

# Iran’s Serious Warning to EU About Mischief Against IRGC

Officials lash out at European Parliament decision to blacklist IRGC

## Report Regional dimensions of Ukraine war with global scope

TEHRAN – Though the Ukraine war is considered a regional war in terms of geographical division, its global dimensions and effects are so wide that it can be considered a conflict in the Western hemisphere with an impact on the whole world.

One of the surprises of this war is that it took place in a continent that was considered the epitome of peace and security for years and decades, and its residents did not hear the sound of any kind of gunshot except the Serbian war in the Balkans.

The war, which is still going on and is getting more intense every day, and there is no prospect of end to it, began in February 2014 with a speech by Russian President Vladimir Putin

## Iranian security forces foil two Daesh-linked terror groups

TEHRAN- Iranian security forces have destroyed two Daesh-affiliated squads before they could cause unrest in the province of Sistan and Baluchestan in southeast Iran.

According to a report published on Thursday by Tasnim, the Intelligence Ministry, the IRGC, and the police worked together to destroy the two teams.

The report also stated that team members and a number of accomplices were detained and handed over to the legal system.

Based on the report, the teams intended to cause unrest in the southeast of the country.

One of these squads’ goals was to kidnap foreigners and entrepreneurs in Chabahar and hold them hostage.

The report also stated that the group’s members, who included Afghan and Tajik nationals, had elaborate plans to sow disturbance in southeast Iran.

Recent riots in Iran have been exploited by terrorist groups connected to Deash and the Mujahedin-e-Khalq Organization (MKO) to commit acts of terrorism and sabotage around the country.

## Ex-Persepolis forward Locadia linked with Barcelona

TEHRAN – Jurgen Locadia has been linked with a move to Barcelona football club.

The Catalan club is going to find a replacement for Memphis Depay, who will likely join Atletico Madrid.

The 29-year-old Dutch attacker, who terminated his contract with Iran’s Persepolis in late December, could join Barcelona on a free transfer.

Locadia traveled to his country due to his wife’s illness but announced that he would not return to Iran for family reasons.

He was the best goalscorer of Persepolis in the current season. He scored six goals in nine matches for the Reds.

Players such as Alexis Ssnchez, Roberto Firmino, Alfredo Morelos, Dries Mertens and Moussa Dembele are under contract with their respective clubs for less than six months and are therefore relatively eligible to negotiate with other clubs.

Locadia, ex-player of PSV, Brighton & Hove Albion and TSG Hoffenheim, is without a club and is an option without any costs.



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TEHRAN – The First International Congress for Women of Influence was held in Tehran on Friday with female international figures from different countries in attendance.

The vice president for women and family affairs hosted some 300 female guests including wives of heads of state, ministers, vice presidents, and

parliamentarians from Burkina Faso, Kyrgyzstan, Serbia, Guinea, Niger, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Syria, Turkmenistan, and Armenia.

‘women of influence’ showcase achievements

An exhibition showcasing the achievements of successful Iranian women was held on Friday on

the sidelines of the First International Congress for Women of Influence.

In this exhibition, the achievements of Iranian women entrepreneurs in various fields such as electricity and electronics, medical equipment, technology, innovation centers, and home businesses were on display.

## Iran, Belarus ink MOU on agricultural co-op

TEHRAN – Iran and Belarus have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for expanding cooperation in the agricultural sector, the portal of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) reported.

Drafted under the framework of the two countries’ Joint Economic Committee, the MOU was signed at the place of the Iranian Agriculture Min-

istry, on the sidelines of the visit of a Belarusian delegation headed by the country’s Deputy Agriculture Minister Ivan Ivanovich to Tehran.

According to Dmitry Koltsov, the ambassador of the Republic of Belarus in Tehran, practical steps have been outlined in this MOU for the development of relations between the two countries in the field of agricultural and food exchange.



Colombian narrator with “Wise Prince” crowned best at Iran storytelling festival

TEHRAN – Colombia narrator Mauricio Patino Acevedo has taken first place for recounting the fairy tale “The Wise Prince” at the 24th edition of Iran’s International Storytelling Festival.

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## Martian Mountains, Makran coast hold high potential for tourism, minister says

TEHRAN – The Miniature Mountains and Makran coastal strip, in Chabahar, southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan province have a high tourism potential, Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Minister has said.

A good tourism opportunity should be provided for these areas as these two attractions offer great ecotourism potential, said Ezzatollah Zarghami on Thursday, while vis-

iting the city.

In this area, tourism-related projects will be initiated with the help and support of the ministry, and a number of infrastructure projects will be designed, he added.

Along with the Miniature Mountains in this area, Makran coast is a valuable resource that will hopefully become an important tourist attraction in the future, he mentioned.

The Miniature Mountains is a set of natural phenomena that provides a truly unique travel experience for tourists and nature lovers alike.

Locals call it “Koohaye Merikhi”, which means “Martian Mountains”, since it seemed as if aliens – in this case, people from Mars – built them, and their curvy scenery stands in strong contrast with the surrounding landscape.

## From Inside

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## Tehran Papers

In the following column, we take a look at some important contents and views in Thursday’s Iranian newspapers.

## EU Parliament move on IRGC result of failures in Iran

In a dangerous move the European Parliament on Wednesday voted for a resolution in which it asks the European Union and its member states to include the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps of Iran (IRGC) on its terrorist list.

## Iran, Russia presidents hold phone talks

TERHAN – Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi received a phone call from Russian President Vladimir Putin during which they discussed a variety of issues.

In the phone call, Ayatollah Raisi reviewed the bilateral and regional relations between Tehran and Moscow, and emphasized the need to increase cooperation and coordination between the two countries, according to a readout released by the official website of the Iranian presidency.

President Raisi also called the agreements of the two countries to expand cooperation in the field of energy and transit constructive and positive, and added, “We support the resolution of Syrian issues within the framework of the Astana Process”.

## Iraqi deployment of border guards should prevent anti-revolutionaries from entering Iran: MP

TEHRAN – A senior Iranian lawmaker has said that Iraq’s decision to deploy troops on the border with Iran and Turkey should lead to preventing counterrevolutionary elements from illegally entering Iran.

The lawmaker, Ebrahim Azizi, who is deputy chairman of the Iranian Parliament’s National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, said Iran’s border interactions with neighboring countries should ultimately lead to maintaining security and stability for both sides.

He was referring to Iraq’s recent decision to deploy thousands of troops on the border with Iran and Turkey.

“Certainly, the Islamic Republic evaluates the product of the actions of the neighboring countries in preventing the entry of affiliated, rejected and counter-revolutionary currents and groups into Iran,” Azizi told the Islamic Consultative Assembly News Agency (ICANA).



## TEHRAN PAPERS

## EU Parliament move on IRGC result of failures in Iran

*In the following column, we take a look at some important contents and views in Thursday's Iranian newspapers.*

from page 1 ► The move was due to the failure by the West in its project of riots and unrest inside Iran. But it is said that there are legal complications in this move.

Although the enemy's plan to bring Iran to its knees in the nuclear negotiations failed, to keep Iran's unrest alive on their TV shows and reignite the sedition the Western countries are seeking to designate the IRGC as a terrorist organization.

Referring to the reactions of the Iranian authorities to the action of the European Parliament, the newspaper also talks about attempts by the British parliament to take a similar action.

On a possible action from the British parliament, the newspaper writes: Analysts say that putting the IRGC's name on the list of terrorist organizations will intensify the tensions between London and Tehran and will lead to retaliatory measures by Iran. It will also complicate any future hopes of diplomatic efforts to save the 2015 deal with Iran.

