeen news channel that the goal of the attacks was to terrorize Yemenis.

Regional countries and movements also condemned the attacks, among them Iran which strongly condemned the attack as well as Iraqi and Lebanese political parties and movements.

Lebanon's Hezbollah stated "we strongly condemn the horrific massacres committed by the Saudi-American aggression on Yemen. This heinous massacre confirms the barbarity of the forces of aggression and their stripping of human, moral and religious values"

In a statement, Hezbollah also called "on all free people everywhere to stand by the oppressed Yemeni people and condemn and denounce this crime and condemn the forces of aggression"

The movement added, "we believe that our dear people, who have endured difficulties throughout the past years, are capable of moving towards defeating aggression and achieving victory"

In the United States, the Congressional Progressive Caucus wrote on social media "this is horrific news, further devastating Yemen. It's also a predictable consequence of continuing to arm Saudi Arabia. The Biden administration must stop unauthorized participation in the Saudi war and bring its bombings and blockade to an end, as Congress has demanded."

Trita Parsi, the executive vice president of the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft said "the Biden admin has condemned the [Yemeni retaliatory] actions roughly 13 times since taking office. Not one condemnation of Saudi bombings of Yemen though. Will, it also not condemn this attack?"

The author of Reign of Terror, Spencer Ackerman noted "America is complicit in this, as it has been complicit in every Saudi or UAE airstrike of this horrific war that Biden and his senior officials once promised to end. I hope they see these children when they sleep at night"

Analysts say over the past few years, the equation has changed in the war on Yemen, the era of hit and run appears to be over for the Saudi-led coalition.

Riyadh and Abu Dhabi will now be on high alert with radars fixed on any incoming projectiles from the South.

Unfortunately for both countries, the advanced defense systems purchased from the United States has done little to stop relatively cheap homemade Yemeni armed drones that have proven to be quite effective in causing significant damage.

(Source: Guardian)

## Permanent market for disabled crafters makes debut in Bandar Abbas



TEHRAN – The first permanent market for handicrafts produced by the crafters with disabilities has been established in Bandar Abbas, southern Hormozgan province, the provincial tourism chief has said.

At this market, over 100 hand-crafted items are on display and available for purchase, Sohrab Banavand said on Saturday.

Workshops on different handicraft fields will also be offered every week in the market by experienced craftsmen and masters, the official added.

Bordering the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman on the south and bounded by Bushehr and Fars provinces on the west and northwest, Kerman on the east and northeast, and Sistan-Baluchestan on the southeast, Hormozgan is widely renowned for having incredible culture and heritage, stunning sceneries, and above all its warm and hospitable people.

It embraces arrays of islands among which Kish, Hormuz, Hengam, and Qeshm are the most popular ones and top tourist destinations in the southernmost parts of the country.

Over the past couple of decades, the coral Kish Island has become a beach resort where visitors can swim, shop, and sample a laid-back and relatively liberated local lifestyle. It is home to free-trade-zone status, with ever-growing hotels, shopping centers, apartment blocks, and retail complexes.

Hormuz, which is mostly barren and hilly, is situated some eight kilometers off the coast on the Strait of Hormuz, which attracts many tourists by its colorful mountains, silver sand shores, and great local people.

Hengam Island has scenery rocky shores, serene sunset, and kind natives, which can attract travelers who enjoy a relaxing trip by spending time on this tranquil island.

Qeshm Island is a heaven for eco-tourists

as it embraces wide-ranging attractions such as the Hara marine forests and about 60 villages dotted mostly across its rocky coastlines. The island also features geologically eye-catching canyons, hills, caves, and valleys, most of which are protected as part of the UNESCO-tagged Qeshm Island Geopark, itself a haven for nature-lovers.

### Wide-ranging handicrafts

With 14 entries, Iran ranks first globally for the number of cities and villages registered by the World Crafts Council, as China with seven entries, Chile with four, and India with three ones come next.

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

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

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

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

## Country of four seasons: Iran a world inside a country

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Iran is one of the only countries in the world which has the complete four seasons.

The land whose every inch needs deep evaluation. Its north is covered with evergreen forests and a beautiful lake with moderate climate, its south is led to the Persian Gulf, with hot and humid climate, beautiful and attractive palm trees, its east with a hot desert and running sand, with its nights full of stars and the west of this vast land with mountains high in the sky, attracts the attention of every visitor.

In other words, Iran possesses characteristics of all four regions, given its position at the crossroads of these four geo-climatic zones. It is a land of wonder, paradox and diversity, hence the appropriate title "Iran: a world inside a country". In fact, Due to the large size of Iran, there can be great variation in weather conditions across the country e.g. winter weather in the northwest of Iran is typically cold with heavy snowfall and subfreezing temperatures, whilst in the southern regions of Iran; the weather during this period is often fairly mild. However, cold air blowing from Siberia can produce some very cold weather during this period. Weather during the spring period in Iran is typically fairly mild and most of the rainfall



seen in Iran occurs during the spring and winter periods.

