

# Vienna Talks Make Progress Despite British Pessimism

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Report

## More “potential” graves of native children found in Canada

An indigenous community in Canada has identified almost 100 “potential” graves at a residential school site, months after the discovery of hundreds of children’s remains at former boarding schools shocked the country and the international community.

The Williams Lake First Nation (WLFN) community says a preliminary geophysical investigation has identified 93 burial sites around the premises of a church-run boarding school

The geophysical survey revealed what the First Nation has described as characteristics “indicative of potential human burials” at the former St Joseph’s Mission residential school in British Columbia.

Investigators “surveyed approximately 14 hectares of the site which is about 300 kilometers north of Kamloops, where the remains of 215 children were discovered in May.

Chief Willie Sellars of the Williams Lake First Nation says an excavation would be needed to confirm the presence of human remains and more work is required to make final determinations.

From the 19th century until the 1970s, more than 150,000 Indigenous children in Canada were taken away from their parents and forced to attend government-funded Christian-run schools as an effort to assimilate them into Canadian society.

Canada’s government has acknowledged that physical and sexual abuse was a widespread practice in the schools, with the children beaten if they spoke their native languages.

The latest possible findings near Williams Lake comes after investigators using ground-penetrating radar led to the discovery last year of what are believed to be 215 unmarked graves at a former residential school in Kamloops, British Columbia. ► Page 5

## Chinese Taipei defeat Iran in AFC Women’s Asian Cup

TEHRAN – Chinese Taipei booked their place in the AFC Women’s Asian Cup India 2022 quarter-finals after defeating Iran 5-0 in their final Group A tie at the D.Y. Patil Stadium on Wednesday.

Lai Li-Chin starred with a hat-trick with Chen Yen-Ping and Wang Hsiang-Huei scoring one each as Chinese Taipei sealed second place in Group A behind China PR to advance to the knockout stage.

Both teams, having suffered defeats against China, went into the tie fully aware that their respective fates were in their own hands, with Chinese Taipei only needing a draw to pip Iran to a quarter-final berth.

Iran’s women’s football team have participated in the competition for the first time ever.

Maryam Irandoost’s side took part in the campaign without any friendly match prior to the competition.

## Iran, Azerbaijan ink MOU for constructing bridge over Astarachay

TEHRAN –Iran and the neighbor Azerbaijan have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for cooperation in constructing a bridge over the Astarachay border river, the portal of the Iranian Transport Ministry reported.

The MOU was signed by Iranian Deputy Transport and Urban Development Minister Kheirollah Khademi and Azerbaijan’s Deputy Minister of Digital Development and Transport Rahman Hummatov in Baku on Tuesday.

As reported by IRNA, the project for the construction of the mentioned bridge was commenced in a ceremony attended by Iranian Transport Minister Rostam Qasemi and

Azeri Deputy Prime Minister Shahin Mustafayev.

Qasemi, who is also the head of the two countries’ Joint Economic Committee, traveled to Azerbaijan on top of a delegation on Monday to visit the country’s economic areas and explore avenues of mutual cooperation.

Iran and Azerbaijan had earlier announced the total investment made in the project to be 4.7 million euros.

The construction of Astarachay bridge is going to be a positive step in completing the North-South Corridor and is expected to open a new gate for the development of all-

out relations between the two neighbors.

Speaking in the mentioned ceremony, Mustafayev said the construction of the bridge is scheduled to be completed by the end of the current year.

“The president and the government of the Republic of Azerbaijan attach special importance to the development of relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the presidents of Iran and Azerbaijan expressed interest in further developing relations between the two countries in a cordial meeting in Ashgabat,” the official said. ► Page 4

## Wrecked cars of Iranian nuclear martyrs on show at Tehran museum

TEHRAN – The Sacred Defense Museum in Tehran has put on show wrecked cars in which five Iranian nuclear scientists have been assassinated by armed attacks.

Embedded in roofed glass-encircled stalls, two of the cars were used by martyrs Masoud Alimohammadi, a quantum field theorist and elementary-particle physicist who was assassinated on January 12, 2010, in front of his home in Tehran; and Mostafa Ahmadi Roshan, nuclear scientist and then deputy of commerce at the Natanz nuclear power plant, who was assassinated on January 11, 2012, in Tehran.

Moreover, they showcase blasted vehicles of Majid Shahriari, a top nuclear scientist and physicist who worked with the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran; Fereydoon Abbasi-Davani, a nuclear scientist who was head of the Atomic Energy Organization from 2011 to 2013; and Darioush Rezaeinejad who was shot five times and killed by motorcycle-riding gunmen in front of his home in 2011.

The epic-scale Sacred Defense Museum may not be top on the list for travelers to the Islamic Republic but it does bargain something different in modern Iranian history where you can delve into wreckages of rockets, tanks, rifles, vessels, mortars, radars, air defense systems, grounded jets, military supplies

## Saudis hit Yemen with scores of airstrikes

The Saudi-led coalition has once again targeted the Yemeni capital, Sanaa, and it’s wider province, with scores of airstrikes on residential neighborhoods.

Other provinces around the country have been attacked as well with two communications towers targeted.

A similar attack last week on a communications facility in the strategic port city of Hodeidah left dozens of casualties including three children dead.

The attack, along with another in Sa’ada city that left hundreds of casualties, sparked international condemnation and caused an

internet outage across Yemen.

After several days, internet services have largely been restored. According to the communications ministry services have returned to all provinces after initial repairs.

Yemen’s deputy foreign minister has praised efforts to repair the damage.

Meanwhile, the head of the national delegation, Muhammad Abd al-Salam has stressed that “the countries of aggression are mistaken in considering their security while continuing to launch their aggression and siege on the Republic of Yemen, killing civilians and destroying civilian facilities.” ► Page 5

## Iran to celebrate poet Nezami Ganjavi in weeklong program

TEHRAN – Iran’s Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance on Tuesday announced its plan to commemorate the Persian poet Nezami Ganjavi in a weeklong program in March.

The program, which has been set up as a hybrid event with virtual and live meetings, will begin on Esfand 21 in the Iranian calendar year (March 12), which is celebrated by Iran as Nezami Day every year.

“Instead of one day, this year, we will dedicate one week to celebrating Nezami to

stress the Iranian nationality of the great poet and his Persian language,” culture minister aide Mahmud Shalvi said in a meeting with the managers of several Iranian platforms that will cover the weeklong program.

“Hakim Nezami belongs to Greater Iran,” he noted and added, “The commemoration of Nezami is a cultural move, away from any political attitude, and therefore our team of organizers’ efforts will be concentrated in introducing Nezami as an Iranian and Persian-language poet.” ► Page 8

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Interview

## S. Arabia and Israel becoming world pariahs: analyst

By Zahra Samimi

TEHRAN – American political analyst Martin Love believes that Washington has failed in West Asia and its allies are becoming world pariahs.

“The overall problem for the U.S. is that it is witnessing the birth of a multipolar world and does not know how to adapt any longer, or easily, to not being the sole hegemon, and the use of military power has failed both in West Asia and Southeast Asia (since Vietnam) And its allies like Saudi Arabia and Israel are fast becoming world pariahs,” Love tells the Tehran Times.

While the U.S. is striving to expand its influence in East Asia, Latin America as Washington’s backyard is progressively emerging from years of U.S.-backed dictatorships and right-wing governments.

Elected governments in Latin America and West Asia tend to adopt independent policies rather than following America’s dictates.

“Several countries in the U.S. ‘backyard’ continue to try to defy the U.S. Nicaragua, Venezuela, Cuba and maybe even Chile with its new government and even Bolivia,” Love argues.

Following is the text of the interview:

### How do you see U.S.-Russia’s recent escalation over Ukraine?

Russia is not in fact “escalating” much except moving a lot of troops near Ukraine but still on Russian soil, ► Page 5



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## Capabilities of the Iranian military are a source of pride: Azeri defense chief

TEHRAN – General Zakir Hasanov, Defense Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan, who was on a two-day tour of Iran, said on Wednesday that Iran’s military capabilities are a “source of pride”.

“The military strength and capabilities of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran are a source of pride,” Hasanov said in a meeting with his Iranian counterpart Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Ashtiani. ► Page 2



## Capabilities of the Iranian military are a source of pride: Azeri defense chief

From page 1 ► Defense Minister Hasanov also thanked the Iranian officials and government for their support of the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

He called for expansion of bilateral relations and invited the Iranian defense minister to visit Baku.

For his part, Iran's defense minister said in view of historical and cultural commonalities between the two nations, Iran and Azerbaijan need to develop relations, especially in areas of defense and security.

Noting that deepening defense and security cooperation between Iran and Azerbaijan is very important, Ashtiani said, "Due to the special geopolitical situation and characteristics, the two countries have a lot of capacities and capabilities to expand comprehensive relations."

During the two-day visit, the Azeri defense minister met with high-ranking Iranian military and political officials. The main goals of the trip, according to IRNA, are to develop military and security cooperation.

### Azeri defense chief meets Raisi

Speaking in a meeting with Azeri Defense



Minister Hasanov on Wednesday, Iran's President Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi also said Tehran-Baku interactions are beyond mere relations.

"Iran and Azerbaijan are not only relatives, but the existing relation are based on the deep beliefs of the people of the two countries in common religious principles that have been established throughout history," Raisi remarked.

Referring to his meeting with the Azeri president on the sidelines of the ECO summit in Turkmenistan, Raisi said the policy of Iran is extensive cooperation with neighbors, especially Azerbaijan in the Caucasus region, and according to the emphasis made by the presidents of the two countries, the process of developing economic and trade interactions, including transit interactions between the two countries, is accelerating.

The president also said Iran's power in the region brings security. He also warned that the presence of Takfiri groups including Daesh is not in the interest of the people of the region anywhere.

"These groups are made by the Americans and the Zionists and have committed criminal acts wherever they are present," he pointed out.

He also said the Zionist regime is the enemy of humanity and can by no means be a friend of the Muslim nations. The president cited the occupations and aggressions by the Zionists in the region, particularly against the Palestinian

people, as a proof to these bitter facts.

The president expressed hope that through conscious planning by the Azerbaijani Armed Forces, Takfiri movements and those who do not want to reconcile with Muslims would not be able to gain a foothold in the region.

During the meeting, the Azeri defense minister described his meetings and talks with his Iranian counterparts as very fruitful for future cooperation.

During a meeting with the Azeri defense minister on Tuesday, Iran's armed forces chief Major General Mohammad Bagheri also warned that terrorists are trying to spread across the region, including the Caucasus and Central Asia.

The top general said, "Terrorists in Syria and Iraq have been defeated, but not destroyed."

ISIS, also called Daesh in its Arabic acronym, unleashed its biggest attack in Syria since the fall of its "caliphate" three years ago. More than 100 ISIS militants assaulted the main prison holding terrorists, sparking a battle with Kurdish fighters that continued 24 hours later and left dozens dead on Friday, NBC news reported.

Across the border in Iraq, ISIS gunmen stormed an army barracks north of Baghdad before dawn on Friday while soldiers inside slept, killing 11 before escaping — the deadliest attack in months on Iraq's military.

"These terrorists are trying to spread the region, including Afghanistan, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Confronting them requires the cooperation of the countries of the region," General Bagheri insisted.

Major General Mohammad Bagheri also said defense cooperation between Iran and the Republic Azerbaijan will surely expand and this will benefit security in the two countries.

"I hope your visit to Iran is a good opportunity for development and consolidation of relations between the two countries, especially in defense, technical and military fields."