#### Shraq: Europe's harsh winter

In an article entitled "Harsh winter of Europe", Shargh refers to the comment of a member of Iran's nuclear talks team who had said that if Iran did not talk to the West this winter, which will be a harsh one, the Europeans will give more concessions to Iran.

"We will not forget that some members of the negotiating team said in the summer, just when Europe was trying to bring America back to the talks with Iran regarding nuclear issues, that now is not the right time for the negotiation on the nuclear issue because there will be a harsh winter ahead and it will make the West to give more points to Tehran."

The theorists who hoped for a harsh winter in Europe have not studied history and are not familiar with the living conditions of Europe and their measures to deal with hardships. However, at least they should have known that even when they have abundant energy, the heating systems are usually turned off at night and they have been trying to reduce energy consumption for many years. Unlike us who consume energy wastefully and do not know its value.

The newspaper writes: Even if the opinion is correct, i.e. the Europeans were facing problems in winter, the opportunity should not have been missed, because opportunities pass rapidly like clouds.

#### Ham-Mihan: European game

As we move forward, the "snowball of the crisis" in Europe-Iran relations is rolling downhill faster and bigger every hour.

Now some senior European officials talking about the possibility of Europe taking a decision to include the name of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) on the list of terrorist groups of the European Union.

Of course, this hostile action by the West is not unprecedented.

Earlier, Donald Trump had put the IRGC on the U.S. terrorist list. The move was criticized at that time. But it seems that this time things are somewhat different. During the past few months, a lot of pressure was organized against Iran. These pressures generally took place under two pretexts:

firstly, how to deal with internal unrest in Iran, and secondly, Iran- Russia military cooperation.

Based on the current situation, there is no clear prospect of on the relations between Iran and Europe, and not only there is no determination to stop the tension in the relations between the two sides, but the conditions are getting worse day by day and the speed of the snowball is also increasing.

Apart from human rights issues and the debate on the execution of some rioters in Iran, it seems that selling Iranian drones to Russia has greatly angered Europe. In such a situation, Europe, which has spent heavy political, economic, social, and security costs in the past months in face of Russia's attack on Ukraine, has placed Iran on Russia's side. In the meantime, the Americans are also blowing on the fire.

Two days ago, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman clearly stated that until the issue of Iranian drones is not resolved, it is unlikely that negotiations with Iran on the reviving the nuclear agreement is resumed.

The Europeans are more motivated now than before to increase the pressure on Iran.

Of course, we should not ignore the fact that human rights issues will play a role in Europe's decisions regarding Iran.

The first effect of such comprehensive pressure on Iran is to send a signal to the countries of the region and other countries of the world that the cost of action against Iran has decreased.

#### Javan: Enemy addicted to miscalculations

The failure of the recent unrest in Iran, which was ordered by the West, once again proved the capability of the Islamic Republic and made its supporters in all parts of the world more hopeful, especially among resistance groups supported by Iran.

It is not difficult to understand why Macron, Biden, the German chancellor, the British prime minister, and some other leaders of the domineering system openly supported the rioters in Iran during the recent unrest.

On the one hand, they were trying to make up for their defeats of Iran in the past, and on the other, they believed in the years-long actions of their spy services in sabotaging Iran.

But the reason for the failure of their scenarios should be seen in their miscalculations and mistakes in understanding the realities of Iran, the religious beliefs of Iranians, the status of the Leader in the hearts of the Iranian people, the capacity and power of the security forces, etc.

After the failures, the West will continue its efforts in the economic field and pressure campaign through sanctions and intensify the livelihood problems of the Iranian people in order to incite the internal unrest and isolate Iran on the pretext of human rights.

That is why Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Khamenei urged the nation to be highly vigilant and united in the face of increasing conspiracies by the foes, saying "We should also be careful. We should not be negligent and proud and say that the games are over. We must stay in the field and know that hope and national unity are the factors that save the nation."

This illegality and recklessness have serious consequences that should not be underestimated; thus, if not addressed properly, it can further destabilize an already fragile situation, endangering regional and international peace and security.

For more than 70 years, the Israeli regime has committed these atrocities without being held accountable or facing any consequences. Apartheid is still in effect, and the occupation has not ended.

In the meantime, the viability of establishing a Palestinian State is difficult and even meaningless due to the ongoing Israeli regime's settlement activities that are blatantly prohibited by international law and pertinent UN resolutions.

We believe that the conflict in occupied Palestinian territory can only be resolved if the occupation is ended and the Palestinian people's inalienable rights to self-determination are fully recognized, upheld, and protected. This will result in the full restoration of Palestinian sovereignty over the entire Palestinian territory.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))

# Officials lash out at European Parliament decision to blacklist IRGC

TEHRAN- A myriad of Iranian authorities has shown reaction to a resolution by the European Parliament asking the European Union and its member states to blacklist and restrict activities of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC).

The European Parliament passed the resolution on Thursday. It followed the adoption of a measure on Wednesday backing

the effort.

The resolution asked "the EU and its member states to put the IRGC on the EU's terror list."

The resolution, sponsored by some 60 parliamentarians from different wings of the European Parliament, was adopted with a large cross-party majority. However, the vote is non-binding.

The blacklisting would include



## EU blacklisting of IRGC "desperate" move, violating UN Charter

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi denounced the move by the European Parliament, saying the action was brought on by "desperation" on the part of Europeans.

Raisi made a brief reference of a recent amendment to a European Parliament resolution that urged the EU and its member states to add the IRGC to their list of terrorist organizations at a cabinet meeting on Thursday.

Europe believed it could "stop the Iranian nation" with such actions, he stated.

Raisi highlighted that the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps is an "official force" and a component of the Iranian Armed Forces.

He also declared that the action was against both international law and the UN Charter.



## "EP move reveals foes' resentment"

The unlawful action was vehemently denounced by the Iranian Army in a statement released on Friday. It said the European Parliament's move revealed the enemies' animus for the country's Islamic leadership.

"The European Parliament's action against an anti-terrorist body, which professes to be battling terrorism, is a result of their frustration and failure in promoting recent disturbances in Iran," the statement added.

It asserted that the IRGC has a proven track record of defeating domestic and international terrorist organizations like Daesh and the Mujahedin-e-Khalq Organization (MKO).

It went on to say that the action is the result of "blindly adopting hostile U.S. policies against the Islamic Revolution" and that it is evidence that Europeans are subservient to the U.S. and "global Zionism."



## "IRGC largest anti-terrorism entity in the world"

In a tweet on Friday, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani said the IRGC is the "foremost anti-terrorism organization" in the world.

Writing on his twitter account, Kanaani highlighted that the apartheid regime in Israel is the largest organized terrorist entity in the whole world which was founded by the UK and sponsored by the United States.

The "Global Club of Terrorists" are upset for an obvious reason: the IRGC is the largest anti-terrorism organization in the world.

Kanaani also directed attention to a statement by martyr commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani following the defeat of the Daesh terrorist group in 2017.

General Soleimani was considered as legendary commander against terrorist groups, including Daesh (ISIS).

## Admiral says Iran will force foes into submission

TEHRAN- Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, the deputy commander for coordination at the Iranian Army, warned on Thursday that Tehran will respond sternly to its adversaries' error in coming into contact with Islamic Iran and force them to repent.

At a memorial service for the Varamain martyrs, Rear Admiral Sayyari reaffirmed that "the

youth of yesterday, led by the late Imam Khomeini, have made the status of the global oppressor system in West Asia and inflicted fatal blows against them. In the past, Iran was governed in the presence of military consultant officers from alien countries."