However, the weather within the Caspian coastal area of Iran (which is a high mountainous region) is very different to the rest of Iran and this area usually experiences rain fall throughout the whole year. Due to the different weather conditions in this country, the region is far more fertile to the rest of Iran which is typically fairly arid. Summer weather in Iran is typically very hot and dry. It is not uncommon for the temperature in the south of Iran to exceed 37 degrees centigrade during this period. The sun shines almost continuously during this season. Like the spring, autumn is a fairly short season in Iran and it's advisable to visit at this time.

# Foreign travel agencies to explore East Azarbaijan on fam tour

From page 1 ► Iran's tourism

Last week, the deputy tourism minister Ali Darabi announced that Iran needs to get ready for a probable "tsunami of tourism" once the coronavirus pandemic is over.

"The Iranian government should get fully prepared for a surge and potential tsunami of tourism when COVID-restrictions are over."

Travel and tourism will increase as vaccination becomes a priority around the world and lifestyles align, the official added.

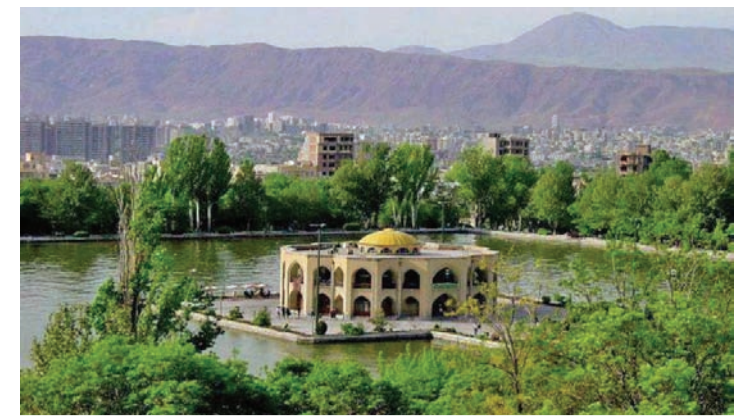
Earlier this month, an official with the tourism ministry announced that the Iranian tourism industry has suffered \$233m losses due to

COVID restrictions over the past two years.

"Travel is not believed to be the cause of the outbreak, rather it is a lack of adherence to health protocols that have caused the outbreak, but people canceled their trips anyway, causing major damage to the tourist facilities across the country," he explained.

With only two months until the upcoming new Iranian year holidays, the tourism ministry is preparing safe and smart travel packages for Iranian holidaymakers and travelers, he noted.

Nearly 70 percent of the population has been vaccinated,



A view of Qajar-era (1789-1925) Elgoli Mansion in Tabriz, East Azarbaijan province

so these trips may be able to partially compensate for the damage done to tourism facilities over the past two years, he mentioned.

Last year the tourism ministry announced that the tourism of the country was growing before the corona outbreak, its revenues reached \$11.7 billion in 2019, which accounted for 2.8% of GDP, nearing the average share of tourism in the world GDP, which was 3.2 percent.

Iran was ranked as the second fastest-growing country in tourism based on data compiled by the World Tourism Organization.

Experts expect Iran to achieve

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

The Islamic Republic expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 26 are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, Iran aims to increase the number of tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2025.

## Luristan Bronzes: a glimpse into their mystery

TEHRAN – Soaked in history and culture, the western Iranian province of Lorestan is one of the lesser-known travel destinations in Iran, which mainly acts as a gateway to the sweltering plains below in adjoining Khuzestan province.

Most travelers just pass through on their way to the UNESCO sites of Susa, Tchogha Zanbil, and Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System. Lorestan is also a region of raw beauty that an avid nature lover could spend weeks exploring.

However, of ancient highlights of the under-the-radar destination are the Luristan Bronzes that comprise small cast objects decorated with bronze sculptures from the Early Iron Age, found in large numbers in Lorestan and its neighboring Kermanshah province.

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

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

As reported in a recent National Geographic article, Iron Age artifacts from the Zagros Mountains of Iran began to capture the world's attention in the 1930s, but scholars today are still debating who crafted them.

When exquisite bronze figures began flooding the antiquities market in the late 1920s, nobody knew much about them. Artworks of people and animals, embossed bronze cups, and delicate pins thrilled dealers, who were awed by their beauty. Inquiries were made about their origins, but answers were somewhat vague. Rather than name a specific settlement or civilization, dealers would only indicate a region in the Zagros Mountains: Luristan (located in western Iran and known today as Lorestan).

The first Western archaeologist to investigate the bronzes was German-born archaeologist Erich Schmidt, who first began exploring Luristan in 1935. His work at the site was innovative thanks to his wife, MaryHelen. The two shared a passion for archaeology: They first met when visiting the site of Tepe Hissar in Iran.

MaryHelen advocated using airplanes to



scope out the sites from above, and she bought one for the missions. Named the Friend of Iran, the plane surveyed Luristan and other Iranian sites, including Persepolis (the ancient capital of the Persian Empire), that Schmidt would be studying. After permission was secured from Iran, reconnaissance flights flew in 1935-36 and again in 1937. Schmidt's aerial photography would prove valuable not only for documenting the sites but also for methodically planning out the excavations.