Referring to the policy of Iran in opposing occupation, General Bagheri also said, "The liberation of the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, which took place after three decades, pleased the Leader of the Islamic Revolution and the people of Iran."

Emphasizing the need to respect the territorial integrity of all countries, the military chief said that Iran is as sensitive to the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan as it is to its own.

Bagheri also said the presence of Israel in the region is a source of division and a threat to the security and stability of the countries in the region.

region.

The two foreign ministers also discussed further expansion of Iran-Qatar relations in different areas, including politics, economy and culture.

Meanwhile, Hamidreza Dehghani, Iran's ambassador to Doha, said on Tuesday night that the Iranian and Qatari foreign ministers talked twice on the phone.

"When relationships are close, developments are fast, and the issues are important, in one night, two phone calls are made," Dehghani tweeted.

According to the Qatari Foreign Ministry, the phone calls focused on the heightened tensions in the region between the UAE and Yemen's Ansarallah movement.

It is noteworthy to say that the Qatari Emir will leave for Washington in a few days.

# President clarifies on outcomes of his Moscow visit

*'If cruel sanctions are lifted, there will be opportunity for deal'*

TEHRAN — Speaking in his fourth televised interview on Tuesday night since taking office as president in August, Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi touched on many points, including his visit to Russia and the foreign policy approach of the government.

Raisi said that many activities and efforts have been made in Iran's international policies, yet, many areas have not been as balanced as political ones.

"The government is pursuing a kind of balance in its international policies. Iran's trade and economic interaction with Tajikistan has tripled since my visit and we are eliminating the shortcomings," the president explained.

Raisi then referred to imbalance in foreign policy, saying as the country's political relations with the outside world have increased internationally, economic and trade ties have not been given due attention "and we have a sort of backwardness in this regard."

"Enormous trade and economic capacity can be established with our country's 15 neighbors," said the president.

Raisi went on to say that following the agreements reached during his visit to Tajikistan, the economic and trade relations between the two countries have tripled.

"Also during the visit to Turkmenistan, apart from the (gas) swap discussion, transit relations were established between the two countries and good trade and economic relations were established," he said.

He added that as stated in the news, Iran's relations with the Republic of Azerbaijan have been developed, and today some shortcomings are being compensated.

This is also true in case of Russia, the president added.

"Iran's trade capacity with Russia is not what we see today," he said, adding that the current volume of trade ties which is more than \$3 billion dollars could easily reach

\$10 billion. We can import many goods from Russia, and we also have many agricultural products and goods that can be exported to the Russian market," he explained.

Raisi noted that in the field of oil and gas, given the technology that the Russians have, there is a good capacity for cooperation, which can lead to the growth of economic interactions between the two countries, as well as Iran's economic growth.

The president added, "There is cooperation with the Russians in the fields of transit, transportation, energy, agriculture, industry, aerospace and various other fields."

According to the president, there are many capacities in both countries which can help promote economic ties.

"We have advantages that Russia needs in our country, and there are advantages that can be used by Iran," he said.

In response to a question regarding a balanced foreign policy, Raisi said, "Negotiations have begun and the government's foreign policy in various fields is active, but there is no such thing as saying that negotiations solve everything. We negotiate, but not everything is negotiation."

Raisi added that the government operates in two areas: One is neutralizing sanctions and the other is lifting sanctions.

"One of the ways to neutralize sanctions is to have relations with our neighbors, and Russia is one of Iran's great neighbors, so we cannot ignore having economic, trade, and many relations that we can have with each other as an independent and capable country," he stated.

### Our foreign policy plan is interaction with all countries

Raisi stated that the basis of Iran's work is interaction with the whole world.

"I announced this in the election campaign and I will follow this, we will interact with all the countries of the world that want to interact with us, but the countries that



want to oppose us, naturally we will resist them. But what we have in our foreign policy plan is interaction with all countries."

Regarding his visit to Russia, including how he was received and prayed at the Kremlin, the president said that the result of a trip should be "more than a smile".

"The result of the trip should be the development of relations in the fields of energy, agriculture, industry and people's lives. What we care about is people's interests. That is what we pursued in Russia during the three-hour meeting with Mr. Putin. From the beginning to the end, bilateral, regional and international issues were on the agenda of our talks," the president stated.

Raisi added that since Iran and Russia have common positions on international issues, it was planned how to pursue the work, and so were those sections that dealt with domestic issues.

"Mr. Lavrov had told Mr. Amir Abdollahian that immediately after our meeting, Mr. Putin had instructed the ministers that the decisions we had made with the Iranian president should be implemented instantly. I also instructed the foreign minister, the minister of economic affairs and finance, the minister of petroleum and the relevant ministers to immediately implement the agreements we had so that their effects on the economy and various issues would be clarified," he remarked.

Referring to the Iran-Russia consensus on the need to break the dollar's dominance over the two countries' monetary and financial transactions, Raisi said he and Putin agreed that they could do a lot of trade between the two countries by using national currency.

"We had good agreements in the fields of defense, security, aerospace and other areas of mutual interest," the president outlined.

He went on to say that today in Bushehr, except for the first

phase of the nuclear power plant, which has been put into operation, the government is following the implementation of phases two and three with the Russians.

He added, "Accelerating the implementation of these plans was one of the issues raised. Exports of agricultural products to Russia and imports of strategic goods from Russia with regard to the elimination of tariffs were also among the issues discussed, and given the positive view of the Russians on this issue, it could expand bilateral trade."

Referring to the importance of activating the North-South corridor to facilitate and expand Iran's economic cooperation with neighboring countries, including Russia, the president outlined that in addition to these, various decisions regarding securing people's interests and the country's economic development in line with the neighborhood diplomacy was adopted.

Raisi added, "Regional issues, including the developments in Syria and the Caucasus, were also among the topics discussed with the Russian president, which was pursued in line with the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran."

On how the Vienna talks are proceeding if the United States' request for direct talks is taken seriously, he said that this is not "new".

"This request is not new. It has been made for a long time. Many of these countries that come to visit us carry a message that the Americans have sent to speak directly. This has been the case for a long time, maybe in previous administrations and in our administration, but so far there have been no negotiations with the Americans," he remarked.

Raisi concluded, "We have announced, and we will announce again, that if the parties are ready to lift the oppressive sanctions against the Iranian nation, there is opportunity for any kind of agreement"

## Iranian foreign minister to visit India next week

TEHRAN - India is expected to host Iranian foreign minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian next week, close on the heels of the India-Central Asia summit, the Economic Times reported on Wednesday.

This would be the Iranian foreign minister's maiden visit since his appointment last year. The agenda of the visit will include the Afghan situation, transit to Afghanistan and Central Asia, current developments in West Asia following the UAE-Yemen battle and trade ties, according to people aware of the matter.

The other issue that will figure high on the agenda of talks between the visiting minister and his Indian counterpart is the optimum use of Chabahar Port.

India is extremely keen to use the port for connectivity to Central Asia. India, Iran and Afghanistan had entered into a trilateral arrangement for the use of Chabahar Port under the erstwhile Ghani government. Later, India-Iran-Uzbekistan formed a trilateral for the use of the strategically located port and there was speculation that Afghanistan might join to make it a quadrilateral of sorts.

Besides, a preferential trade agreement with Iran is on the cards. India is keen to push the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) for connectivity to Russia via Iran. There are plans by India, Iran and Russia to link the Chabahar Port with the INSTC which would also enable the Central Asian states to access the Indian Ocean Region via the port. Iran's entry into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization as a member could further bolster India-Iran ties

in the region.

Iran, like India, favors an inclusive regime in Kabul that comprises representatives from all ethnic communities. The issue is expected to figure high on the agenda of Jaishankar's meeting with Amir Abdollahian. The two had met twice last year.

Ahead of the visit, Amir Abdollahian sent Republic Day greetings and called for expansion of all-out relations.

"Warm wishes to my colleague Indian FM@DrSJaishankar and the government and people of the Republic of India as they celebrate their Republic Day. Will continue to work towards further expansion of all-out relations, bilaterally, regionally and at international fora," he tweeted on Tuesday.

### Raisi felicitates India on National Day

In separate messages to the president and prime minister of India, Iran's President Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi also congratulated the Indian government and people on National Day.

In the messages, Raisi insisted on deepening relations between the two countries in all fields in line with the interests of the two nations.

President's message to Indian President Ram Nath Kovind is as follows:

In the Name of God, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

Your Excellency Mr. Ram Nath Kovind,

President of the Republic of India,

I would like to offer my sincerest congratulations to Your Excellency on the National Day of the Republic of India.

## Qatar FM to visit Tehran on Thursday

TEHRAN — Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, Qatar's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, will visit Tehran on Thursday to hold talks on bilateral and regional issues with his Iranian counterpart, Hossein Amir Abdollahian.

The trip comes 16 days after Amir Abdollahian visited Qatar.

Late on Tuesday, Iran's foreign minister also held phone talks with Al Thani.

In the telephone conversation, the two foreign ministers exchanged views on regional issues and the need to promote diplomacy and dialogue to resolve issues.

In the same framework, the foreign ministers of Iran and Qatar exchanged views on the developments unfolding in the region as well as the continuation of consultations between the two countries on the path to establish and protect peace and stability in

As two countries with rich culture and ancient civilizations in Asia, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of India have always had excellent relations and will undoubtedly create a new page of relations in the present era with their past reserves.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has the necessary will and readiness to expand and deepen relations with the Republic of India in all fields.

I wish Your Excellency health and success and the people of the Republic of India prosperity and felicity.

### Rich cultural and civilizational commonalities

Raisi's message to the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is also as follows:

In the Name of God, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

Your Excellency Mr. Narendra Modi,

Prime Minister of the Republic of India,

I would like to offer my sincerest congratulations to Your Excellency on the National Day of the Republic of India.

I hope that in the light of the rich cultural and civilizational commonalities and the long-standing relations between the two countries, the cooperation between the two countries will expand and strengthen with the efforts of the high-ranking officials of the two countries in all fields and in the interests of the two nations.

I wish Your Excellency health and success and the people of the Republic of India prosperity and felicity.



# Iran, Togo FM's meet in Tehran

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian on Tuesday hosted his Togolese counterpart Robert Dussey and his entourage.

The two sides exchanged views over issues of mutual interest as well as regional and international matters, the Iranian foreign ministry said.

The Iranian foreign minister welcomed Dussey and his entourage and referred to the significance of visits by officials of both countries for the purpose of expanding bilateral ties.

Amir Abdollahian then reaffirmed the determination of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to expand relations with African countries and all-out expansion of interactions and deals in all areas of mutual interest with Togo.

The Iranian foreign minister also outlined the achievements of the Islamic Republic of Iran in different fields and the

capabilities of Iranian companies in economic, scientific, technological and health sectors.

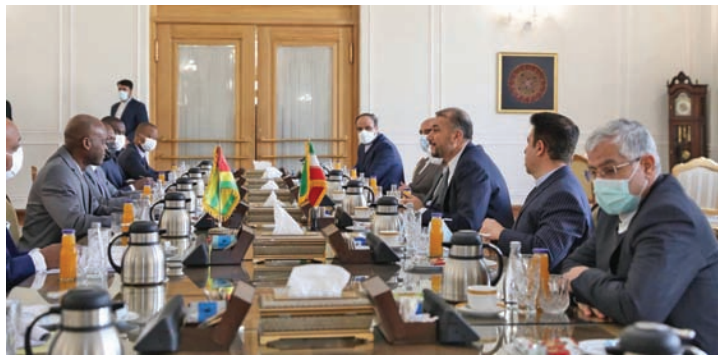
Amir Abdollahian underlined Iran's readiness to cooperate with other countries in those fields.