"They resort to any action against Iran out of hatred after the Iranian nation's victory in the

the IRGC and its subsidiary forces, the Basij volunteer forces and the Quds Force.

Additionally, regardless of the location of the action, it would target "any economic and financial activity involving businesses and commercial activities related to, owned, wholly or in part, by, or fronting for, the IRGC or IRGC-affiliated individuals, regardless of their country of operation," the

European Parliament stated.

EU chief diplomat Josep Borrell agreed with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian that the move was sensational.

"I also agree that the draft by the European Parliament is sensational and is a cause of concern," Borrell said in phone calls with Abdollahian, according to the Iranian Foreign Ministry.



## Armed Forces warn EU of consequences of banning IRGC

The "desperate" designation breaches all international laws, according to a statement released on Thursday by the General Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces.

The recent action by the European Parliament, which was unprecedented in terms of international laws and regulations, "will influence regional and global security, calm, and peace, and the European Parliament must be vigilant about its ramifications," according to the statement.

After failing in their attempt to sow unrest and instability in Iran, the statement said the recent European Parliament's move was a tandem with the hostile policies of "the U.S. terrorist regime as well as the false Zionist regime."



## "Retaliatory move from Iran"

Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, the speaker of the Iranian parliament, blasted the decision as a "miscalculation" and said it would render the European Union as the main sponsor of terrorism.

The Parliament speaker emphasized that the IRGC is the most distinctive non-terrorist organization in the region, and that the world and the general public are well aware that the IRGC is the best organization in the fight against terrorism.

"The European countries demonstrated that terrorism and supporting terrorists are now a part of their official policies, and this new ratification of the European Parliament in including the IRGC on their list of terrorist organizations is in fact encountering the center of culture, martyrdom, and selfless services to the people," he continued.



## "IRGC is pillar and strength of Islamic Republic"

Pointing out the heinous and illegitimate recent action of the European Parliament in banning the IRGC, Mohammad Javad Haj Ali Akbari, an interim Friday prayer leader in Tehran, stressed on Friday that such a mean move bears no momentum and significance for Iran. The action taken by the European Parliament is not worth paying any attention because the IRGC is a noble and elite entity.

Ali Akbari also emphasized that such a move is proceeded because the IRGC is a solid pillar for the Islamic Republic, having a leading role in thwarting and hard and soft power.

"In the resistance front in the West Asia region, you can see the expansion of the IRGC authority and strength while having thousands of seasoned individuals working for this splendid organization as well as complying with the ideals of the Islamic Revolution," he remarked.

Islamic Revolution dealt a terrible blow against the world despotism," he continued.

He also reaffirmed that the avowed enemies of Iran use a variety of tactics, such as sowing the seeds of religious and tribal strife, but all of these plays resulted in their humiliating defeat and that they have never been able to establish their hegemony over Islamic Iran.



# Iran’s serious warning to EU about mischief against IRGC

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN – The European Parliament’s recent resolution on Iran has sent Iranian authorities scrambling to prepare a proportional response whose consequences could rattle the EU.

Members of the European Union unexpectedly adopted a resolution on Iran that, if acted on, would blow up years of diplomacy with Iran and set Iran and the West on a path of confrontation.

The resolution in question was adopted with an overwhelming majority and included many lines that seemed to be borrowed from a Trump official’s speech verbatim. It called on the European Council to list the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist group, a move that stands in stark contrast to the European Union’s general policy line on Iran in recent years.

“They [MEPs] also call on the Council and the member states to add the IRGC and its subsidiary forces, including the paramilitary Basij militia and the Quds Force, to the EU terrorist list. Any country in which the IRGC deploys military, economic, or informational operations should sever and outlaw ties with this agency,” the European Parliament said in a press release after the adoption of the Resolution.

The move, though unbinding, elicited huge criticism from Iran. Officials, lawmakers,

## Iraqi deployment of border guards should prevent anti-revolutionaries from entering Iran: MP

From Page 1 ▶ He added, “If the deployment of a force of 6,000 people leads to the fact that counter-revolutionary elements do not enter our country, in the sense that the Islamic Republic of Iran’s wish is fulfilled, naturally we will cooperate more with our neighbors in this regard.”

He continued, “Otherwise, if we witness the illegal movements of the elements of Komala, Democrats and affiliated parties, we reserve the right to target these elements wherever they are and to support the borders and security of our country’s people in any way possible.”

Azizi said, “However, we welcome the approach of the neighboring governments in trying to ensure security, and we are ready to cooperate for more interactions, but the outcome of these actions is important and decisive.”

The lawmaker said some countries in the past have not exerted control over their borders. “This issue caused the elements of the dissolved Democratic and Komala groups to come to the country and unfortunately, the transfer of weapons from the northwestern borders of the country took place on a large scale. These movements have had an impact on our internal security,” he said.

Azizi pointed to the pause in Iran’s operations



senior clerics, military officials, media personalities all fiercely reacted to the possibility of the EU designating the IRGC. All of them have said that Iran will strongly react to the move. Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf said Friday that Iran will “certainly” deal with the Europeans “in a different way.”

“If the IRGC is designated as a terrorist organization, we will certainly reciprocate and will deal with the Europeans in the region in a different way,” he said, according to Tasnim.

Almost all Iranian officials vowed a strong response to the European move. Hajj Ali Akbari, Tehran’s Friday prayer leader, said the Majlis and government will give a “decisive response” to the EU, according to ISNA.

There are indications that Iran is in the process of brainstorming to give a response to the EU,

particularly if it presses ahead with the IRGC listing. Alireza Salimi, a member of the parliament’s presiding board, said Friday that the parliament will have a closed-door session early on Sunday morning with the IRGC chief commander General Hossein Salami, and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian in attendance.

“This meeting will be in order to brainstorm a decisive response to the unwise action of the European Parliament in declaring the IRGC as a terrorist,” the senior lawmaker said.

Over the course of the protracted talks between Iran and the West, the European Union, as a coordinator for the talks, used to be relatively soft and moderate. When Trump took the controversial step of designating the IRGC in 2019, the European Union was keen to air its unease out of a perception that the move was to derail future

against the counterrevolutionary elements, saying, “The cessation of our deterring operations will be until we see the absence of movement of anti-revolutionary elements from neighboring countries.”

Ahmad Hossein Fallahi, another lawmaker, has recently pointed to Iraq’s decision to deploy 6,000 troops to the border with Iran and Turkey. “If security is not provided by the neighbors, our country will take action on its own, which will definitely cause border tensions,” he said.

Fallahi was commenting on recent remarks by Iraqi Interior Minister Abdul Amir al-Shimmari, who had announced that Iraq has taken measures to bring under control the country’s borders with Iran and Turkey. “The Iraqi border is a red line, and there will be no dereliction in controlling them,” al-Shimmari told Al Arabiya.

He added, “There was a decision to control the borders with Iran and Turkey and to take measures to control these borders... Amounts of money have been allocated for maintaining the borders with Turkey, building outposts, installing cameras and building towers.”

Al-Shimmari revealed that more than 6,000 policemen are present at the border posts with Iran and Turkey in the Kurdistan region of Iraq.

MP Fallahi said since past few years, Iran

conversation between Iran and Russia in less than two weeks. They spoke over the phone earlier this. During this conversation, Ayatollah Raisi emphasized the importance of the continuous development of economic cooperation between the two countries, especially in the field of transit and energy, and considered these cooperations to institutionalize beneficial relations for the nations of both sides as well as the countries of the region.