In June 1938 Schmidt's team explored Surkh Dum, a settlement site in Luristan. Prior to this dig, unauthorized excavations in the area

Luristan Bronzes began to capture the world's attention in the 1930s, but scholars today are still debating who crafted them.

resulted in the removal of many bronzes, resulting in the loss of valuable information about the site's history. Local authorities finally put a stop to the looting, and Schmidt focused his efforts on uncovering what remained.

Despite the damage and looting, Schmidt's team was able to recover bronze, ivory, and ceramic items, objects that revealed similar artistic techniques and styles to the bronzes that were being unearthed and sold in the 1920s. Much of the exploratory work at Surkh Dum centered on a multi-chambered structure that was believed to have been a temple or place of worship. Schmidt also recovered items from chambered tombs with stones placed vertically as walls and larger slabs as ceilings.

Establishing a strong chronology for the Luristan bronzes has been challenging. The extensive looting destroyed much of the surrounding soil layers, or stratigraphy, that archaeologists rely on to establish occupation dates.

Only in recent decades has it been possible to pinpoint dates for the Luristan bronzes. Stylistic and iconographic analysis was complemented by a series of archaeological digs during the 1960s and 1970s. The excavations, carried out between 1965 and 1979 in western Luristan

## Tiling, symbol of ornamental elements in Iran

Tiling is considered as one of the important symbols and prominent ornamental elements in Iranian architecture, and one of the old crafts of this land which was mainly carried out using glazed bricks for the strength and facets of buildings; however, gradually became usefully applicable for appearance and facade of the buildings. Also, the word "Kashi", i.e. the Persian equivalent of 'tile', takes its name from the city of Kashan which was the most important center of pottery and exquisite tile works in

central Iran.

Age and history of this art dates back to ancient times and the second millennium BC, and pleasant samples of Achaemenid enameled and painted bricks have been recovered from archeological excavations in the monuments such as Chogha Zanbil, Susa Apadana Palace, and the other Iranian ancient spots. In the Sassanid era, making tiles was continued the same style of Achaemenid era and with thicker enamels.

However, with the arrival of Islam,

this craft was gradually taken over by the artistic field of Architecture, and turned to one of the most important ornamental and covering elements for stability various buildings, especially religious buildings, and finally in Safavid and Timurid era was rapidly developed and evolved. Today, scientists and mathematicians believe that the Islamic Tile Art is closely related with mathematics and music. As the most beautiful and oldest tiles of this period, we can refer to the turquoise tiles of Isfahan and ancient inscriptions of Seljuk

minarets.

Overall, the main techniques in tile decoration include: Lustre, under-glaze paintings, over-glaze painting, mosaic faience, angular, Mo'qeli or Bannai tiles, and Cuerda seca, some of which are used only for inside of the building and some for both the inside and outside; moreover, craftsmen concerned in tiling believe that the Cuerda seca tile is one of the most famous arts in the remained historical monuments from the era of Islamic Tile Art.

(Source: Visit Iran)

# New guidelines on environmental literacy published

TEHRAN – On the occasion of Clean Air Week, nine training packages on environmental literacy as well as procedures for activities and jobs were unveiled on Saturday.

These works are entitled climate change, biodiversity, waste, ecotourism, sports and environment, sports and civic activities with the aim of enlightening, educating, and promoting environmental culture with special priority on empowering educators, and facilitators to provide appropriate environmental education to members of the community as well as public participation in environmental protection.

Every year, January 19, is the National Clean Air Day in Iran in order to remind and highlight the main factors in maintaining air quality, as well as promoting a sense of responsibility and citizen participation in protecting the urban environment and fulfilling social responsibility for the environment.

Unveiling the Clean Air Law monitoring system, unveiling the connection of three air quality measuring stations in Assaluyeh Special Energy Zone to the country's air quality monitoring system, the unveiling of the monitoring systems of the chimney and industrial effluent pollution to the comprehensive environmental system, and unveiling the technical inspection system of motorhomes are among the programs planned for the National Clean Air Day.

Publishing multimedia environ-



mental training packages in social networks, unveiling 9 volumes of environmental literacy books, holding press conferences in the provinces, opening a radio program, holding a bicycle race in natural and forest parks, and holding a painting contest for students are other programs.

The main purpose of these programs is to expand and promote public participation in reducing air pollution and informing the public at various levels and the role of all agencies in implementing the clean air law.

Abbas Shahsavani, head of the air and climate change department of the Ministry of Health, said in November 2021 that expenses related to deaths attributed to air pollution over the past Iranian calendar

year (March 2020–March 2021).

About 10 percent of deaths are caused by air pollution nationwide.

Air pollution is responsible for around 40,000 premature deaths in Iran annually, Mohammad-Sadeq Hassanvand, head of the air pollution research center at Tehran University of Medical Sciences, said in July 2020.