Robert Dussey also thanked the Iranian side for the invitation, announcing his country's readiness to expand bilateral ties, especially regarding trade and economic issues.

Dussey enumerated fields in which Iran and Togo can cooperate like education, healthcare and energy and invited Iranian companies to participate in the development plan of his country and related projects.

In the meeting, the two sides agreed on the establishment of a joint working committee, exploring the possibility of opening embassies in the capitals of the two countries and exchanging trade delegations.

The Togolese foreign minister



invited Amir Abdollahian to visit Lome and the Iranian foreign minister accepted the invitation.

The foreign minister of Togo also met with Iranian President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi. Speaking on Monday in a meeting with Dussey, Ayatollah Raisi said that African countries have rich and talented natural resources, minerals and human resources, adding, "Tehran seeks comprehensive development of relations with African countries, including Togo, to serve the common interest of the two nations".

Stating that throughout the history, Westerners have mainly sought to colonize and exploit the African continent, and today they are pursuing their desires and interests in various forms, the president noted, "The efforts of the people of this continent to maintain their independence are valuable and their success depends on the emphasis on national and cultural identity and resistance to extravagance".

The president stated, "African countries have the necessary capacities for development and prosperity, and the Islamic Republic of Iran supports the independence, progress and welfare of the African people," according to the official website of the Iranian presidency.

The Foreign Minister of Togo Robert Dussey also stressed that his country wants to establish wide-ranging and comprehensive relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, adding, "Lomé trusts Tehran's approaches in the development process of relations, and hopes that the policies of development of economic cooperation with Africa boosts through mutual partnership".

Condemning the West's tough sanctions against independent states and nations, the Togolese Foreign Minister stressed, "We seek joint cooperation with Iran to activate our capabilities in the mutual interest".

## Iran FM advisor and Sweden special envoy discuss Yemen

TEHRAN – Ali Asghar Khaji, a senior advisor to the Iranian foreign minister for special political affairs, and Peter Semneby, Sweden's special envoy for Yemen, on Tuesday discussed latest developments in the Arab country via a video conference.

During the video discussion, the two sides exchanged views over potential areas of cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Sweden for the purpose of helping resolve the Yemeni crisis and end the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in the country.

The conversation came against a backdrop of heightened tensions between Yemen and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The Sanaa-based government has launched two drone and missile attacks on the UAE in recent days.

Iran has expressed concern over the situation in Yemen. Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian said what is going on between Yemen and some neighbors is a Yemeni issue adding that the Islamic Republic of Iran has already tabled its four-point political plan on the subject and supports it.

He made the remarks at The National Conference on Iran and Neighbors which was held on Monday, 24 January, with the participation of the Institute for Political and International Studies of the Foreign Ministry and the Institute for the Islamic World's Future Studies.

At the conference, Major General Yahya Rahim-Safavi, Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi, Minister of Economy Ehsan Khandouzi and the scientific secretary of the conference Seyed Jalal Dehghani Firozabadi, offered their thoughts.

In the follow-up to their speeches, seven scholarly panels were held on neighborhood policy, environmental cooperation, political economy, geostrategic rivalries, scientific and cultural exchanges and regional and international corridors.

At the conclusion, Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian talked about the neighborhood policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iran's achievements and actions in this regard. He said under the new neighborhood policy, consultations with all neighbors, including on the Vienna talks, is among our priorities.

Amir Abdollahian considered the issue of Yemen as a challenge to the neighborhood policy being pursued by the Raisi administration.

He also said the escalation of the war is a source of concern and called on the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia to adopt a constructive approach and move to accept an end to the war, ceasefire and intra-Yemeni talks.

The foreign minister also backed continuation of talks with Saudi Arabia stressing that whenever this country decides to normalize ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran, we will support reopening of the embassies.



Amir Abdollahian urged Saudi Arabia and the UAE to put an end to the war in Yemen.

"These days, something is happening in Yemen. What is between Yemen and some of its neighbors and countries participating in military operations is an internal Yemeni issue. Iran has presented a four-point political plan at all stages since the beginning of the Yemeni crisis and has followed its plan," Amir Abdollahian said, pointing to Iran's initiative to end the war in Yemen.

"We are concerned about the escalation of the war and call on Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to take a political and constructive approach to end the siege and end the war and enter into the Yemeni-Yemeni dialogue," he reiterated, warning that "continuation of such a situation is not in the interest of the region."

## Vienna talks make progress despite British pessimism

TEHRAN – Britain has once again resorted to language of threat despite the fact that talks in Vienna are making progress, though slowly.

Iran's chief negotiator, Ali Bagheri Kani, held meetings on Tuesday with several delegates in Vienna as part of the negotiations over reviving the 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). He held a meeting with chief EU negotiator Enrique Mora and then a meeting with the heads of the delegations of the EU and the E3 (France, Britain, and Germany).

Simultaneously, expert-level meetings were held to discuss how to revive the 2015 deal. The talks continued on Wednesday at the level of experts and heads of delegations, an indication that the talks in Vienna are making progress.

But British Foreign Secretary Liz Truss has another assessment. She stuck a note of pessimism at a time when even Western diplomatic sources are convinced that the talks are on the right track.

She warned about a perilous



"impasse" at the talks. "This negotiation is urgent and progress has not been fast enough. We continue to work in close partnership with our allies but the negotiations are reaching a dangerous impasse," Truss told the British parliament.

She so far as to urge Iran to choose between concluding a deal or bearing the responsibility for the unraveling of the JCPOA. "Iran must now choose whether it wants to conclude a deal or be responsible for the collapse of the JCPOA (nuclear deal). And if the JCPOA collapses, all options are on the table," Truss added.

This wasn't the first time the British foreign secretary made unconstructive remarks that go against the general atmosphere of the talks. At the beginning of the seventh round of talks, the British foreign secretary co-authored an op-ed with the Israeli foreign minister that used the language of threat against Iran. This was widely seen as a diplomatic gaffe as the seventh round was just beginning. The top British diplomat continued to make unconstructive remarks. He then said that the seventh round was the last chance to revive the JCPOA. "This is the last chance for Iran

to come to the negotiating table with a serious resolution to this issue, which has to be agreeing the terms of the JCPOA. This is their last chance and it is vital that they do so," Truss said in December.

Of course, the seventh round ended without any deal being made. And it wasn't the last chance as talks entered the eighth round.

As regards the impasse, the talks are going on and the slow pace is natural given the depth and scope of the issues under discussion. Over the past few days, the talks even made further progress in terms of filling some of the brackets in the draft agreement. Therefore, the British allegation that the talks are heading toward a stalemate is far from reality and is seen by some observers as a move to pressurize Iran into making more concessions in Vienna.

Iran has said that some of the issues under discussion in Vienna require political decisions on the part of Europe and the U.S. If the West makes such decisions, Iran stressed, a deal in Vienna would be within reach soon.

## We have a tough match against rejuvenated Iraq: Skocic

TEHRAN – Iran football beam coach Dragan Skocic says that they will a tough match against rejuvenated Iraq.

The 'Persian Leopards' are scheduled to meet Iraq on Thursday in Group A of the 2022 FIFA World Cup qualifier on Thursday.

Iran will qualify for the 2022 FIFA World Cup if defeat Iraq in this match.

"Some players got infected with COVID-19 and it could be blow to our team. The match against Iraq is very important since we can qualify for the 2022 World Cup if we defeat our opponents," Skocic said in the pre-match news conference.

"Iran have a difficult task ahead but we are ready to beat them. I've seen Iraq's matches in Arab Cup and I have to say they are a good team.

"Sardar Azmoun and Ahmad Nouroollahi have missed the match and finding replacement for them is very difficult," the Croat added.

"We respect rejuvenated Iraq but we want to beat them," Skocic stated.

## 2022 WCQ: 11,000 fans to attend Iran v Iraq match

TEHRAN – Some 11,000 fans will attend the match between Iran and Iraq football team in the 2022 World Cup qualifier.

The match will be held in Tehran's Azadi Stadium on Thursday.

Group A leaders Iran will qualify for the 2022 FIFA World Cup for the third time in a row if defeat the Iraqi team at the Azadi Stadium.

With confirmation of Iran's National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control, some 9,000 male and 2,000 female are allowed to enter into the stadium.

The football federation had previously announced that up to 30,000 fans would attend the match.

## Rafael Nadal proud to be Meshkatolzahra Safi's idol

TEHRAN – Tennis legend Rafael Nadal says that he is very proud to inspire Iranian girl Meshkatolzahra Safi to choose tennis.

A day after making history by becoming the first ever player from Iran to win a Grand Slam junior match, Meshkatolzahra Safi, 17, came face to face with the man who inspired her to take up tennis in the first place.

Nadal finds Safi's story "amazing" and was thrilled he got to meet her.

"I was in the corridor and somebody from the tournament just introduced me to her and explained to me a little bit the history. For me it was a pleasure to know more about her, I think it's amazing, her story; super special to see players from different parts of the world, especially parts of the world that historically we never had players on the tour," Nadal told The National in a voice message on Tuesday, after he booked himself a spot in the Australian Open semi-finals.

"I think it's fantastic to see a player from Iran that now is in the juniors and she already won a match. It's a great story and it really was a pleasure to meet her.

"One of the most beautiful things is that sport can change life of people and every time our sport is arriving to more places, it's

being more global and stories like hers say that we're on the right way to keep promoting our sport in every single part of the world," he added.

Nadal, who is gunning for an all-time record 21st Grand Slam title this fortnight in Melbourne, has inspired countless people across the globe but still finds it humbling to hear that Safi played tennis for the first time because she watched him play a match on TV.

"For me, it's something special. If I am able to inspire anyone to help them to make positive decisions on the lives of the people, it's something that I am very proud of," said the Spaniard.

"In this particular case, if that helped her to try to play tennis and now she is where she is, it's a big honor for me and I'm super happy for that," Nadal concluded.

## Happy birthday gentleman Pourheydari

TEHRAN – For most of the Iranian football fans, Mansour Pourheydari was not just a former player and coach, he was a man who dedicated himself to the country's football.

Pourheydari was a member of Esteghlal football club for 10 years and claimed two league title and one Asian Club Championship (1970) with the team.

As the team's coach, he inspired the Blues to two league titles and two Hazfi Cups as well.

Pourheydari also helped Iran to win 1998 Asian Games in Bangkok, Thailand.

He was born on Jan. 26, 1946 and passed away on Nov. 4, 2016.

As a football player and coach, he was loved and respected by all who knew him.

He served Iran football for many years and will never be forgotten.

## Iran beaten by Bahrain in 2022 Asian Handball Championship

TEHRAN – Iran suffered a 36-26 loss against Qatar in Group II of the 2022 Asian Handball Championship.

Iran will meet Group I first-place team Qatar in semifinals round on Saturday.

Iran have previously qualified for the 2023 World Handball Championship for the first time since 2015 in Qatar.

The top five teams from the Championship 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.

## Mehdi Taremi a doubt for Iran v Iraq match

TEHRAN – Iran national football team forward Mehdi Taremi will most likely miss the match against Iraq in the 2022 World Cup qualifier.

The Porto star is in Istanbul, Turkey now but cannot travel to Tehran after the flights were canceled due to heavy snowfall.