In another part of his speech, President Raisi emphasized that only through cooperation and

coordination can regional issues be resolved, including in the Caucasus and Syria, and stated, “The Islamic Republic of Iran always emphasizes on strengthening regional integration and the harmfulness of foreign interference”.

Regarding the efforts to solve the Syrian issues, Ayatollah Raisi emphasized the centrality of the Astana Framework and announced the readiness of Iran to play an active and constructive role in ending the conflicts and establishing peace in Ukraine.

## Iran deputy FM visits Niger

TEHRAN – Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Ali Bagheri Kani paid a visit to Niger and met with Nigerian Foreign Minister Hassoumi Massaoudou in Niamey.

In this meeting, the latest state of relations and cooperation between the two countries was reviewed and the two sides discussed ways to strengthen and develop bilateral and international cooperation, Fars News reported.

The emphasis on holding the third meeting of the Joint Economic

talks with Iran over reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Fast forward to 2023, the European Union is moving in a direction that could be the starting point of the much-rumored Plan B. Some in Tehran believe that the European resolution could be intended to extract more concessions from Iran in the nuclear talks by adding to the complexity of the already complicated talks. “It seems that the Europeans are not serious about continuing and concluding the talks. They are making excuses, adding another issue, and complicating the nuclear talks. Or they are seeking more concessions from the Islamic Republic of Iran. Because after the death of Ms. Mahsa Amini the Americans told their Europeans that new developments would take place in Iran and the Islamic Republic would be forced to make concessions,” Abbas Golrou, a member of the Iranian parliament’s National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, told the parliament’s news agency ICANA.

He underlined that it is impossible for Iran to make more concessions than it has made so far. “The parliament emphasizes that Iran’s nuclear capability should be increased and strengthened in response to Europeans’ non-compliance,” he said.

has had extensive cooperation to ensure the security of Iraq and it has given many martyrs in this way.

“Currently, we have reached a time when the Iraqi government has reached stability and has an army that should be able to control its borders.”

He went on to express regret that the border of the Kurdistan Region towards Iran has become a route for the entry of weapons and movement of anti-revolutionary elements.

According to the recent memorandums with the Iraqi government, a brigade should have been deployed on the Iranian border and a brigade on the Turkish border to ensure border security, which has been done.

Fallahi continued by emphasizing that if the Iraqis control their border, “our costs” in providing security will also decrease and this is a two-way issue.

“The borders of our country and Iraq are long, and to ensure security, cooperation and participation of both sides is required, because no border point should remain unmonitored,” he insisted.

Fallahi pointed out that it should be noted that securing the border is not a voluntary action by Iraq, but is part of their duties.

In this telephone conversation, Russian President Vladimir Putin described comprehensive economic cooperation as very fruitful for the relations between the two countries and added, “Expanding the capacities and cooperation of the two countries, including in the field of transit and energy, is beneficial to the economies of the entire Eurasian region”.

In another part, Putin welcomed Iran’s initiative to establish peace in Ukraine and emphasized coordination to solve the problems of Syria within the Astana Framework.

Cooperation Commission in the first half of this year was one of the issues agreed upon by the two sides.

The Iranian deputy foreign minister also met with the Ministers of Interior, Energy, Planning, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, the head of the Iran-Niger Parliamentary Friendship Group and the head of the Niger Chamber of Commerce. In these meetings, the two sides discussed and consulted on the mechanisms for the development of bilateral cooperation.

# IRAN IN FOCUS

JANUARY 21, 2023

Straight Truth  
TEHRAN TIMES

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## SPORTS

### Persepolis edge Zob Ahan to cement place at top

TEHRAN – Persepolis football team consolidated their lead in the Iran Professional League with a 1-0 win over Zob Ahan here at the Azadi Stadium on Friday.

The Reds’ captain Omid Alishah scored the only goal of the match with a header in the 69th minute.

Persepolis lead the table with 35 points, five points ahead of second-place Sepahan.

In Kerman, Mes defeated rock-bottom Naft Masjed Soleyman 2-0.

Sanat Naft and Foolad also shared the spoils in a goalless draw.

On Thursday, Sepahan defeated Esteghlal 2-1 in Isfahan.

An added-time goal from Ramin Rezaeian helped Sepahan complete a dramatic late win over Esteghlal in their pursuit of the title of Iran Professional League (IPL).

Omid Noorafkan opened the scoring for the hosts with a powerful shot in the 50th minute.

Arsalan Motehary equalized the match before the hour mark.

Sepahan forward Shahriar Moghanlou was brought down by Esteghlal defender Siavash Yazdani into the box and the referee showed the penalty spot. Rezaeian converted his penalty in the injury time.

### Iran learn fate at 2023 AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup

TEHRAN – Iran discovered their opponents at the AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup Thailand 2023.

The competition group stage is set to be a thrilling affair following the draw at the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) House in Kuala Lumpur on Thursday.

The action promises to be spectacular as besides regional glory, the top three teams will qualify for the FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup UAE 2023.

Hosts Thailand will have 2006 champions Bahrain, Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia for company in Group A.

Group B will see United Arab Emirates, Iran – both two-time winners, Malaysia and Uzbekistan vying for the two spots into the quarter-finals.

Defending champions and three-time winners Japan, Lebanon, China and Indonesia will battle in Group C while Group D will feature 2015 winners Oman, Palestine, Kuwait and Kyrgyz Republic.

The 10th edition of the AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup will be played in Pattaya from March 16 to 26.

#### Draw

**Group A:** Thailand, Bahrain, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia

**Group B:** UAE, Iran, Malaysia, Uzbekistan

**Group C:** Japan, Lebanon, China, Indonesia

**Group D:** Oman, Palestine, Kuwait, Kyrgyz Republic

### Iran U20 football team lose to Jordan

TEHRAN – Iran U20 football team lost to Jordan U20 in a friendly match on Thursday.

Samad Marfavi’s boys suffered a 2-0 loss at the Petra Stadium in Al-Hussein Youth City.

Iran will play Jordan once again on Sunday.

The matches are being held as part of the preparation for the AFC U-20 Asian Cup Uzbekistan 2023, which will be held in March 2023 in Uzbekistan.

Iran are drawn in Group C along with Qatar, Vietnam, and Australia.

### American star Petty happy to beat Al Riyadi in WASL-West

TEHRAN – Shahrdari Gorgan point guard Perry Petty is so happy to help his team defeat Al Riyadi of Lebanon 75-62 in Group B of the WASL-West Asia.

Petty bannered the payback win with 26 points, including 11 each in the first and fourth quarters as he helped set the tone early before coming through with the last key run that brought their gutsy rivals down for the count.

The American, who’s one of WASL-West Asia’s top scorers, also finished with 7 rebounds, 4 assists, and 3 steals with a game-high efficiency rating of 25.

“It was a very good game. That’s a very good team, great players, well-coached. We played hard. We were well prepared by the coaching staff. I’m happy we were able to win. We played hard,” Petty said.

### Persepolis eye Brazilian forward Wellington

TEHRAN – Brazilian forward Wellington Luis de Sousa has reportedly been linked with a move to Persepolis.

The 34-year-old striker currently plays at the Japanese club Shonan Bellmare.

Wellington started his professional career in 2007 with Sport Club Internacional.

Brazilian center forward Nicolas Godinho Johann is reportedly on Persepolis’ radar as well.

Persepolis lead the Iran Professional League (IPL) table.

### Hajisafi assists in Greek Cup win over Panserraikos

TEHRAN - AEK overcame the fighting Panserraikos to win 3-0 while taking the lead for the qualification to the semi-finals of the Greek Cup.