**Air pollution kills 7m people worldwide**

Air pollution is the contamination of the indoor or outdoor environment by any chemical, physical or biological agent that modifies the natural characteristics of the atmosphere. Household combustion devices, motor vehicles, industrial facilities, and forest fires are common sources of air pollution. Pollutants of major public health concern include particulate matter,

carbon monoxide, ozone, nitrogen dioxide, and sulfur dioxide. Outdoor and indoor air pollution cause respiratory and other diseases and is an important source of morbidity and mortality.

Air pollution kills an estimated seven million people worldwide every year. WHO data shows that almost all of the global population (99%) breathe air that exceeds WHO guideline limits containing high levels of pollutants, with low- and middle-income countries suffering from the highest exposures.

From smog hanging over cities to smoke inside the home, air pollution poses a major threat to health and climate. The combined effects of ambient (outdoor) and household air pollution cause millions of premature deaths every year, largely as a result of increased mortality from stroke, heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, lung cancer, and acute respiratory infections.

January 19 is the National Clean Air Day, promoting a sense of responsibility for protecting the environment.

## National plan on justice in health reform unveiled

TEHRAN – A national plan on justice in health reform was unveiled in the city of Mashhad with Health Minister Bahram Einollahi in attendance.

The plan was unveiled in order to develop the fair quantitative and qualitative indicators of the country's health and medical education, the minister said, adding that strengthening, rearranging, and expanding the country's health network system is one of the most important features of this plan.

"Development of educational justice, fair and balanced distribution of human resources, strengthening the basic health insurance system, improving the quantity and quality of applied research based on people's needs, providing sustainable resources and reviewing the structure, maximizing the use of health charities, moving towards self-sufficiency in medicine, vaccines, and Equipment, supporting knowledge-based companies, increasing the productivity of medical

services, changing the health system from treatment to prevention-centered, promoting community health literacy to increase active self-care and lifestyle reform and combating corruption are among the most important axes of the plan.

**Health reform plan**

The health reform plan, aiming at decreasing out-of-pocket expenses for the patients, promoting natural birth, and supporting underprivileged patients suffering from rare or incurable diseases, was launched in the country in May 2014.

It has succeeded in enforcing many of the health-deferred laws and regulations, and continues to do so despite all the credit and manpower deficiencies.

Increased access to medicine and treatment was among the achievements of the plan. In addition, 11 million Iranians without any health insurance were covered by public insurance.

Prior to the project, public spending on health-care services was more than 50 percent. Meanwhile, with the implementation of the plan, the share of payment from the pockets of patients in the field of health has decreased to 32.4 percent.

The plan started supporting physicians in deprived areas, which increased the number of doctors to more than 4,300 general practitioners, specialists, and subspecialists, resulting in increased access to medical treatment.

About 1,100 comprehensive healthcare centers across the country are now offering medical services to patients and providing the necessary care since the onset of the pandemic.

One of the important health capacities that came to the aid of the country in the coronavirus crisis was the electronic health record, and according to former health minister Saeed Namaki, at least 75 million Iranians with a national code can file electronic health records.

## Educational spaces to officially reopen as pandemic eases

TEHRAN – Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi issued a communique on Saturday to the ministers of science, health, and education, announcing the reopening of universities and schools which were teaching mostly online due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Following the decision of the National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control and President Ebrahim Raisi, all universities affiliated to the ministries of science and health, and schools affiliated to the ministry of education, must operate in person as the new cases of the disease have notably reduced.

In this communique, Vahidi emphasized that it is necessary to observe hygienic principles (use of masks and observance of social distancing).

Around 92.5 percent of Iranian students aged 12-18 have so far received the first dose of coronavirus vaccine and some 75 percent are inoculated with the second dose, Fars reported a week earlier.

All educational centers in Iran have been closed since February 2020.

In order for students to keep in touch with their studies, the

Ministry of Education launched a homegrown mobile application on April 9, called SHAD, providing students with distance learning programs. More than 60 percent of students and 94 percent of teachers attended 64 percent of classes through the SHAD app, whose acronym in Persian translates as the Students Education Network.

Moreover, the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) also began to broadcast televised educational programs on a daily basis after school closures.

Due to the vaccination and the re-



duction of transmission, schools are gradually reopened since September 2021, and about 15 million students across the country attended schools with strict observance of health protocols. However, the fifth wave of the pandemic prevented the students to enjoy face-to-face education.

## ENGLISH IN USE

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#### 'Only 15% of Tehran's construction, demolition waste recycled'

While some 50,000 tons of construction and demolition waste is produced in Tehran daily, only 10 to 15 percent of which are recycled and the rest is dumped or disposed, Mohammad Hossein Bazgir, head of Tehran's department of environment (DOE) has said.

Waste materials, generally termed as construction and demolition waste, are part of construction materials' packaging, containers, and spent machinery and equipment parts that are no longer usable.

"A good portion of construction wastes can still be usable with proper planning and their usage can be a solution itself to the burgeoning waste issues that the communities and the construction industry face," Bazgir said.