Iran are scheduled to meet Iraq in Tehran's Azadi Stadium in Group A on Thursday.

Dragan Skocic's team will qualify for the FIFA World Cup for the third time in a row with a win over Iraq.



## Iran, Azerbaijan ink MOU for constructing bridge over Astarachay



Iran's Deputy Transport Minister Kheirollah Khademi (L) and Azerbaijan's Deputy Minister of Digital Development and Transport Rahman Hummatov sign MOU documents in Baku on Tuesday

From page 1 ► Noting that Azerbaijan and Iran have established deep relations in various areas including trade, economy, energy, customs, and investment, he said: "There are good opportunities between the two countries to implement joint projects in these fields."

Mustafayev further mentioned the upward trend of trade between the two countries and said: "Despite the Coronavirus pandemic in the last two years, the trade turnover of Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan in the first 11 months of 2021 increased by 30 percent compared to the previous year and the amount of road transport also increased by 62.5 percent."

"During this period, the transportation and transit of goods between the two countries have not stopped for a single day," he stressed.

Qasemi for his part called Azerbaijan the closest neighbor to Iran and said: "We hope that after the meeting of the presidents of the two countries, relations between the two nations will develop as much as possible."

He pointed to the development of relations with neighbors as one of the priorities of the Iranian government and, referring to Iran's participation in the implementation of projects in Azerbaijan's liberated territories [in Karabakh], said: "Cooperation between the two countries in this area can accelerate the reconstruction of these regions."

Qasemi noted that the development of transport and transit in the region is in the interest of both countries, and said that the two countries' Joint Economic Committee could help deepen economic relations between them, as well as provide the necessary facilities for businessmen and entrepreneurs.

Elsewhere in the ceremony, Khademi also considered the construction of the Astarachay bridge as an effective step in completing the north-south corridor and said: "The construction of this bridge will lead to economic, tourism, industrial and transportation development of the two countries due to the cultural, social and religious commonalities of the two neighboring countries."

"The Astarachay border bridge will lead to the development of transit between the two countries, which, in parallel with the existing railway bridge, will lead to the comprehensive development of the region," he said.

## South Pars accounts for 70% of Iran's gas supply

TEHRAN – Director of production and operations at Pars Oil and Gas Company (POGC), which is in charge of developing giant South Pars gas field in southern Iran, has said the field meets 70 percent of the natural gas need in the country, Shana reported.

Noting that eight percent of the world's gas reserves are in the South Pars field, Alireza Ebadi said: "over 50 percent of Iran's gas reserves are in South Pars, which is divided into 29 phases."

According to the official, 60 percent of the field, which Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf, is in the Arab country's territorial waters and 40 percent belong to Iran.

Processing the output of two south Pars phases, each refinery of the South Pars Gas Complex (SPGC) produces 50 million cubic meters of gas, 2,750 tons of ethane, propane, and butane, 77,000 barrels of gas condensate, as well as 400 tons of sulfur on a daily basis, the official said.

"Each two-phase refinery accounts for one percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), earning the country \$10 million a day and \$3.5 billion a year," Ebadi added.

He put the total investment made in South Pars at \$81 billion, saying that the field needs another \$7.8 billion to be completed.

# Iran serious to develop petro-refineries

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN- International energy companies predict that the demand for petrochemical products will increase significantly in the coming years, and therefore the development of petro-refineries seems a necessity in Iran.

Due to the country's benefit from oil and gas resources, the development of petro-refineries is much easier and relatively cheaper in Iran than other countries in the world, and the country can play a role in regulating the price of petrochemical products in the world due to its proximity to energy sources and its capacity for the development of petro-refinery.

And most importantly, if the country's petro-refinery capacity can be expanded to the level of crude oil feed produced in the country, the sanctions on Iran's oil industry will be practically nullified.

It is why Iran is now serious and determined to develop its petro-refineries, although in previous years, despite the country's upstream economic plans based on preventing the sale of crude oil and natural gas, and developing refining capacity instead to boost production of export products, there seemed to



be no will to build petro-refineries.

In order to encourage the government and investors to work hard on the development of petro-refinery industry, the Petro-Refinery Development Law was drafted in the Iranian calendar year 1398 (March 2019-March 2020), and then amendments to this law were drafted in the parliament earlier this year.

Two weeks ago, Iranian Oil Minister Javad Oji said some major domestic banks are going to form a consortium with a total investment capacity of four billion dollars to implement petro-refinery projects across the country.

Speaking to the press on January 15, Oji said: "A large part of the

financial resources required for the implementation of the country's oil projects will be provided with the support of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, and this includes the financial resources needed for the refining sector as well."

Back in March 2021, Oil Ministry announced starting of a program for constructing petro-refinery plants in the southern coastal regions, calling on capable domestic companies to contribute to the program.

Following the announcement, 74 domestic companies were authorized for participating in the mentioned program.

In fact, 117 companies had

submitted their requests to the Oil Ministry among which 74 were initially approved.

Also on Wednesday, the managing director of Lavan Refinery (in Lavan Island south of Iran) announced the construction of a 150,000-barrel petro-refinery next to Lavan Refinery and efforts to increase the refinery's gasoline production by one million liters per day.

Mohammad-Ali Akhbari said the project to build the mentioned petro-refinery is in line with the oil industry's approach to develop the petro-refining plans.

He said that major shareholders have welcomed the investment in the new petro-refinery project, negotiations have been held with the private sector, and a working group has been set up to expedite and facilitate the implementation of this project, which will be completed with continuous follow-up.

Increasing the country's petro-refining capacity, in addition to generating more revenue, new job opportunities, economic prosperity, and reviving other industries, is a key defense mechanism against the impacts of the U.S. sanctions on the country's oil industry.

## Oil output planned to reach 5.7m bpd in 8 years

TEHRAN – National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) plans to increase the country's crude oil production capacity to 5.7 million barrels per day (bpd) over the next eight years, Karim Zobeidi, NIOC's director of corporate planning, said.

"By attracting the necessary investment, we intend to increase Iran's oil production capacity to 5.7 million barrels in the next eight years," Zobeidi said in a gathering of NIOC and capital market representatives on Tuesday.

As Shana reported, referring to the NIOC investment priorities, the official stated: "The participation of domestic investors in the drilling operations of new oil wells is more important for us."

According to Zobeidi, the maintenance projects aimed at keeping the production levels of the existing oil wells can also be good areas for investment. These projects may include repairing existing wells and constructing some process facilities and pipelines.

He further noted that according to the NIOC plans, the country's daily natural gas production capacity is also expected to reach 1.5 billion cubic

meters within the next eight years, provided that the necessary investment is made in this sector as well.

Pointing to the plans to increase the country's gas production capacity, the official said: "Completion of the development project of South Pars phase 11, completion of some pressure-boosting projects in the existing phases of South Pars, and the development of Kish and North Pars gas fields are among the projects that the National Iranian Oil Company has on the agenda to increase the country's gas production capacity."

The Iranian Central Oil Fields Company (ICOFC), which operates some oil and gas fields in central Iran, also plans to increase its gas production capacity by 320 million cubic meters over the next eight years, Zobeidi added.

Back in November 2021, the Iranian Oil Ministry had announced that plans were underway to boost the country's crude oil capacity to near four million bpd by March 2022, returning to levels not seen since before the U.S. withdrew from the nuclear deal and re-imposed sanctions



on the country's crude sales in 2018.

In the budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year (starts on March 21), special attention has been paid to improving oil and gas production and development of energy infrastructure across the country in order to boost the oil output to 3.952 million bpd.

Considering the new resource allocations for the development of the oil industry in the budget bill for the next fiscal year, the country's crude oil and gas condensate production is expected to increase by 144,000 bpd, Tasnim News Agency reported earlier this month.

## Farmed shrimps export stands at \$150m in 10 months

TEHRAN- Iran's farmed shrimps export stood at \$150 million since the beginning of current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2021), an official with Agriculture Ministry announced.

Morteza Afrasiabi said that 57,800 tons of shrimps were farmed in 14,034 hectares of aqua farms during the said time span, about 75-80 percent of which was exported to the European, Asian and regional markets.

He named Turkey, Iraq, United Arab Emirates (UAE), China, Spain and France as some of the export destinations of Iran's farmed shrimps during the mentioned period of time, and said China and UAE stood at the top of the list.

In last August, an official with Iran Fisheries Organization (IFO) announced that the area under shrimp farming in the country has risen 12 percent in the current Iranian calendar year.

Ilsa Golshahi, IFO's director-general for quality improvement, processing, and market development, said that the area under shrimp farming has reached about 13,607 hectares with an increase of about 12 percent compared to the previous year.

He stated that the highest area under shrimp farming belongs to Bushehr province (in the southwest of the country), adding that the area under shrimp cultivation in this province is about 6,053 hectares, which is 53 hectares more than the area targeted in the Sixth Five-Year National Development Plan (2016-2021).

The official has also stated that cooperation with the relevant organizations such as chambers of commerce, Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as

well as the non-governmental sector to open new markets in the international arena is one the agenda of the IFO's plans.

Over the past two years, the efforts of the Aquatics' Production and Trade Union of Iran, and the non-governmental sector have led to the addition of markets in countries such as Oman and Malaysia to Iran's target export markets in this field, he has noted.

Fishery production has increased noticeably in Iran in recent years.

Enjoying high quality, Iran's fishery products were sold easily in the export markets, and also some new export destinations welcomed these products in the past two years; as new markets including China, South Korea, and the Eurasian Union nations opened up for Iranian fishery products.

## TEDPIX up 21,000 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose 21,497 points to 1.229 million on Wednesday.

Over 5.545 billion securities worth 34.793 trillion rials (about \$120 million) were traded at the TSE.

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.

## Govt. announces new resolutions to support stock market

TEHRAN – Government Economic Coordination Headquarters in its latest meeting has approved five new resolutions for supporting the country's stock market, and the directives in this regard have been sent to relative ministries, First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber announced.

The mentioned resolutions include the reduction of petrochemical feed prices, the reduction of interbank interest rates, the restriction of the sale of securities, preventing the increase of government mining salaries and the increase of the exchange rate of banks, IRNA reported.

## Products worth \$730m exported from Hamedan province in 9 months

TEHRAN- As announced by a provincial official, commodities worth \$730 million were exported from Hamedan province during the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 21, 2021).

Alireza Qasemi-Farзад, the governor-general of the province, said that 110 items in agriculture, industry, mining, and handicrafts groups were exported from the province to 29 countries during the nine-month period.

The official said that the province's value of export is planned to reach \$1.3 billion by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20).

According to Mokhber, the decisions made in the meeting of the Government Economic Coordination Headquarters have been communicated with Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Ehsan Khandouzi, Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade Reza Fatemi-Amin, Oil Minister Javad Oji, Head of Planning and Budget Organization (PMO) Masoud Mir-Kazemi, and Governor of Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Ali Saleh-Abadi.

Speaking about the positive impacts of the mentioned decisions on the capital market, Finance Minister Ehsan Khandouzi said on Tuesday that the mentioned resolutions carry

As previously announced by the head of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the value of Iran's non-oil trade rose 38 percent during the first nine months of the present year, as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

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, IRNA reported.

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 message of government's serious support for industries and indicate stable economic activity, predictability of variables, and ultimately a positive outlook for the economy in the coming months.

Earlier on Tuesday, President Raisi had called on all related authorities to take the necessary measures for resolving the stock market problems.

Following the president's remarks,

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.