The mighty Panserraikos lasted only for one half against AEK at the OPAP Arena.

Union picked up the pace in the second half, overcame the resistance of Serrai, and easily won 3-0 in the first game between them for the quarter-final phase of the Greek Cup.

The goals came from Mantalos (55th), Levi Garcia (67th), and Oberlin Pineda (89th).

### Four dead, dozens injured in stampede at Persian Gulf Cup in Iraq

TEHRAN – At least four people have been killed and dozens injured in a stampede at a stadium in Basra in southern Iraq ahead of the Persian Gulf Cup final, according to Iraqi football officials.

Reporting from Basra, Al Jazeera’s Mahmoud Abdelwahed said a number of the about 80 injured people were “in critical condition” after the incident on Thursday.

The match took place on Thursday night and Iraq defeated Oman 3-2, winning the eight-nation tournament.

Thousands of fans without tickets had gathered outside Basra International Stadium since dawn in hopes of watching the rare home international match.

A photographer with the Agence France-Presse news agency inside the stadium said the turnstiles were still closed when the stampede broke out. Sirens blared as ambulances arrived to ferry the injured to hospital.

Abdelwahed said some people without tickets tried to push into the stadium, according to sources in stadium security.

Images posted on social media showed a sea of people outside the stadium.

### 120 Iranian, foreign tennis players to compete in Kish Island

TEHRAN – The first international event of the International Tennis Federation (ITF) in 2023 will start in Kish Island, southern Iran, on Saturday.

120 Tennis players from Poland, Hungary, Turkey, Russia, and Iran will attend in the event which is slated to be held at four levels for two weeks.

The event is to be held in U18 in women and men categories.

## Execution of Alireza Akbari shattered prestige of UK spy agency: statement

TEHRAN – Iran’s Ministry of Intelligence issued Friday an explanatory statement about Alireza Akbari’s case, saying his execution has destroyed the prestige of the British intelligence.

The statement described the execution of Akbari as a blow to the prestige and credibility of the UK intelligence community which boast of having the “oldest” spy agency.

“The prestige of the British spy agency and the safety of its spies have been destroyed. And the agency’s intelligence officers are facing the challenge of how

to restore their credibility among their agents henceforth,” the statement said.

The intelligence ministry said Akbari’s case was so unprecedented that some intelligence services have reached out to the ministry to learn about the experience associated with this case.

The ministry also announced that from now on “dirty tools” such as making recruitments through giving visas and residence permits as well as granting citizenship to spies with the aim of rescuing them will come to naught.



## Lack of an air transport system a major barrier to boost flowers export



TEHRAN- The lack of an air transport system for flowers export is one of the most important challenges in Iran's export of flowers and ornamental plants, according to the chairman of Flower Retailers' Association of Tehran.

"The lack of an air transport system for flower export is one of the most important challenges in this sector, so sometimes a passenger plane is used if the space is empty", Gholam-Hossein Soltan-Mohammadi said, adding, "In general, sending flowers from the place of production to the final consumer is a relatively long and complicated path; Because sending cut flowers has its own subtleties that are still neglected in our country."

He named factors such as high air freight rates,

problems related to ground transportation from the cultivation site, and terminal, problems related to adjusting the production and transportation schedule, and as a result, lack of timely research of the product according to the need of the customer, as well as the individual entry of Iranian exporters to global markets and the lack of recognition of export target markets as some other main difficulties in the export of flowers and ornamental plants.

Iran has 17th place in the world in the production of flowers and ornamental plants, but it is ranked 107th in terms of export.

Every year, three billion flowers and ornamental plants are produced in the country, of which only 300 million are exported. 50 percent of the produced flowers are sold domestically and the rest is thrown away.

As said by Soltan-Mohammadi, flowers and ornamental plants consumption per capita in Iran is 20, while the figure is 150 to 250 in the world.

"We must have mass production to reduce the price of flowers", he has stated.

According to him, to produce flowers and ornamental plants for export, it should be considered as an industry and the demands of target companies should be evaluated.

## Manufacturing of refrigerators, freezers rises 18% in 9 months on year

TEHRAN- Manufacturing of refrigerators and freezers in Iran has risen 18 percent in the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 21, 2022), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, according to the data released by Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry.

The ministry's data indicate that 1.955 million refrigerators and freezers have been manufactured in the nine-month period of this year, while the figure was 1.653 million in the same time span of the previous year.

Based on the data previously released by the ministry, 2,265,300 refrigerators and freezers were manufactured in the country during the past Iranian calendar year 1400, showing 8.3 percent growth year on year.

Manufacturing of home appliances in Iran rose 7.56 percent during the previous year from its

preceding year.

According to the industry ministry's data, over 6,273,600 sets of large home appliances, including TV sets, refrigerators and freezers, washing machines, and air coolers were manufactured in 1400, while the figure was 5,832,400 in 1399.

Among the mentioned products, just air cooler experienced a production drop, and production of the other items increased.

Over the past few years, the Iranian government has been following a new strategy for supporting domestic production to neutralize the impacts of the U.S. sanctions while reducing the reliance of the economy on oil revenues.

The home appliances sector has been one of the pioneers in this regard and like many other areas, the production of home appliances has witnessed a significant rise in the past four years.

## Intl. conference on dates, related industries held in Bushehr

TEHRAN - The international conference on dates and related industries was held in Bushehr (the capital city of Busher province), southwestern Iran, on Thursday, with the presence of senior officials including the ambassador of Bangladesh in Iran, Turkey's commercial attaché to Tehran, and a number of national and provincial authorities.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the conference, Head of Bushehr Chamber of Commerce and Industry Khorshid Gazderazi said Iran is the ninth biggest producer of dates in the world, IRIB reported.

## Intl. exhibit of ceramics, tiles, sanitaryware running in Tehran

TEHRAN - The 27th international exhibition of tiles, ceramics, and sanitary porcelain kicked off at Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds on Thursday, IRIB reported.

The opening ceremony of the exhibition was attended by Deputy Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Mohammad-Mehdi Baradaran.

As reported, over 100 foreign and domestic companies active in the ceramics and sanitaryware industries are showcasing their latest products and services in this four-day exhibition.

Turkey, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Russia, Syria, Belarus, and Tajikistan are among the countries whose representatives are participating in this

"Despite having unique capacities, Iran has not been able to properly enter the global dates market, mainly due to the challenges and problems in the processing sector," Gazderazi said.

According to the official, financing and providing working capital to exporters and granting facilities with low-interest rates and appropriate breathing periods, using the capacities of knowledge-based companies and science and technology parks in order to benefit from modern technologies, the establishment of dates organization are among of the necessary measures that the government should take to promote the country's date industry.

year's exhibition.

According to the chairman of the Iranian Ceramic Society, Iran-made ceramics and tiles are currently exported to 150 different countries.

Asghar Ahaniha said on Tuesday that the export of Iran-made products has significantly increased in recent years as new markets have been opened in Africa and Russia.

Since the cost of transportation is of great importance in exports, the Iranian producers prioritize the export of their products to the neighboring and regional states, he noted, adding that 80 percent of Iranian tiles and ceramics are currently exported to Iraq and Pakistan.

# Iran, Belarus ink MOU on agricultural co-op

from page 1 ► The Belarusian delegation also attended a business forum, held by the TCCIMA, to explore ways of expanding mutual cooperation with the Iranian private sector in the fields of agriculture and food industry.

This is the second MOU signed between Tehran and Minsk over the past six months.