He further referred to a construction waste management unit opened in Abali in Damavand county last week, and stated that the unit is capable of recycling some 3,000 tons of construction waste, ISNA reported on Tuesday.

To eradicate the issue, construction waste trucks must be equipped with GPS to determine their route and not allow them to dispose the waste at any areas, he concluded.

#### تنها ۱۵ درصد نخاله های ساختمانی تولید شده در تهران بازیافت می شود

رییس اداره محیط زیست شهر تهران با بیان اینکه در تهران روزانه ۵۰ هزار تن نخاله ساختمانی تولید می شود، گفت: متأسفانه تنها ۱۰ تا ۱۵ درصد این زباله ها بازیافت می شود و بیش از ۸۰ درصد آن دیو می شود.

محمد حسین بازگیر در گفت و گو با ایسنا، اظهار کرد: بازیافت پسماندهای ساختمانی بخشی از فرایند مدیریت پسماند است که سبب می شود این نوع زباله ها دوباره به چرخه مصرف بازگردانده و بسیاری از مشکلاتی که مردم و صنعت ساخت و ساز با آن روبرو هستند، برطرف شود.

ظرفیت این واحد بازیافت حدود ۳۰۰۰ تن است و می تواند این مقدار نخاله و آوار ساختمانی را بازیافت کند.

وی در پایان با تأکید بر اینکه کامیون های مخصوص حمل نخاله های ساختمانی باید ساماندهی شوند و پیمانکاران حمل نخاله ها تحت مدیریت مناسب و هوشمند قرار بگیرند، گفت: کامیون های حمل نخاله باید مجهز به GPS شوند تا مسیر تردد آن ها مشخص شود و امکان تخلیه زباله را در هر نقطه ای نداشته باشند.

## Iran ranks 11th in intellectual property worldwide

From page 1 ▶ Over the past year, Iran has ranked third in the world with 541,750 trademark registrations, which due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus, the growth of trademarks has grown very well.

In total, in 2020, the number of registered trademark applications increased by 19.3 percent, and Iran's growth in this index was 1.19 percent.

According to Koushki, in 2019, Iran has registered 554,925 trademarks.

Iran ranks third in trademark registration and 11th in the world in the registration of industrial designs, with a total of three indicators; and in terms of

all three indicators of trademarks, patents, and industrial designs, placed 8th in the world, while China, the United States, Germany and Japan top the list, respectively.

Iran ranks 21st for the number of patent applications, 3rd for trademarks, and 12th for industrial designs.

Variations in the patenting activity across countries reflect differences in the size and structure of their economies. It is therefore informative to examine resident patent activity with regard to variables such as population, research and development spending, and gross domestic product (GDP).

The U.S. (1,358), Finland (1,333), Sweden (1,178), Denmark (1,123) and Iran (1,091) round out the top 10 origins. Iran is one of the top 10 origins according to GDP.

## Climate crisis could still be affecting size of Greenland ice sheet in thousands of years

The global climate crisis due to emissions of greenhouse gases could continue to impact the size of the Greenland ice sheet for "thousands of years", researchers have said.

The enormous ice sheet is the second-largest on Earth after the Antarctic ice sheet, and covers 1.5 million sq m, with the ice reaching up to 3,000m (9,800 feet) deep.

Rising global temperatures are already melting Greenland's ice and glaciers and causing sea levels to rise, but how fast and how much this will occur remains uncertain.

However, new modelling by researchers at the Alfred Wegener Institute in Germany, showing the numerous times the ice sheet has grown and shrunk over the past 125,000 years, reveals a significant lag – of several thousand years – between high-temperature climates and melting, and low-temperature climates and ice expansion.

"We found that the times when the ice sheet was largest and smallest, respectively, lag the times when Greenland's climate was coldest and warmest by several thousand years," said Dr Hu Yang, lead author of the study.

During the Holocene period (the past 10,000 years), which is usually considered to be stable, Greenland experienced a gradual summer cooling, which the researchers said was primarily due to changes in the Earth's orbit of the Sun. This summer cooling had driven a progressive growth of the Greenland ice sheet, from its minimum extent at between 6,000 and 5,000 years ago until the industrial revolution.

The researchers said that though the industrial age caused global average temperatures to begin rising in the early 19th century (around the 1830s), the rapid speed of the temperature rise meant the Greenland ice sheet began to lose mass from the 1980s onwards.

Speaking to The Independent, Dr Yang said: "Warming temperatures only melt the ice at the limited margins of the ice sheet during a few

months in the summer.

"The summit, or the inner of the ice sheet, is difficult to melt – because of the topography the elevated air temperature is too cold. Once the margins of the ice sheet have been removed, the inner parts start to slide more quickly and lose mass.

He said this process "takes time to achieve its final comfortable state, not within a hundred years, but in the order of a few thousand years.

"We need to be aware that the Greenland ice sheet has been standing there for at least three million years."

He warned that post-industrial human activity has emitted CO2 at a rate more than 100 times faster than the average natural CO2 increase seen during the last deglaciation – around 18,000 – 10,000 years before the present.