He noted that the value of the country's non-oil exports in the first nine months of the current year has exceeded the total value of exports in the previous year and the figure is expected to reach \$47 billion by the end of the current calendar year (March 20, 2022).

Moghadasi said the value of Iran's non-oil trade with foreign partners is expected to reach \$98 billion by the year end.

According to the official,



# S. Arabia and Israel becoming world pariahs: analyst

From page 1 ▶ but the U.S. and minions want to think it is escalating to justify sending arms to Ukraine and maybe 8500 troops to eastern Europe and thus raising alarms. Whatever, it's a big distraction created entirely by the U.S., and daft Biden even allegedly threatened nuclear war, which I don't think has been done before since the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The escalation seems entirely on the U.S. side unless one believes Russia moving troops around on its own territory near or at the Ukraine border is any kind of real escalation. Sure, it may look like preparations for an invasion of some kind but it's hard to believe Russia would invade Ukraine over the eastern Ukraine and its mostly Russian speaking civilians whom the Russians do want to protect from attacks by Ukrainian forces. Rumors regarding Russian intentions, most of them anyway, are probably false. To demonstrate how bizarre Biden is: in a news conference Biden heard a question by a reporter asking about rampant inflation in the U.S., a concern for every American, and was heard commenting via a hot mic that the reporter was a "stupid son of a bitch". Rumors are all over the map over Russian intentions. One has it that Putin wants to replace the government in Kiev with one friendly to Russia. However such may be welcomed by Putin, the Ukraine government is a mess, as is Ukraine, and it is doing a good enough job harming itself. But it's hard to imagine Putin would take the bait and launch an invasion, as ever, the U.S. is desperately trying to stir up trouble. Biden was a leader promoting the coup as Vice President under Obama years ago.

**Do you predict NATO will surrender to Russia or it is going to surround it?**

It depends on what is meant by "surrender" to Russia. Russia has not yet DONE anything that must be surrendered to. But in any case, if Russia invades Ukraine or crosses the border, it is going to be met with draconian sanctions and perhaps outright war, which will be a disaster for the U.S., for Ukraine and for Europe. And perhaps for Russia also. Russians cannot forget what happened in Afghanistan years ago.

**What would be the U.S.'s reaction**



**if another power tries to enter into its backyard or its sphere of influence?**

Several countries in the U.S. "backyard" continue to try to defy the U.S. Nicaragua, Venezuela, Cuba and maybe even now Chile with its new government and even Bolivia. They all are tired of U.S. diktat over decades and just want to be left alone to develop as they see fit without the usual U.S. interference. There has been talk about Russia and China establishing a presence in Venezuela, assisting Cuba, extending the Belt and Road initiative of economic support to South and Central America. Moves by Russia and China to expand their spheres of influence may well occur or be occurring, but to be clear, it seems unlikely the U.S. can do much about this and are not going to invade Cuba or Venezuela one must presume. The U.S. does NOT itself have the power or influence it once had in its "backyard". But the overall problem for the U.S. is that it is witnessing the birth of a multipolar world and does not know how to adapt any longer, or easily, to not being the sole hegemon, and the use of military power has failed both in West Asia and Southeast Asia (since Vietnam). And its allies like Saudi Arabia and Israel are fast becoming world pariahs.

**Why is the U.S. insisting on entering other powers' spheres of influence like what we see in escalation with Russia over Ukraine and China over Taiwan?**

The "why" is obvious. The U.S. cannot fathom losing its perch as the



unipolar behemoth. It is scared and seems to lack the creative thinking necessary to maintain the degree of influence it has enjoyed since World War II. A frightened U.S. blusters and threatens, as it always has for decades, but extant military power

**"Iran, China and Russia are continuing to develop and shore up their alliances in every respect at the same time that the U.S. begins to lose critical support in Europe for its postures."**

fore Russia invades Ukraine!" Europe in any event seems to be wising up to a dangerous U.S. and the U.S. Secretary of State, Tony Blinken, seems well out of his depth and facing some rejection.

**How do you read new moves of Iran, China and Russia in inking strategic partnerships and exercising joint military exercises? Are they a reaction to U.S. interventionist policies?**

Iran, China and Russia are continuing to develop and shore up their alliances in every respect at the same time that the U.S. begins to lose critical support in Europe for its postures. Raisi had a very successful recent visit to Russia. Raisi told the Russians that Iran has been resisting the U.S. for over 40 years, and he was apparently well received. Meanwhile the U.S. has so far failed to give Iran guarantees over the JCPOA's sustainability. Part of the problem is that President Biden is casting about

in all the wrong ways to regenerate support at home, where his approval rating is only about 30 percent, and also abroad. Iran definitely seems to be on the right track, looking East, and China, Russia and They are developing a new bank clearing network to compete with the SWIFT system and has potential member nations of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Eurasian Economic Union on board with the idea. So far Biden's

major threat is cutting Russia off from SWIFT, but some Europeans are aghast at the idea and know quite well that such a move would well sink Europe's and especially Germany's economy and as well ultimately harm the U.S. In sum, it's sad Biden never carried through on most of his campaign promises, even on the war on Yemen. His Presidency smells of utter failure after a year in the White House.

## More "potential" graves of native children found in Canada

From page 1 ▶ Since May, more than 1,000 anonymous graves have been found near former school institutions, shedding light on a very dark chapter in Canadian history and its policy of forced assimilation of First Nations people.

According to Sellars 14 of 470 hectares around the former St. Joseph's Mission Residential School have been examined so far as part of the broader process to find out what happened to all the children who did not return home.

He says "there is much more work to do on the St. Joseph's site, and we have every intention of continuing with this work".

Sellars noted the accounts of survivors suggest "many? children who attended the school remain unaccounted for saying "their bodies were cast into the river, left at the bottom of lakes, tossed like garbage into the incinerators".

He added "It is for those children and families that we grieve the most?"

The survivors of the Williams Lake First Nation and nearly a dozen nearby First Nations will be receiving therapy and other means of support to help them deal with what has been found and the memories that haunt them to this day.

The St. Joseph's Mission Residential School was opened by the Roman Catholic Church in 1891 and ultimately closed in 1981.

First Nations representatives are calling on Pope Francis to come to Canada and issue a public apology. Last year, The Vatican announced the pope would visit Canada this year. However, a date has not been announced.

There were some 130 residential schools operating by Catholic missionary congregations.

The goal was to isolate young native children from the influence of their parents and their culture, which the government considered inferior to the colonialist Canadian society.

Sellars found it emotionally difficult to deliver the preliminary findings at a press conference. He recalled traumatic details by school survivors to investigators and spoke about already known "atrocities" committed against Indigenous children by staff there.

At one point he noted a chilling account: "so common, as one survivor relates, that if the school intercom requested a child to attend the office, you knew someone was about to be raped".

Sellars says the investigation team has heard stories of torture, rape, forcible confinement, and exposure to extreme conditions, among other abuses.

The preliminary investigation also used ground-penetrating radar and other equipment near the school site.



The atrocious suffering of the indigenous people occurred at the school institutions as well as other similar facilities across the country.

Sellars says religious officials and the federal government misled the public about what was happening at residential schools.

"It is important that these investigations remain in the public eye," Sellars said. "That we, as a nation, continue in an unwavering path forward in our pursuit of the truth with respect to St. Joseph's Mission and other residential schools in Canada."

A truth and reconciliation commission concluded in 2015 the failed government policy amounted to "cultural genocide."

## Saudis hit Yemen with scores of airstrikes

From page 1 ▶ He reiterated that "It is noteworthy that the head of the national delegation stressed in a previous statement that as long as the aggression against us continues, we will continue to respond, stressing that if the UAE decides not to be targeted, it should not target others".

Yemeni officials accuse the United Arab Emirates of backing "mercenaries" in Southern Yemen who have been wreaking havoc in the country's south with a separatist agenda.

Yemen has warned Abu Dhabi to back out of the Saudi-led coalition.

Over the past week, Yemeni forces have carried out two military operations against the United Arab Emirates dubbed "Yemen Storm one" and "Yemen Storm two" striking targets deep inside the UAE including the capital Abu Dhabi and its commercial hub Dubai for the Emirati increasing

participation in the war.

At one point, Abu Dhabi announced it would withdraw support for the coalition, and Yemeni forces refrained from targeting the UAE. Over the past months two m, Yemeni officials accused the UAE of resuming its role in the coalition.

Yemeni forces have also retaliated against Saudi Arabia in response to a very sharp uptick in air raids by the Saudis across Yemen, with the latest retaliation targeting an industrial zone in the Kingdom's south.

The operations in both countries were conducted with missiles and drones causing significant damage.

According to the United Nations, since the war on Yemen began in 2015, around 300,000 people have been killed from violence and preventable diseases.

However, monitoring groups say



the figure is much higher (with the majority of deaths being women and children) as the UN stopped keeping count of the death toll for several years acknowledging it was impossible to do so.

Yemeni officials say that since the

beginning of January this year, attacks by the Saudi-led coalition have killed at least 150 people.

According to the UN, the country has become the world's worst humanitarian disaster, with millions on the verge of starvation.

# INTERNATIONAL

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Straight Truth  
TEHRAN TIMES

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## Biden says no U.S. or NATO troops will be sent to Ukraine if Russia invades



President Biden said Tuesday that no U.S. or NATO troops will be sent into Ukraine in the event of a Russian invasion, which Biden said would be "the largest invasion since World War II," CNN reported.

Speaking to reporters while visiting a small D.C. clothing store, Biden said he would consider personally sanctioning Russian President Vladimir

Putin if he invaded Ukraine.

NATO countries have sent fighter jets and ships to Eastern Europe, Eastern European NATO members are funneling U.S.-made anti-aircraft and anti-tank weapons into Ukraine, and the Pentagon has placed around 8,500 U.S. troops on high alert.

Last week, the United Kingdom sent 2,000 anti-tank missile launchers into Ukraine along with 30 elite British troops to train the Ukrainian military on how to use them.

Senior Pentagon and Biden administration officials have also considered backing an anti-Russian insurgency inside Ukraine if Russia invades.

Foreign policy analyst Clint Ehrlich warned in a Twitter thread earlier this month that such a strategy assumes "NATO can kill Russian soldiers with impunity ... [a]nd that there is no real risk of Russia retaliating."

Ehrlich went on to envision a scenario in which Russia struck back by funding, training, and arming its own "insurgencies inside NATO member states," a move that could easily escalate into full-scale war.

## Pelosi to seek reelection with Democratic majority at risk

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi announced Tuesday she will seek reelection, ending speculation that she would retire as Democrats face the threat of losing control of Congress in the 2022 midterms.

"While we have made progress, much more needs to be done to improve people's lives," the 81-year-old Pelosi said in an online video.

"This election is crucial. Nothing less is at stake than our democracy," she added.

By announcing she would seek a 19th term, Pelosi avoids becoming a lame duck in a year when Democrats are clinging to a fragile majority in the House and the party is under pressure to raise vast sums of money to defend control of Congress.

Her decision to remain in the chamber follows announcements by 29 House Democrats that they won't seek reelection this year, compared to 13 Republicans as the GOP looks toward taking back the House.

The party that controls the White House typically loses seats in Congress in midterm elections, and Democrats are defending both chambers at a time when President Joe Biden's approval rating has been slipping.

"Our democracy is at risk because the assault on the truth, assault on the U.S. Capitol and the state-by-state assault on voting rights," she added.

In the video, Pelosi never addresses if she intends to seek another term as the House's Democratic leader, if reelected.