Back in November 2022, the two sides signed another MOU for expanding cooperation in the agricultural sector during a visit of the Iranian Deputy Agriculture Minister Abbas Askarzadeh to Minsk.

The agricultural delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran headed by Askarzadeh traveled to Minsk, the capital of Belarus, to hold the second working group of the Iran-Belarus Agricultural Cooperation.

During his visit to the European country, Askarzadeh met with Belarusian Agriculture and Food Minister Ivan Krupko



*Iran-Belarus business forum at the place of TCCIMA*

and discussed ways to further expand cooperation between the two countries in the field of agriculture.

In the meeting, Askarzadeh officially invited Krupko to visit Iran later this year.

The Belarusian minister also referred to the warm and

friendly relations between the two countries and the great potential of Belarus and Iran for cooperation in the field of agriculture and animal husbandry and called for the implementation of the agreements between the two countries and the removal of existing obstacles to the further

expansion of mutual cooperation.

Enumerating Belarus' capabilities in the agricultural sector as well as dairy and food industries, Krupko said: "The Belarusian government is ready to meet some of the agricultural needs of the Iranian market, as well as the implementation of joint projects in the field of agriculture."

Pointing to the results of the second joint Iranian-Belarusian agricultural working group, Askarzadeh said: "During a visit to the Belarusian Food Industry Exhibition and a number of dairy factories, agricultural machinery units, and livestock farms, I came to the conclusion that there are unique capacities for developing cooperation and implementing joint projects."

"Belarus can supply part of Iranian market needs for grains, oilseeds, chicken, eggs, and dairy products and in return, Iran can meet Belarus' needs for a variety of fish and seafood, fruits, vegetables, and nuts," he said.

## Iran-EAEU FTA to go operational by late September

TEHRAN - Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) has said the long-awaited free trade agreement (FTA) between the Islamic Republic and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) is going to be put in effect by mid-Iranian calendar year 1402 (late September).

Alireza Peyman-Pak made the remarks after a meeting with Minister in charge of Trade of the Eurasian Economic Commission Andrey Slepnev in Tehran on Thursday, the TPO portal reported.

"In the last two and a half years, more than 30 rounds of negotiations have been held with the representatives of five member countries of the Eurasian Union, and thank God, we reached a final agreement in this round," the TPO head said.

According to Peyman-Pak, during the Thursday meeting, the two sides concluded their negotiations and the draft of the agreement was finalized.

The official noted that the list of the commodities to be included in the FTA has been also finalized, saying: "The two sides made the final talks today, according to which 90 percent of the items were put on the green trade list with the rest 10 percent enlisted as forbidden items."



*TPO Head Alireza Peyman-Pak (R) and Minister in charge of Trade of Eurasian Economic Commission Andrey Slepnev*

He noted that the FTA will have a significant positive effect on the volume of trade between the two sides.

In the meantime, the EAEU trade minister said that the five members of this union attach special significance to cooperation with Iran.

Slepnev said that Iran is a close ally of Russia and other EAEU member countries. He also believed that the preferential trade agreement between the two sides led to an expansion of

economic cooperation with Iran.

Despite all the restrictions caused by the outbreak of the coronavirus disease, EAEU's trade with Iran has grown by 20 percent over the past year, the official said.

Iran and EAEU reached a preferential trade agreement in 2018 based on which about 862 commodity items are currently subject to preferential tariffs.

The agreement came into effect on October 27, 2019.

The value of trade between Iran and the EAEU members reached \$5.643 billion during the previous Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20, 2022), registering a 66-percent rise compared to the figure for the preceding year.

According to the former Spokesman of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) Ruhollah Latifi, the weight of Iran-EAEU trade in the mentioned year stood at over 13.127 million tons which was also 51 percent more than the preceding year.

Iran exported 2.77 million tons of commodities worth over \$1.170 billion to the mentioned union to register a 3.5 percent increase in terms of weight and 12 percent growth in terms of value.

## ICCIMA to dispatch trade delegation to Kazakhstan next week

TEHRAN- Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), in collaboration with Iran-Kazakhstan Joint Chamber of Commerce, will dispatch a trade delegation to Kazakhstan's capital Astana next week concurrent with the two countries' Joint Economic Committee meeting.

Iranian Agriculture Minister Javad Sadati-Nejad will lead the Iranian delegates, which will stay in the Kazakh capital during January 25-28, with the aim of expanding trade ties between the two countries.

Transportation fields (shipping, railway, transit), technical engineering services, extraterrestrial cultivation, agricultural products and food, grain and animal feed, chemicals, plastics, industries and machinery, constructional materials, minerals, medicine and medical equipment, technology and knowledge-based areas are the main activities of the Iranian delegates.

In last November, Iran and Kazakhstan inked a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on the expansion of cooperation in the agriculture and trade fields as well as industries, logistics, transportation and technology transfer in Tehran.

The MOU was signed on November 2 by Sadati-Nejad and Zhumangarin Serik, the deputy prime minister and minister of trade and integration of Kazakhstan, who visited Tehran on top of a Kazakh delegation.

As reported, the effort of the

two countries in order to increase the value of bilateral trade to about one billion dollars, based on the agreements of the presidents of the two countries, was considered in the MOU.

In the MOU, there was also an agreement on the establishment of a joint trading company for agricultural products and the implementation of joint agricultural projects, and also holding related exhibitions by Kazakh companies in Tehran in the first month of the next Iranian calendar year (starts on March 21), coinciding with the visit of the prime minister of Kazakhstan to Tehran.

During a meeting between Kazakhstan Prime Minister Alikhan Ashanuly Smaiylov and Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber on the sidelines of the Second Caspian Economic Forum in Moscow in last October, the Kazakh side emphasized the importance of improving the level of cooperation between Tehran and Astana in the oil swap, as well as industry, agriculture, scientific and cultural sectors.

Mokhber, for his part, said that the level of trade between Iran and Kazakhstan can quickly reach three billion dollars, considering the existing capacities of the two countries.

The Kazakh prime minister welcomed the proposal of Iran's first vice president and stated that the necessary fields and capacities of the two countries are ready to raise the level of trade exchanges between



Iran and Kazakhstan and reach three billion dollars a year.

Mokhber then announced Iran's readiness to send mining companies to Kazakhstan and added: "Tehran is ready to cooperate with Astana in port, dam construction, hydropower plant construction, knowledge-based and technical and engineering services."

Meanwhile, during a meeting with a Kazakh trade and transport delegation headed by the country's Deputy Minister of Trade and Integration Kulbatyrov Nurlan Naizabekovich at the place of ICCIMA in Tehran in late November, Behnam Faramazian, the director of transport and TIR Carnets at ICCIMA, expressed Iran's readiness to establish a joint transport consortium with Kazakhstan and to launch a regular RO-RO service between the ports of the two countries.

Speaking in the meeting, Naizabekovich mentioned the Kazakhstan President's recent visit to Iran and said: "One of Kazakhstan's main goals in the region is to develop transit cooperation with Iran."

Referring to the targeting of

three billion dollars of annual trade by the two countries' governments, the deputy minister said: "Although the capacity of Iran's export to Kazakhstan is very high, a small number of Iranian commodities enter Kazakhstan; However, those goods have had positive feedback among Kazakh consumers."

Emphasizing that the main purpose of the Kazakh delegation's trip to Iran was to examine Iran's business facilities and capacities and to identify challenges in the way of developing mutual trade in order to find suitable solutions for them, Naizabekovich added: "Iran is an important country for Kazakhstan and we are determined to develop business relations between the two countries."