"The lag is always there," he said. "The atmosphere and ocean temperature needs time to rise."

But he added: "The ice sheet melt at the margins is slow. Nevertheless, the ice sheet will slowly achieve its comfortable state, which may contribute to sea level rise perhaps more than 10 times than what we will witness this century."

Atmospheric carbon is currently more than 410 ppm, around the same level as it was about 3 million years ago. At that time, the highest sea level was about 10-25 metres higher than today, Dr Yang said.

"If we do not limit our emissions, by the end of this century, the CO2 level will be more than four times the pre-industrial level."

He said that the last time atmospheric carbon levels were that high, during the Cretaceous period, there was no ice sheet on Greenland at all.

"What we do in this century will determine the destiny of the climate and ice sheet in the coming centuries," he added.

## COVID-19 UPDATES ON JANUARY 22

New cases	3,503
New deaths	30
Total cases	6,245,346
Total deaths	132,202
New hospitalized patients	426
Patients in critical condition	1,216
Total recovered patients	6,078,024
Diagnostic tests conducted	43,953,611
Doses of vaccine injected	128,252,824

**TEHRAN TIMES**

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JANUARY 23, 2022

**GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING**

If you are greeted then return the greetings more warmly. If you are favored, then repay the obligation manifold; but he who takes the initiative will always excel in merit.

**Imam Ali (AS)**

Prayer Times » Noon: 12:16 Evening: 17:42 Dawn: 5:43 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 7:10 (tomorrow)

**Manuscripts of Hafez**

Part 1

A major concern of 20th-century Hafez scholarship has been the establishment of a reliable text of his poems. While the texts of other poets have also been the subject of critical inquiry and debate, the case of Hafez seems exceptional.

This may be partly because his relatively small poetic output appears more susceptible to control than a large divan or a lengthy narrative masnavi, partly because many manuscripts exist that were produced close to the poet's own time, and partly because the density of Hafez's poetic language inspires a demand for accurate readings; but it also reflects the poet's iconic status as a symbol of Persian cultural and literary identity.

Hafez's poems are found in numerous manuscript sources, ranging from anthologies and other works to redactions bearing the title divan. It is estimated that there are at least 1,000 known manuscripts of the Divan in Iran and other parts of the world, and perhaps two or three times that many that are as yet unknown; there is no doubt that many have disappeared.

Rather than simplifying the task of establishing a textus receptus, this proliferation of sources has only served to complicate it. Since a discussion of the manuscript tradition as a whole would be an impossible task, this article will rather address some of the issues that have preoccupied scholars and critics with respect to establishing the text of Hafez's Divan.

It is, by and large, only the ghazals that have received significant attention; Hafez's poems in other forms are generally regarded as marginal.

Efforts to establish a reliable text of the ghazals focus largely on four main issues: the number of ghazals in the Divan; the number of verses in each ghazal; the correct order of verses; and the correct reading of each verse.

Underlying these issues is the assumption that there is an "original" Divan, an authentic, authorial (or at least authoritative) redaction, that can be recovered, so that the Divan can be reconstructed in the form it would have taken had Hafez himself compiled it.

Historically, lyric poems (qasidas, ghazals, and so on) were transmitted in a variety of ways, and were not routinely collected in divans. This is especially true of the ghazal, which only acquired major importance from the 12th century onwards, and was transmitted primarily in oral form.

A few early poets compiled their own divans; others refer in their poetry to a divan; but poets continually revised their poems, and the term divan simply indicates a selection of poems compiled for a patron, for circulation among friends, or for other purposes (including, perhaps, self-advertisement).

A poet's work might be compiled, during his lifetime or posthumously, by someone else (again, usually for some specific purpose); but there was no standard procedure for publishing a poet's work in written form.

Hafez is said to have edited his Divan in

1368; but there is no evidence to support this, and in any case it would not have been a complete text. The "Golondam preface" found in many manuscripts of the Divan (the authenticity of which was once disputed, but which can now be accepted) states that after Hafez's death he, Mohammad Golondam, collected and recorded the poet's scattered ghazals.

This indicates that the earliest sources, oral and/or written, were multiple, and that the hope of reconstructing the "true divan" (divan-e sa'ahiha) is indeed slim.

The nature of the early manuscript sources further supports this. Even in redactions of the Divan as such, the number of ghazals varies considerably; and while it is generally assumed that later redactions became inflated through the addition of poems by other poets mistakenly or falsely attributed to Hafez, the exact number of ghazals in the "original" divan—the exact number of ghazals (and other poems) Hafez composed—cannot be securely ascertained.

Nor can we be certain that all of his poetic output has survived. It is a remarkably small output: if we assume around 500 ghazals, composed over a poetic career lasting roughly forty years (if not longer), the poet would have composed, on average, one ghazal per month. (This contrasts with the far greater number of ghazals in the divans of his close contemporaries—for example Khaju Kermani, Salman Savaji, and Kamal Khojandi the latter poet, like Hafez, specialized in the ghazal.)