The San Francisco Democrat made history 15 years ago when she became the first female speaker of the House. She has served in Congress since 1987.

Earlier this month in an interview with The As-



sociated Press, Pelosi only hinted at another run, saying she "may" seek reelection.

In a Twitter post, California Republican Kevin Kiley, a congressional candidate and state assemblyman, said Pelosi's announcement was "all the more reason we need Republicans in Congress who will fight."

Pelosi will be a overwhelming favorite in her heavily Democratic district — she won with 78% of the vote in 2020. But she's also running at a time when her hometown has been criticized for squalor and crime, including daytime shootings in tourist areas, widespread homelessness and smash-and-grab thefts at high-end stores.

(Source: AP)

## Syrian Kurds say prison recaptured after IS group attack

Kurdish forces in Syria on Wednesday said they fully recaptured a prison in the northeastern city of Hasaka that had been attacked by the Islamic State (IS) group, ending the biggest jihadist assault in the country in three years.

In a statement, Farhad Shami of the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) said days of operations had "culminated with our entire control" over the prison in Hasaka after all holdout IS group fighters surrendered.

There was no mention in the statement of the 850 children and minors caught in the crossfire when the SDF began to storm the prison on Monday.

The UN and international aid organizations had expressed fear over the fate of the minors living alongside the nearly 5,000 prisoners in the overcrowded jail.

More than 100 jihadists from the IS group last week attacked Ghwayran prison in Hasaka, held by a semi-autonomous Kurdish administration.

The brazen assault on the Kurdish-run facility involved a double suicide bombing and saw the jihadists free fellow IS members, seize weapons and take over a series of jail blocks.

It is considered the most sophisticated attack carried out by the group since it was territorially defeated in Syria nearly three years ago.

The SDF on Wednesday morning "carried out search operations inside prison blocks" and in areas surrounding the facility, where intermittent clashes had broken out overnight, said the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

Heavy fighting in and around the prison since Thursday has killed 181 people, including 124 IS

jihadists, 50 Kurdish fighters and seven civilians, says the Observatory.

That death toll could rise, however, as Kurdish forces and medical services gain access to all parts of the prison following the end of the attack.

According to the war monitor, an unknown number of jihadists had managed to escape but their exact number was not immediately clear.

Thousands of Hasaka residents were forced to leave their homes due to the heavy fighting around the prison.

In one mosque located at a safe distance from the chaos, hundreds of women and children were huddled together in the biting winter cold.

"We want to go back home," said Maya, a 38-year-old mother trying in vain to pacify her youngest, adding that "there is no bread, water or sugar here".

Kurdish forces had cut off food and water to the jail for two days to pressure holdout jihadists to give themselves up, the Observatory said.

Kurdish authorities say they are holding more than 12,000 IS suspects with 50 different nationalities. They have long warned of jailbreaks since they do not have the capacity to hold, let alone put on trial, all the IS fighters captured in years of operations.



## Wrecked cars of Iranian nuclear martyrs on show at Tehran museum

From page 1 ► Last November, Kazem Gharibabadi, the Iranian deputy judiciary chief for international affairs and the secretary of the High Council for Human Rights, said the Tehran Justice Department had completed its legal investigation into assassination of four Iranian nuclear scientists and it will soon issue verdicts in these regards.

“The Tehran Justice Department has completed the legal investigation into four cases of assassination of nuclear scientists and the relevant verdict will be announced soon,” Gharibabadi said.



## Abandoned Paleolithic site in need of permanent center for research, archaeologist says



TEHRAN – Iranian archaeologist Seyyed Milad Hashemi has urged the need for establishing a permanent research center at the Paleolithic site of Mirak located in Semnan province.

“It is of great importance to set up a research center at Mirak archaeological site, which is the oldest heritage site in Iran and the first open-air Paleolithic site in the country,” IRNA quoted Iranian archaeologist Seyyed Milad Hashemi as saying on Wednesday.

The establishment of a research base in Mirak will contribute significantly to the

development of studies in this area, he noted.

There have been several articles about Mirak in prestigious English-language academic journals, and the site is well known worldwide, he explained.

Due to its global importance, this ancient site should be seriously considered by all related organizations in Semnan, he added.

Mirak that is situated on the northern edge of the Iranian Central Desert was once to Stone Age men either as a tool-making workshop or as a seasonal camp. Excavations began in Mirak in 1992.

Mirak constitutes one of the largest open-air lithics scatters in the region, consisting of eight natural mounds.

From a chronological point of view, Mirak holds the longest period of settlement in the Middle Paleolithic era (about 250,000-40,000 years ago) as well as the New Paleolithic era (about 40,000-18,000 years ago). It is also known for carrying evidence that attests to the presence of the Neanderthal man of the Middle Paleolithic, a period dating back to 40 to 50 thousand years ago.

## Neighboring countries to attend Tehran tourism fair

TEHRAN – Exhibitors and travel insiders from neighboring countries are planning to participate in the 15th Tehran International Tourism Exhibition, which will be held at Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds from January 29 to February 1.

“The participation of representatives from neighboring countries in this edition of the exhibition is certain,” said deputy tourism minister Ali-Asghar Shalbafian, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

The exhibition will be attended by trade delegations from

Pakistan, Turkey, Iraq, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Oman, the official added.

In addition, there will be B2B meetings with companies from China and some European countries, especially in the field of health and medical tourism, he noted.

During this edition of the exhibition, there will be a focus on supporting tourism and handicrafts as well as paying attention to the development of tourism in the western provinces of the country, he explained.

Food, agriculture, and health tourism will also be given serious



attention, he added.

The event will be held following health protocols and social distancing rules, he underlined.

Earlier this week, CHTN reported that panels of travel experts, tour operators, and hoteliers have been invited to hold specialized meetings and workshops during

# Brick minaret of Seljuk-era Mosque restored

TEHRAN – A team of restorers has finished work on the brick minaret of the congregational mosque of Zavareh, which dates from the Seljuk era (1037-1194).

The mosque is of high importance as one of the earliest examples of a four-ivan plan scheme. Contrary to most Seljuk mosques, the inscription containing the date and the patronage for the building is located on the courtyard façade.

Although this information is not completely preserved, a date of 1135 (530 A.H.) can be established for this building. The patron of the mosque is identified as Abu Tahir Husayn ibn Ghali ibn Ahmad. In another inscription on the eastern side of the south iwan, the date of the mihrab is recorded as 1156

(551 A.H.), according to Archnet.

The mosque has a rectangular plan that is nine bays long and seven deep. In the center is a courtyard that is surrounded by arcades.

The sole minaret is located on the northwest side of the mosque and is accessed through a narrow passageway that opens two bays in from the north wall. Of the three entries into the mosque, an entrance located on the north end of the east side of the building is the main public access. The other two entries are located at two ends of the west side of the building.

Four iwans mark the centers of the courtyard façades. The north and south iwans are taller, marking the importance of the north-south axis along which the entry to the mosque



chamber and the mihrab are located.

The arcades consist of a series of pointed barrel vaults oriented perpendicular to the main north-south axis of the building. The three bays adjacent to the dome chamber and the south iwan are the widest. A series of octagonal and rectangular piers support the vaults.

The dome chamber, located on the south side of the mosque, is square in the plan;

above its walls is an octagonal zone of transition between the square plan and the dome. The mihrab, located on axis with the main entrance, is the most decorated feature of the interior. It consists of two rectangular epigraphic frames containing two orders of pointed arch niches that are supported on slender pairs of engaged columns.

Zavareh is located northeast of Isfahan province, adjacent to the central Iranian desert.

## Iranian police recover haul of relics dating from Elamite, Seleucid, and Parthian eras

TEHRAN – Iranian authorities have recently recovered a haul of relics, the majority of which date back to the Elamite, Seleucid, and Parthian eras.

“Police have confiscated 810 historical relics from a gang of smugglers who were attempting to ship the haul out of the country,” the police commander in charge of protecting cultural heritage said on Thursday.

The relics include various coins mined during the Elamite, Seleucid, and Parthian eras as well as bronze objects that date some 3,000 years, the commander said, CHTN reported.

A total of 930 objects were confiscated of which 810 have historical values and



the rest are newly-made replicas, the report said.

Three members of the gang were detained and one ran away. The relics will soon be delivered to the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and

Handicrafts.

The relics have been unearthed from unauthorized exactions in Sistan-Baluchestan, Khuzestan, and some other Iranian provinces, the police commander said.

Sistan-Baluchestan is home to several distinctive archaeological sites and natural attractions, including two UNESCO World Heritage sites, namely Shahr-e-Soukhteh (Burnt City) and Lut desert. Moreover, Khuzestan embraces three UNESCO World Heritage sites of Susa, Tchogha Zanbil, and Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System yet it is a region of raw beauty where its visitors could spend weeks exploring.

## Historical anchor discovered in Caspian Sea

TEHRAN – Fishermen have recently discovered a historical anchor while amassing their nets on a Caspian seashore in northern Iran.

“A historical anchor located in the bed of the Caspian Sea was trapped inside the net of fishermen near the shores of the city of Noor,” ISNA quoted Iranian archaeologist Ramin Adibi as saying on Wednesday.

Measuring 3.6 meters in length and made from wood and iron, the anchor is covered by sea sediments and needs to undergo restoration, the archaeologists said.

Initial estimates suggest that the anchor might be belonging to a war vessel, he added.

According to Encyclopedia Iranica, exploitations of the sea developed only slowly and gradually after the Islamic conquest of Persia. During almost two centuries the mountainous barrier of the southern Caspian sheltered important pockets of indigenous resistance and several independent Zoroastrian principalities, which blocked the predominant Persian Islamic civilization of the plateau from access to the sea.

In addition, commercial relations between the



Muslim successors to the Sasanians and the inhabitants of the northern steppes were at first conducted via the established stages of the land route to the west of the Caspian. This orientation did not favor maritime activity or even a quest for detailed knowledge of the sea.

As mentioned by Iranica, before the Muslim conquest of Persia the Caspian Sea was little known and little used. Throughout the entire period, it remained on the margins of the great civilizations, far from the centers of population, and the history of geographic knowledge about it is the history of a series of trials and errors. The Assyrian troops of Adad-Nirari III (805-782 BC) were acquainted with it and called it the “great

sea of the rising sun”.

Furthermore, the Greeks became aware of its existence at an early date through the reports of merchants from their Black Sea colonies, who transmitted some detailed information; as early as the 5th century BC. Herodotus recognized that the Caspian is a landlocked sea. That the Greeks’ knowledge was essentially limited to the southern part of this body of water, however, is attested by the two names by which it was known.

Bounded by the Caspian Sea and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the north, Gilan, in the far past, was within the sphere of influence of the successive Achaemenid, Seleucid, Parthian, and Sassanid empires that ruled Iran until the 7th century CE.

## Iran-UAE ferry route serves travelers after two years halt

TEHRAN – Maritime trips between Shahid Bahonar Port, in Iran’s southern Hormozgan province, and UAE’s Sharjah, have resumed following a two-year suspension resulting from COVID-19 restrictions.

A high-speed passenger vessel with a capacity of 200 people makes the trips twice a week, the head of Ports and Maritime Organization of Hormozgan has announced.

A negative COVID-19 test issued at most 72 hours before the trip and vaccination certificate is required for all passengers, IRNA quoted Hamidreza Mohammad-Hosseini as saying on Tuesday.

Strict health protocols and social distancing rules will be strictly followed during these trips, 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.