Further in the meeting, Alireza Yavari, ICCIMA deputy head for international affairs, stated that Kazakhstan is one of Iran's priorities for the development of trade in the region.

He emphasized close relations between the two countries and said: "After the visit of Kazakh officials to Iran last month, the Islamic Republic has agreed to provide transport facilities to Kazakhstan in the southern ports of Iran, including Shahid Rajaei port so that this country can use this capacity to develop its exports to Far East countries."

"Such agreements will definitely lead to the development of the two countries' trade relations," Yavari added.



From page 1 ► If we go through the grounds and roots of the war, we must look at the costs it has had for Europe, affecting one of the centers of wealth and industry in the world.

Today, inflation in the world, and of course in Europe, is very high, however, the European continent is caught in an energy crisis.

In addition to the main responsibility of supplying the weapons needed by Kiev, Europe must also try to compensate the costs that this war has had on the continent, including the migration of war refugees, the increase in energy costs, and inflation.

**Energy is Europe's Achilles heel in the Ukraine war**

One of the most important weaknesses of Europe is its dependence on energy imports from outside the continent, especially from Russia.

After the start of the war in Ukraine, Europe tried to support Ukraine as the front line of protecting NATO's security line, but the policy caused problems.

In 2021, the EU imported 40% of its gas from Russia – so many of its member states were exposed to high energy prices.

This restriction has created problems for European citizens and has raised the cost of living in the continent to its highest level in the last few decades.

Russia's war on Ukraine impacted energy prices across Europe, Reuters reported on 29 Sep. 2022. Italy's regulated household electricity prices increased by 59% in the fourth quarter, Italy's energy authority ARERA said.

The change, which reflects a spike in wholesale energy prices, concerns 41.5% of Italian households, according to ARERA's 2021 data.

Market conditions would have dictated a far higher price hike of "about 100%," but ARERA intervened "exceptionally" to dampen the increase.

Electricity prices also in France averaged 62.94 EUR/MWh from 2004 until 2022, reaching an all-time high of 743.84 EUR/MWh in August of 2022. Prices remained well above those of European neighbors.

Expressed in euro, average household electricity prices in the first half of 2022 were highest in Denmark (€45.6), Belgium (€33.8), Germany (€32.8) and Italy (€31.2).

According to a report released by Eurostat on 32 Oct. 2022, in the first half of 2022, average household electricity prices in the EU increased sharply compared with the same period in 2021, from €22.0 per 100 kWh to reach €25.3 per 100 kWh. Average gas prices also increased compared with the same period in 2021 from €6.4 per 100 kWh to €8.6 per 100 kWh in the first half of 2022.

More recently, accordingly, wholesale prices for electricity and gas have increased substantially across the EU. Energy and supply costs impacted by the current geopolitical situation, the Russian military aggression in Ukraine, mainly drove the increase.

**Reducing prices with government aid!**

Although it is sometimes claimed that some energy carriers have decreased in European countries and the war in Ukraine has not affected the continent that much, all these price reductions are due to



# Regional dimensions of Ukraine war with global scope

government subsidies and aid.

Compared with a year ago, the weight of taxes and levies in the final electricity and gas bills charged to households in the EU in the first half of 2022 decreased significantly as member states put in place governmental allowances and subsidies to mitigate high-energy costs. Compared with the first half of 2021, the share of taxes in the electricity bill dropped sharply from 39% to 24% (-15.5%) and in the gas bill from 36% to 27% (-8.6%).

The BBC announced in a report on December 21, 2022 that Poland has announced plans for an energy price support package for households, worth 26.8bn zlotys (£4.8bn).

It includes freezing energy prices for 2023 at this year's level, with a limit of 2,000 kWh per year for most households. There will be higher thresholds for households with people with disabilities and for families with three or more children.

The government has abolished VAT on food, gas and fertilizer and reduced it on petrol, diesel and energy bills.

There is also a new mandatory 10% electricity saving for national and local government public administrations.

According the BBC, Norway has set a maximum price that households should pay for their energy – anything over this, the government will pay 80% of the bill.

The UK government has brought in a cap on the price of a unit of energy until April 2023, which will mean the typical household bill for gas and electricity will be £2,500 a year.

This is being extended to April

2024, but typical bills will be capped at £3,000 a year.

There will be more support for those on benefits and for pensions households.

In October, the German parliament approved a "defensive shield" package worth €200bn (£175bn). It includes a cap on gas and electricity prices for households and some businesses from early next year.

The government will pay December's monthly gas bill for all households and small-to-medium businesses.

In September and October, all taxpayers received a one-off energy payment €300. There has been extra help for people on benefits.

Public transport tickets were subsidized.

In January, the French government forced the state-owned energy provider, Électricité de France (EDF), to cap price rises at 4% for a year.

It says it will cap rises in gas and electricity at 15% for 2023, as part of a €45bn (£39bn) scheme to support households and businesses.

France had already announced a one-off €100 (£84) payment last year to 5.8 million households receiving energy vouchers.

The aid was while the countries and the EU itself also listed their plans to reduce energy consumption.

**Inflation nightmare for the continent**

Another consequence of the Russian war is the unbridled inflation that the European Union has suffered.

The sudden increase in the cost of

transportation due to the increase in the price of fuel and energy and the increase in the price of goods has caused Europeans to bear additional costs for their livelihood in the last two or three years.

Eurozone government bond yields in 2022 have risen after inflation data showed consumer prices climbed at a record pace in October, heaping pressure on the European Central Bank to continue aggressive policy tightening.

Consumer price growth in the 19 countries with euro as their monetary unit accelerated to 10.7 percent in October from 9.9 percent a month earlier, data showed.

Inflation, excluding unprocessed food and energy, accelerated to 6.4 percent from 6 percent. An even narrower measure that also filters out alcohol and tobacco rose to 5 percent from 4.8 percent.

The data points to further rate increases from the European Central Bank (ECB) in an attempt to bring inflation back down toward its target.

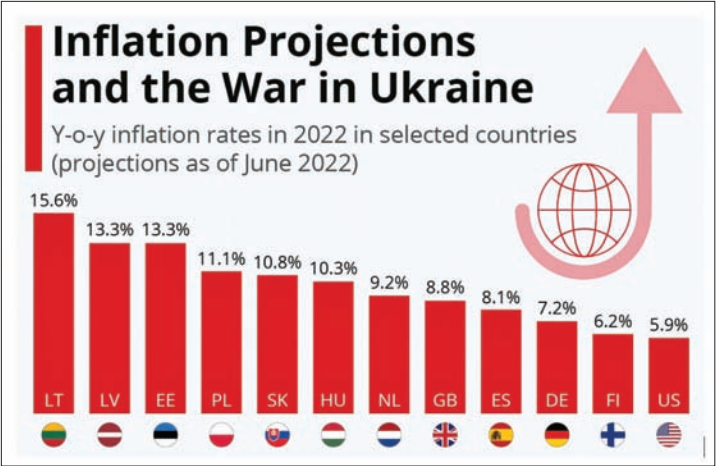
"The ECB's goal of pushing the inflation rate back to just under 2 percent on a sustainable basis seems a long way off," Commerzbank senior economist Christoph Weil said, noting the ECB forecast inflation at 9.2 percent in the final quarter of 2022.

"This also increases the pressure on the ECB Governing Council to further raise key rates sharply," Weil added.

Spanish consumer prices have risen at the fastest pace since September 1984, national statistics for July (2022) showed, as inflation in the European countries using the euro currency shot up to another record, preliminary data released on Friday by Spain's National Statistics Institute (INE) shows.