The number of qasidas preserved in the sources varies; and one manuscript is said to include several elegies (marasi), among them one on Sha Shoja (Rashid Ayyazi and Akbar Behruzi, who based their edition on this manuscript, do not mention marasi in their introduction).

With a few exceptions (noted below), most of the early sources for the ghazals are not redactions of the Divan as such. Scattered verses and poems may be found in sources composed during the poet's lifetime.

One of the earliest sources is the Majmu'a-ye latayef o safina-ye zarayef, a handbook on rhetoric by Sayf-e Jam Haravi, which, although completed around 1400-01, was begun much earlier, in the reign of the Delhi sultan Firuzshah ibn Mohammad ibn Toghloq (1351-88). (The manuscript, which was probably re-copied around the end of the 15th century, was formerly in the library of the Kabul University Faculty of Literature; an incomplete manuscript in the British Museum known as the Dastur al-so'ara, dated 803, is another copy of the same work.)

The book's main section, on the poetic art, is followed by an anthology of poetry by Persian poets (plus a section of poetry by Indian poets) containing 127 ghazals by Hafez, arranged non-alphabetically.

These were published by Nadir Ahmad; one wishes he had published the entire text, as the manuscript – now undoubtedly lost to scholars – is an important document for the history of the reception of Hafez.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica  
 To be continued

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Source: Encyclopedia Iranica  
 To be continued

# “Beyond the Border”: Iranian scholar publishes diary of trips to Tajikistan

TEHRAN – An Iranian regional studies graduate has published an account of his two journeys to Tajikistan in a book entitled “Beyond the Border”.

Ehsan Safarzadeh made the trips, each of which lasted one month, in summer 2007 and winter 2016.

In a preface to the book published by the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO), he declines to call it a travelogue.

“For the most part, the book contains my memories of the trips written in the form of diaries, which do not come in succession,”

The main aim of the book is to raise readers' knowledge of the Khorasan region and Transoxiana.

The first chapter begins from the Balkh Wilayat and goes on with crossing the Amu Darya and Farah Roud, two major rivers in Central Asia and Afghanistan. In the second chapter, the book



Copies of Iranian scholar Ehsan Safarzadeh's book "Beyond the Border".

focuses on Tajikistan.

In one of his diaries, Safarzadeh wrote, “During my stay, I never heard the people in Dushanbe say that they listen to Tajiki Radio, a Tajik radio channel airing from

IRIB's Khorasan Center!”

“Later, I found out that the radio has no signal in Dushanbe at all, and the people of the city listen to BBC and Radio Azadi, the Afghan branch of the U.S. government.

“A question arose for me as to why there is nothing about Tajikistan in Iranian media. There are a few TV series [in Iran] in which a Tajik character has a minor role in their stories. There is no trace of the people of this part of the Khorasan region in the historical series. Even in the Iranian news media, no news about Tajikistan has been published over the years.

“What is the reason for this? Doesn't IRIB have an office or a representative in Tajikistan? I asked. They said that IRIB does have an office at such and such an address. I headed for that location; there was a semi-abandoned building”

In the book, Safarzadeh also talked about Tajik media's frequent references to Tajik President Emomali Rahmon, who has held the post since 16 November 1994.

According to the book, Rahmon is referred as “leader”, “master of the government” and “founder of peace” in the Tajik media.

## Ten Iranian classics picked for review at Fajr Film Festival



A poster for the Classics Preserved section of the 40th Fajr Film Festival.

From Page 1 ► It is about a boy who loses his sister's pair of shoes. He goes on a series of adventures in order to find them. When he cannot, he tries a new way to “win” a new pair.

The film garnered awards at the Fajr festival in four categories, including best film and best director.

Another highlight of the lineup is “The Cow”, a forerunner of the Iranian New Wave cinema directed by Dariush Mehrjui in 1969.

The film follows Masht Hassan, who owns the only cow in a remote and desolate village. While he is away, his cow, whom he treats as his own child, dies. Knowing the relationship between Masht Hassan and his cow, the villagers hastily dispose of the corpse, and

when Masht Hassan returns, they tell him that his cow ran away. Devastated by the news, Masht Hassan starts to spend all his time in the barn eating hay and slowly begins to believe that he has become the cow.

Earlier in the 2016 Fajr festival, the restored edition of the movie was also screened.

In the Classics Preserved section, the festival will also review “The Eagles” (1985) by Samuel Khachikian, “Frosty Roads” (1985) by Masud Jafari Jozani, “Manuscripts” (1986) by Mehrzad Minui, “Captain Khorshid” (1987) by Nasser Taqvai, “The Scout” (1989) by Ebrahim Hatamikia, “The Last Act” (1991) by Varuj Karim-Masihi and “The Need” (1992) by Alireza Davudnejad.