Some experts say Iran has the potential to experience a tourism boom after coronavirus is contained, believing its impact would be temporary and short-lived for a country that ranked the third fastest-growing tourism destination in 2019. 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.



# Some \$9m allotted to knowledge-based transport projects in 8 years

TEHRAN – The Vice Presidency for Science and Technology has earmarked a sum of 2.4 trillion rials (about \$9.1 million) to provide finance for 29 macro projects in the transportation industry over the past eight years.

“National macro technology projects” are knowledge-based and technological projects with commercialization abilities, implementation of which requires the extensive cooperation of various sectors.

However, these projects respond to the strategic and fundamental needs of the country. Given their impact on production, self-efficacy, and job creation, these projects must be supported as important tools for the realization of a knowledge-based economy in the country.

The Center for National Macro Technology Projects has identified and supported 29 technological projects in the field of the transportation industry in the three sections of sea, land, and air.

There are currently 370 knowledge-based companies operating in the field of smart transportation fleet, according to the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology.

**Technology development in Iran**

Despite sanctions putting pressure on the country, a unique opportunity was provided for business development and the activity of knowledge-based companies in the country.

Currently, over 7,000 knowledge-based companies are active in the country, manufacturing diverse products to meet the needs of the domestic market while saving large amounts of foreign currency.

The fields of aircraft maintenance, steel, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, oil, and gas are among



370 knowledge-based companies are currently operating in the field of smart transportation fleet.

## IRCS ready to set up pharmaceutical factories in Iraq

TEHRAN – The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) is currently running four pharmaceutical factories that can establish branches in Iraq. Pir-Hossein Kolivand, head of the IRCS, has said.

He made the remarks during a meeting held in Baghdad on Tuesday with Iraqi Minister of Health Hani Musa Al-Aqabi.

In addition to selling medicine to Iraq, we are ready to transfer pharmaceutical production technology, as we are running four medicine production factories that can be established and operated in Iraq if the need arises, Kolivand stated.

“The expansion of the IRCS medical centers in Iraq can significantly reduce the medical trips of the Iraqi people to other countries in the region,” he said, highlighting that the medical centers focus on specific surgeries and specialized medical services.

Al-Aqabi also for his part said that the Republic of Iraq trusts Iranian medicine. Iranian drugs, especially medicine and test kits for genetic therapies and chemical drugs to control cancer, are now being imported to Iraq.

The Iranian Red Crescent Society can introduce us to the drugs produced by its subsidiaries so that



the Iraqi Ministry of Health can quickly process the registration and import license process, he suggested.

He further expressed pleasure with the establishment and operation of medical centers of the IRCS in Najaf and Karbala, and we, as the supervisory and licensing authority of medical centers in Iraq, promise proper cooperation and speed up the licensing process and shorten the administrative process to better interact with the IRCS, he explained.

Earlier this week, the red crescent societies of Iran and Iraq signed a memorandum of understanding aiming to enhance cooperation in different fields.

The Iranian side will hold educational and training courses related to crisis management, establish water and healthcare facilities, and launch workshops in Iraq.

The Iraqi side will provide the necessary infrastructure for offering medical services during religious events in Iraq and facilitate customs procedures for importing Iranian-made medicine.

**IRCS services worldwide**

At present, the Iranian Red Crescent Society provides medical services to people in 13 Asian, African, and Latin American countries.

Currently, some 14 medical facilities are offering humanitarian, relief, and health services to the deprived people in 13 countries, including Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, the United Arab Emirates, Bolivia, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Congo, Kenya, Lebanon, Mali, Niger, and Ecuador.

The IRCS polyclinic center includes various departments such as laboratory, pharmacy, radiology and physiotherapy, and general practitioners along with obstetricians, gynecologists, internal medicine, pediatrics, ophthalmologists, and dentists.

## Over 57,000 Iraqi students studying in Iran

TEHRAN – More than 57,000 Iraqi nationals are studying in Iranian universities, said Hashem Dadashpour, head of the Organization of Student Affairs, in a meeting with the Iraqi deputy science minister Hazem Baqir Tahir.

In a meeting in Baghdad on Wednesday, Dadashpour expressed hope to provide short-term research opportunities for students from both countries, and Iranian students will be able to gain an understanding of the scientific context of Iraq.

A joint scientific committee between Iran and Iraq should be formed to recognize the capacities of the two countries.

At the Iraqi ministry of science, we seek to implement the agreement signed by the two countries



in recent years on the exchange of professors, joint research and research courses, short-term and long-term scholarships, Tahir said.

The Iranian minister of foreign affairs has said that more than 520,000 foreign students in Iran study for free and that the vaccination of Afghan asylum seekers has been considered and taken on a par

with that of Iranian citizens.

Some 57,675 college students from 133 countries are studying in Iranian universities, many of whom have returned to their country with the outbreak of the pandemic.

Some 30,600 of the whole students are studying in universities affiliated with the Ministry of Science, while 25,000 others are

receiving education in Azad University, and about 2,000 in medical universities.

Fifty-seven percent of the international students are studying for a master's degree, 27 percent for a bachelor's degree, and 15 percent for a Ph.D. degree, while the remaining one percent study at other levels.

Law, Persian literature, and computer engineering are the top three fields of study for foreign students in Iran, while civil engineering, business management, political science, English language and literature, Quran and hadith sciences, international relations, electrical engineering, and other majors with the highest number of non-Iranian students.

## COVIRAN proves more effective than Sinopharm, AstraZeneca, and Sputnik

From page 1 ► Made by researchers at the Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam, COVIRAN Barekat was unveiled on December 29, 2020, and received the license for public use on June 14.

The vaccine has proved effective against Indian strain, according to Hojjat Niki-Maleki, head of the information center of Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam.

Eleven countries from Asia and South America, and a European country have asked for importing COVIRAN vaccine, Hassan Jalili, the vaccine's production manager, said in June last year.

**Homegrown vaccines**

Health Minister Bahram Einiollahi has said five coronavirus vaccines have been so far produced domestically.

The second Iranian-made vaccine developed by the Razi Vaccine and Serum Research Institute (Razi Cov Pars) started the clinical trial on February 27.

The Iranian-Australian Spikogen vaccine joined the national vaccination process in November 2021.

Developed jointly by the Pasteur Institute of Iran and Cuba's Finlay Vaccine Institute, the



Pastu Covac prevented symptomatic disease in people inoculated with three doses by 65 percent and its effectiveness in the prevention of severe disease and hospitalization was 96.5 percent.

Iran is one of the few countries that has all vaccine production platforms, Mohammad Reza Shanehsaz, former head of the Iranian Food and Drug Administration, said in June.

Meanwhile, World Health Organization (WHO) representative to Iran Jaffar Hussain said in September that the Organization was collecting the necessary information for the registration and certification of Iranian-made coronavirus vaccines.

## Hundreds of lives saved by improved air quality during first Covid lockdown, study suggests



More than 800 lives may have been saved across Europe due to better air quality in the first phase of Covid lockdowns, new research suggests.

Measures brought in to stem the rise in infections led to far fewer cars and lorries on the roads, which had the biggest impact on reducing deaths, according to the study led by experts from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM).

Analysis of 47 European cities found Paris, London, Barcelona and Milan were among the top six with the highest number of avoided deaths.

The study noted that closing workplaces and schools in European cities reduced levels of air pollution through less traffic and movement, while public events were cancelled and people stayed at home.

This led to less nitrogen dioxide, or NO2 polluting the air, with Spanish, French and Italian cities seeing the biggest decreases in NO2 of 50% to 60% during the period.

Although strong decreases in NO2 were found, levels of fine particulate matter (PM2.5

and PM10) experienced a smaller drop seeing as they are also produced by natural sources (wildfires and dust) and other emissions.

Antonio Gasparrini, professor of biostatistics and epidemiology at LSHTM and senior author of the study, said: “The lockdown during the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic created immense health and social costs.

“However, it has offered unique conditions to investigate potential effects of strict policies to reduce pollution levels in urban areas.

“This ‘natural experiment’ has given us a glimpse of how air quality can be improved by drastic public health measures that would be difficult to implement in normal times.

“The information can be important to design effective policies to tackle the problem of pollution in our cities.”

The research, published in Nature's Scientific Reports journal, was funded by the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts on behalf of the Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service.

It compared government policies from the 47 European cities from February to July 2020 and estimated the changes in pollution levels and number of deaths.

Rochelle Schneider, honorary assistant professor in geospatial data science at LSHTM and first author of the study, said: “This, and other similar studies, can help drive the message that we definitely need to improve urban air quality for human health, and for the environment.

“Government policies decided during the spring and early summer of 2020 gave us a unique opportunity to study a ‘real-life’ scenario with lower air pollution levels.”

### ENGLISH IN USE

#### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## 21m Iranians undergone hypertension control test

TEHRAN – Over 21 million Iranians have so far undergone blood pressure test and the data have been registered by the national campaign for controlling hypertension, deputy health minister Alireza Raeesi announced.

Some 404,000 individuals have registered their blood pressure information on the ministry's network, Raeesi said, ISNA reported on Tuesday.

He further noted that blood pressure stations also have measured the blood pressure of about 5.4 million people nationwide, adding 13,751 stations have been established across the country.

So far, some 15.1 million information also have been submitted on the integrated health system, he also added.

## ثبت فشار خون بیش از ۲۱ میلیون نفر در بسیج ملی کنترل فشارخون

معاون بهداشت وزارت بهداشت از ثبت فشار خون بیش از ۲۱ میلیون نفر از هموطنان طی اجرای بسیج ملی کنترل فشار خون خبر داد.

به گزارش ایسنا دکتر علیرضا رئیسی افزود: از مجموع این تعداد بیش از ۴۰۴ هزار نفر فشار خون خود را در سامانه خوداظهاری فشارخون بسیج ملی کنترل فشارخون ثبت کردند.

وی در ادامه گفت: بیش از ۵ میلیون و ۴۰۰ هزار مورد فشار خون هموطنان در ایستگاه‌های ثابت و سیار سنجش فشار خون در سراسر کشور ثبت شده است.

دبیر شورای راهبری بسیج ملی کنترل فشار خون افزود: از مجموع ثبت‌های انجام شده بیش از ۱۵ میلیون و ۱۰۰ هزار مورد در سامانه یکپارچه بهداشت (سیب) ثبت شده است.

رئیس با اشاره به فعالیت گسترده ایستگاه‌های ثابت و سیار سنجش فشار خون در کشور گفت: تاکنون ۱۳ هزار و ۷۵۱ ایستگاه ثابت و سیار در اقصی نقاط کشور راه اندازی شده است.

## COVID-19 UPDATES ON JANUARY 26

New cases	11,852
New deaths	29
Total cases	6,279,410
Total deaths	132,303
New hospitalized patients	697
Patients in critical condition	1,267
Total recovered patients	6,088,367
Diagnostic tests conducted	44,323,80
Doses of vaccine injected	129,913,186



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JANUARY 27, 2022

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Whoever warns you against sins and vices is like the one  
who gives you good tidings.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:17    Evening: 17:46    Dawn: 5:41 (tomorrow)    Sunrise: 7:07 (tomorrow)

## Hafez and music

Part 2

Since Shams-e Qays Razi had used very similar terminology in his al-Mo’jam (1232), these meanings were indeed current throughout the lifetime of Hafez, who frequently pairs the words qawl o ghazal in a clearly musical context, with the word ghazal often alluding to his own poem/song.

This is surely an indication that Hafez’s own ghazals were composed with the idea that they would, or might, be sung. Furthermore, the traditional introduction to the Divan of Hafez, composed after the poet’s death but not later than 1421, indicates that Hafez’s poems spread quickly (i.e., during his lifetime) to India, Central Asia, western Persia, Iraq and Azerbaijan, and were virtually obligatory in Sufi sama’ sessions and wine symposiums.

The speed with which the poems traveled, and the settings in which they were reportedly heard, strongly indicate musical performance as the primary mode of popular diffusion.

Despite this widespread singing of his ghazals, few if any of the poems of Hafez could be characterized as “unpleasing” or awkward with respect to the classical quantitative metrics, and one wonders if Homai’s neat distinction between sung poems and plain poems pertains to this period.

Nevertheless, it has been suggested that some ghazals of Hafez exhibit certain regularities of stress, or patterns of accentual rhythm, overlaying and enhancing the quantitative literary meter.

One might speculate that the strings of iambs in many hemistichs of the first ghazal in the Divan, e.g., ke eshq asan namud awwal vali oftad moshkel-ha (where vali, though normally accented in modern Persian on the first syllable, is sometimes sung in tasnif with accent on the second syllable, as in the rendition of Shahram Nazeri) reflect a stress patterning secondary to the quantitative hazaj meter, at least in musical performance.

One type of tasnif mentioned in the classical musical manuals is naqsh, a term to which Hafez may allude on one occasion in a technical sense, perhaps signifying a one-to-one correspondence of tune and poem, such that each note and beat is matched to a single syllable.

Jiri Ceipek has noted the continued existence in the dialects of nomadic tribes, as well as the bazari colloquial in towns, of syllabic meter qasidas and ghazals, varying between seven to fifteen syllables per line, in which assonance sometimes replaces rhyme.

With respect to metrics, Homai himself has noted that Hafez composed most frequently in permissible variations of the ramal, moj’tatt and mozare’ meters, followed by variations of hazaj and monsareh, with motaqareb, rajaz, moqtazab and khafif the least frequent, but the evidence to tell us whether any of these specific meters is more or less likely to be sung has not been marshaled.

It would seem that most of Hafez’s poems circulated in a musical performance context, so perhaps the majority of his ghazals were treated as though adaptable to musical settings.

Whether and to what extent the aesthetics of musical composition may more subtly inform Hafez’s prosody and poetics remains to be studied in detail.

### Musical terms in Hafez

Lexicons and general works on the links

between music and poetry notwithstanding, the function and relative importance of music in various poets has not yet been investigated from a comparative point of view.

Meneghini Correale has produced a full and scientific concordance of the ghazals of Hafez; once similar concordances and frequency lists of the complete oeuvre of other poets have been compiled, it will then be possible to make in-depth comparison of the relative importance specific words/ themes hold for particular poets, and for particular formal/generic contexts (i.e., ghazals, robais, qasidas, masnavis, etc.).

An inventory of the musical terminology of Hafez (as per the Khanlari ed.) follows, divided into categories and listing the total number of occurrences of each word in the Divan, as well as the genres/forms in which it appears.

The frequencies are based upon Meneghini Correale’s concordance for the ghazals (indicated by “g”), and upon my own tabulations for the qasaed (qa), masnaviyat (m), qet’as(qe) and robaiyat (r).

Where a lexical item is used by Hafez in more than one meaning, a (subjective) effort has been made to isolate occurrences which pertain to music either explicitly or implicitly (i.e., as a double entente), from non-musical homonyms (e.g., 6/7 indicates seven occurrences of the word, six of which have musical meanings).

### Musical sounds

Hafez uses a variety of words in the general meaning of melody, tune, air, song, or music, whether the sounds are produced by instrument or voice.

These include: ahang 6 (5/7g, 1qe), avaz 13 (6/9g, 5m, 1qe, 1r), bang 10 (10/17g; exclusive of the non-musical sound bang-e jaras), golbang 10 (8g, 1qa, 1m), nay (1/2g), nava 13 (9g, 1qa, 2m, 1qe), sawt (6g).

Some of these have technical meanings, according to the pre-modern manuals of music, but the precise significance of most such words in the poetry of Hafez seems more context-determined than intrinsically fixed.

Reverberation seems to be the primary meaning of seda (2g), whereas words like zamzama (3g, of voices or instruments), bam o zir (1g), ziri (1r), or safir (as it is associated with birds, 4/5g), seem to describe the timbre, pitch, or volume of the tones.

Words such as faryad, nala, and khorush sometimes represent the emotional peaks of music, whether the sound comes from instruments, songbirds, or the human voice.

### Musical modes, scales, melodic structures

Hafez does not use the technical terms given by Maraghi for musical measure or beat (naqara) and rhythm (iqa), but naghma 12 (10g, 1m, 1r) would appear to convey at times the technical sense of “musical tone” or “note,” and at others the general sense of melody or tune.

A particular arrangement of notes creates the framework of a mode, or maqam (Arabic for gah, literally the “station” of the fingers on the instrument, but the term dastgah is not yet attested and the repertoire of modes recognized in Persia since the 19th century were apparently unknown in the time of Hafez).

(Source: Encyclopedia Iranica)

To be continued

# Iran to celebrate poet Nezami Ganjavi in weeklong program

From Page 1 ► The Republic of Azerbaijan has made claims on Nezami, the greatest romantic epic poet in Persian literature, who lived during the 12th and early 13th centuries. He brought a colloquial and realistic style to the Persian epic.

The State Museum of Oriental Art in Moscow organized an exhibition in 2021, showcasing artworks inspired by Nezami Ganjavi. The museum erroneously called Nezami an Azerbaijani poet. However, his masterpieces have been composed entirely in Persian, without even a verse in the Azerbaijani language.

Nezami Ganjavi (c. 1141-1209 CE) is mostly known for “Khamseh”, two copies of which are preserved in Iran were inscribed on UNESCO’s

Memory of the World Register list in 2011.

“Khamseh” is a pentalogy of poems written in Masnavi verse form (rhymed couplets) with a total of 30,000 couplets.

These five poems include the didactic work Makhzan ol-Asrar (The Treasury of Mysteries); the three traditional love stories of Khosrow and Shirin, Leili and Majnun, and Haft Paykar; and the Eskandar-nameh, which records the adventures of Alexander the Great.

There are various versions of “Khamseh” in Iranian libraries, but the two versions kept at the Central Library of the University of Tehran and the library of the Shahid Motahari School and Mosque in Tehran are the ones that were registered by UNESCO.

A portrait of Iranian poet Nezami Ganjavi. (Goethe Institute)

## Fajr festival to pay tribute to Iranian cinema’s COVID victims

TEHRAN – The organizers announced on Wednesday that the 40th Fajr Film Festival would pay tribute to a number of filmmakers who died from COVID-19.

Khosro Sinai, Akbar Alemi, Kambozia Partovi, Rahim Rahimpur and Fereshteh Taerpur will be commemorated in “Eternal Image”, a series of sessions which will be organized during the festival.

Composer Shahin Farhat will deliver a speech on filmmaker Sinai, who was also a skillful composer and accordion virtuoso, and had composed soundtracks for his own films.

“Bride of Fire”, his feature drama starring Hamid Farrokhnejad, won the Crystal Samirgh for best screenplay at the 18th Fajr International Film Festival.

“The Melody Which an Antique Hears”, “Beyond the Clamor”, “The Coldness of Iron”, “Haj Mosavvar al-Maleki” and “Hossein Yavari” are among his credits.

He was also the director of the documentary “Talking with a Shadow” about Iran’s foremost short story writer, Sadeq Hedayat.

In 2008, Poland decorated Sinai with the Knight’s Cross of the Order of Merit for his documentary “The Lost Requiem” (1970-1983) about the story of the wartime exodus to Iran of thousands of Polish citizens after being released from the Soviet labor camps of Siberia during World War II.

Alemi’s lifetime achievements will be

A poster for the 40th Fajr Film Festival.

discussed by photographers Shahabeddin Adel and Seifollah Samadian.

Alemi, who got his Ph.D. in cinema in England, was the dean of the Animation Department at Tehran’s Tarbiat Modares University.

As a member of the Academy of Persian Language and Literature, he wrote and translated many books and was active as a jury member for several Iranian and international film and animation festivals.

Screenwriter Jaber Qasemali has been invited to make a speech about Partovi, who was most famous for his writings rather than films.

He was the co-writer of “Muhammad, the Messenger of God”, director Majid Majidi’s film about the childhood of the Prophet of Islam (S).

His latest movie “Truck” that recounts the story of a Yazidi woman who becomes homeless after the Iraqi ethnic and religious minority is attacked by ISIS forces in the summer of 2014, premiered at the 36th Fajr

## Rob J. Hayes’ novel “Never Die” appears in Persian

TEHRAN – “Never Die”, a novel by Rob J. Hayes, has recently been published by Chatrang, a major Tehran-based publishing house.

Mohammad Abbasabadi is the translator of the book first published in 2019 by Kindle Edition.

The Emperor of Ten Kings has plunged Hosa into war, and the gods are angry.

When the god of death gives Ein a mission to kill the immortal emperor, he knows he cannot do it alone. He needs allies, heroes who will fight for him. How else can an eight-year-old boy hope to do the impossible?

Whispering Blade, Iron Gut Chen, the Century Blade, and Flaming Fist, these are all names of legend. And the god of death has given Ein a way to bind them

Front cover of the Persian translation of Rob J. Hayes’ novel “Never Die”.

to his cause. There is only one catch. In order to serve him, they must first die.

“Never Die” is a standalone set in Hayes’ series Mortal Techniques. It’s a wuxia adventure filled with samurai, shinigami, heroes and vengeful spirits.

Hayes grew up with all the

usual boy toys, including Lego, Star Wars figures and plenty of Transformers. Playing with these toys inspired his imagination and as soon as he was old enough he started playing with swords... OK, wooden sticks.

At the age of fourteen, he started writing but, like

most fourteen-year-old boys, everything had to be either a vampire, a werewolf, or have superpowers.

After four years at university studying zoology and three years working for a string of high street banks as a desk jockey/ keyboard monkey, Rob ran away to live on a desert island in Fiji for three months. It was there he re-discovered his love of writing and, more specifically, of writing fantasy.

He regularly plays card games based on the “A Game of Thrones” and the “Netrunner” universes and attends tournaments throughout the UK. Rob also enjoys Airsofting: the act of running around a forest with fake guns shooting (being shot by) his friends.

## Sci-fi novel “Blood Music” comes to Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN – American writer Greg Bear’s science fiction novel “Blood Music” has been published in Persian.

Ketabsara-ye Tandis is the publisher of the book first published by Paperback in 1985. Payman Esmailian has rendered the novel into Persian.

The novel was originally published as a short story in 1983 in the American science fiction magazine Analog Science Fact & Fiction, winning the 1983 Nebula Award for Best Novelette and the 1984 Hugo Award for Best Novelette.

Bear published an expanded version in novel

form in 1985.

Blood Music deals with themes including biotechnology, nanotechnology (including the grey goo hypothesis), the nature of reality, consciousness and artificial intelligence.

In this novel, Vergil Ulam has created cellular material that can outperform rats in laboratory tests. When the authorities rule that he has exceeded his authorization, Vergil loses his job, but is determined to take his discovery with him.

Bear is one of the world’s leading hard science fiction authors. He sold his first short story at the age of fifteen to Robert Lowndes’s Famous Science Fiction.

This combination photo shows American writer Greg Bear and the front cover of the Persian translation of his science fiction novel “Blood Music”.