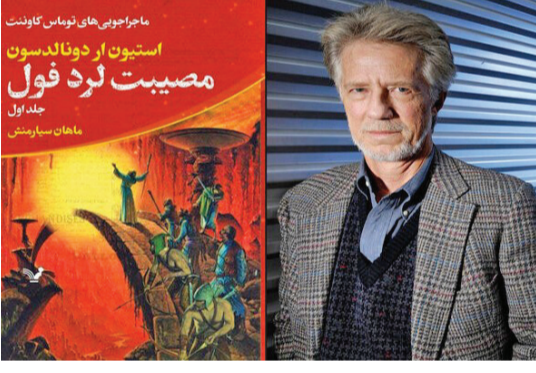
## “Lord Foul’s Bane” hits Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN – “Lord Foul's Bane”, the first book from American writer Stephen R. Donaldson's series “The Chronicles of Thomas Covenant the Unbeliever”, has been published in Persian.

Mahan Sayyarmanesh is the translator of the book published by Ketabsara-ye Tandis.

He called himself Thomas Covenant the Unbeliever because he dared not believe in the strange alternate world in which he suddenly found himself.

Yet the Land tempted him. He had been sick; now he seemed better than ever before. Through no fault of his own, he had been



This combination photo shows writer Stephen R. Donaldson and the Persian translation of his book “Lord Foul's Bane”.

outcast, unclean, a pariah. Now he was regarded as a reincarnation of the Land's greatest hero, Berek Halfhand, armed with the mystic power of White Gold.

That power alone could protect the Lords of the Land from the ancient evil of Despiser, Lord Foul. Only Covenant had no idea of how the power could be used!

Thus begins one of the most remarkable epic fantasies ever written.

Stephen Reeder Donaldson is a fantasy, science fiction and mystery novelist. He has also written non-fiction under the pen name Reed Stephens.

He was born in 1947 in Cleveland, Ohio. Donaldson spent the years between the ages of 3 and 16 living in India, where his father was working as an orthopedic surgeon. Donaldson earned his bachelor's degree from the College of Wooster and master's degree from Kent State University.

## “Saji” a story of the battle of love and insanity

The book “Saji” by Behnaz Zarabizadeh, includes Nasrin Bagherzadeh's memories. The fifth edition of this book got published by Soore Mehr simultaneously with the anniversary of Khorramshahr liberation this year, with a new cover and page layout.

Nasrin Bagherzadeh is a girl from Khorramshahr who had a good life with her husband, Bahman Bagheri and, the thought of war would never cross her mind, but when the war got started, all of a sudden she had to face so many new challenges. She spent the first new days of the war in the city but then had to leave Khorramshahr and go to Shiraz with other women in the family, while their men had stayed to protect the city.

This book would be better to be named the story of the war days in which you read about women's role in the war and, their resistance by men's sides. The story begins from years before the war and when the main character was still a child and reaches its peak whit the beginning of the war.

Behnaz Zarabizadeh, the author of this book, has previously written some other books such as “Sheena's Daughter” and “Eleventh Golestan” and this time, she goes for a woman from Khorramshahr and her life under bullet and fire. So far, the English and Arabic editions have been published.

Kianoosh Nourshahi, a literature researcher, has introduced this book and gave his opinion on it in a note that he wrote for Mehr News Agency to be published.

The note is as follows:

A sad story can't be sweet even if we hear it from the warm and charming language of Nasrin, the southern lady and the wife of martyr Bahman Bagheri. “Saji” by Behnaz Zarabizadeh, begins with pain, disease, and becoming homeless during the prevalence of Typhus. It continues until the destruction of World War II and with the end of it, the season of life, happiness, peace, parties, and marriage get started. But, it seems like peace is not going to last. Nasrin's father, who she really loved, passed away. But then, despite her age, she feels a strong love inside herself.

With the beginning of Bahman and Nasrin's love and their marriage, a short joy and happiness can be felt in the story. That morning when she woke up, and the home was full of excitement, the passion, those beautiful lights in the yard with the smell of Esfand, flowers, and sweets; at that exact moment, you just want to close the book and end the story so that Nasrin can still be happy with her husband and her children but it's not going to happen.

The story changes a lot with the start of the Iran-Iraq war. From now on, for several seasons, the reader follows Nasrin and Bahman through the war, under the bullets and fire, with the smell of blood, and women's cries.

The author, who quickly and skillfully narrates the initial events of the story, at this point, goes through it with more passion to



tell us all the details.

Among all of these tragedies, the love of Nasrin and Bahman still sweetens the story a little bit but then, with the death of “Saaji” Bahman and Nasrin's Newborn baby, the story becomes even more sorrowful. “I smelled the colorful piece on the small table in front of the stroller. They smelled like Sajedeh's little hands and all of a sudden that felt like nothing's matter. I hated Bahman. I felt like she got sacrificed for Bahman, for Khorramshahr, Ababdan, for Bahman's aspirations and aspirations. I hate war...” Nasrin said.

This battle was also a massive burden on Bahman's shoulders, like when he told Nasrin to forgive him for all of these problems and tragedies and that he even wished for death!

“Saji” and stories like this show us how women fought by their men's sides and tried to resist and not to give up.