PINE said prices increased 10.8 percent year-on-year this month, up from 10.2 percent in June.

As the infographic (at the end of the paragraph) based on the latest OECD Economic Outlook shows, the impact of rising consumer prices is being especially felt in Europe and countries neighboring Ukraine. For Lithuania, OECD analysts had projected an inflation rate of 15.6 percent for 2022 – compared to the previous forecast from December 2021, which was an increase of 12.4 percentage points.



## Russia's gas route to China would run via Central Asia

On Wednesday, Gazprom CEO Alexey Miller held a working meeting in St. Petersburg with Kazakhstan's First Deputy Prime Minister Roman Sklyar. Following the talks, the two sides signed off on a roadmap for gas cooperation. No details of the document are available, but experts say this could be the first step toward establishing a natural gas union that would benefit everyone.

"The agreement signed between Kazakhstan and Gazprom is a step closer to a major project that is commonly called the trilateral alliance," Head of the Central Asia and Kazakhstan Department of the

Institute of CIS Countries Andrey Grozin told Nezavisimaya Gazeta.

According to the expert, this is how Russia has been implementing its new energy strategy that will be reoriented southwards from the west. "This will be Russia's new state policy course, and it is obvious that neither Astana nor Tashkent will refuse to participate in the project.

Experts agree that Southeast Asia will become the largest energy-consuming region by the middle of this century, and an expanded network of gas pipelines to Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and China,

as fantastic as it sounds today, will soon become a reality. Therefore, it is necessary to market [Russian] raw materials in the economies of the South," Grozin believes.

However, Senior Researcher at the IMEMO Center for Post-Soviet Studies Stanislav Pritchinn warned that if Astana and Tashkent viewed the trilateral gas union through the prism of geopolitics, fearing Western sanctions, nobody would win, for such a position would be counterproductive, originally envisaging conflict and playing against the interests of the union members themselves.

### WORLD HEADLINES

## Biggest European Parliament graft scandal in decades

The EU has been shaken by one of the biggest corruption scandals in its history after Eva Kaili, a Greek Member of the European Parliament (MEP), was arrested on Dec. 9 by Belgian police on corruption charges allegedly involving Qatar.

Kaili, 44, from Greece's center-left PASOK-KINAL party, and one of the EP's 14 vice presidents, was arrested after her home was searched on corruption charges allegedly involving Qatar, which was accused of paying Kaili to lobby for the Persian Gulf state's interests.

She was subsequently removed from the parliament's vice presidency and dismissed from the PASOK-KINAL party over the allegations following the arrest.

Although Qatar vigorously denies the allegations, so far, four individuals have been arrested and charged with "participation in a criminal organization, money laundering and corruption," according to the prosecutors.

Initially, six people were arrested but Eva Kaili's father Alexandros Kailis, and Luca Visentini, secretary-general of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), were released later.

Also, up to €1.5 million (\$1.62 million) in cash have been seized by the Belgian police across dozens of home and office searches. In addition, parliamentary computers have also been requisitioned to prevent the erasure of important data.

## US weapons transfer from Israel to Ukraine

A few weeks ago, the US armed forces sent to Ukraine weapons it had stored in Israel for emergency use.

A well-informed Israeli source said in an exclusive statement to Anadolu: "American equipment that was stored in Israel was transferred to the American armed forces (and then to Ukraine) a few weeks ago at their request."

Israel has declined to send Israeli weapons to Ukraine despite repeated requests by the Ukrainian government. Since the beginning of the war last February, Israel has restricted itself to sending humanitarian equipment to Ukraine.

However, Nimrod Goren, the head of Mitvim – The Israeli Institute for Regional Foreign Policies, told Anadolu that this step may not represent as big a change as it seems at first glance.

"The talk is about American weapons stored in Israel. They are not Israeli weapons, and the decision to transfer them is an American decision and does not reflect an Israeli position."

He added: "Israel has repeatedly declared that it will not supply Ukraine with weapons and that it will suffice with humanitarian aid. Therefore, in terms of what the Israeli position is, I do not think that this step represents a change in the rules of the game."

According to The New York Times, about 150,000 artillery shells from stockpiles in Israel were transferred to Ukraine.

But Arkady Mil-Man, a senior researcher and head of the Russia Program at the Institute for National Security Studies, told the Israel Broadcasting Corporation: "It is unlikely that the Russians will receive this news well. Even today, Israel has refrained from supplying offensive weapons to Ukraine. By doing so from stocks in Israel, Israel has involuntarily supported Ukraine."

However, he noted that "the Russians understand that this is American ammunition, and that Israel does not have many options when facing considerations of transferring American weapons systems around the world. Therefore, this decision will not decisively affect Israeli-Russian relations."

## French unions call for more protests on Jan. 31 against pension changes

Trade unions in France called for fresh protests and strikes on Jan. 31 to ramp up pressure on the government to withdraw its controversial plan to hike the age of retirement.

The call came as hundreds of thousands poured out for massive nationwide protests on Thursday, which brought transport services and life in general to a virtual standstill in major cities.

According to the country's largest union CGT, at least 2 million people protested across France, including some 400,000 in the capital Paris.

The Interior Ministry, however, claimed the number was significantly lower at around 1.12 million.

In a meeting on Thursday evening, union leaders urged workers to "intensify actions everywhere in the country" as the government looks to formally adopt the proposal at a Cabinet meeting on Jan. 23.

"We are united and determined to get this project withdrawn," unions said in a statement cited by local media, calling for "a fair retirement system."

Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne, who unveiled details of the reform plan on Jan. 10, said last week that the minimum pension amount would rise to 85% of the minimum wage, meaning around €1,200 (\$1,288) per month.

Starting in 2027, only people who have worked for at least 43 years would be eligible for full pensions, she said.



Demonstrators gather in Place de la Republique during a rally in Paris on January 19, 2023, as workers go on strike over the French President's plan to raise the legal retirement age from 62 to 64.



## Martian Mountains, Makran coast holds high potential for tourism, minister says

From Page 1 ► Five to 100 meters is the height of the mountains and there is no vegetation in their grooves of them. The texture is highly resistant and feels like a hard rock when climbing. It is rare, however, for people to climb these mountains, as the pleasure of sight outweighs that of climbing.

Geologists have offered different explanations for the formation of these mountains. While some believe they are a continuation of the Zagros Mountains, a range that ends in Pakistan, others believe they were buried under tons of soil thousands of years ago, and have come to light as climate change and seasonal rains washed soil off their faces.

Located in the southern part of the Sistan-Baluchestan province, Makran is a semi-desert coastal strip along the coast of the Gulf of Oman.

The narrow coastal plain rises rapidly into several mountain ranges. Of the 1,000 kilometers of the coastline, around 750 kilometers are in Pakistan. Makran is very sparsely inhabited, with much of the population concentrated in a string of small ports including Chabahar, Gwatar, Jiواني, Jask, Sirik, Gwadar, Pasni, Ormara, and many smaller fishing villages.

Shahid Beheshti Port, which is Iran's only oceanic port, is the main port of the country on



the Makran coast.

Chabahar is the only ocean port in Iran and the best and easiest access route of the middle Asian countries to free waters. Boasting various natural and historical attractions, Chabahar could be named one of the most underrated destinations in Iran. However, in recent years, various measures have been taken to promote the port as a safe and hospitable choice for both domestic and foreign visitors.

For decades, Sistan-Baluchestan was shunned by potential foreign travelers though it is home to several distinctive archaeological sites and natural attractions, including two UNESCO World Heritage sites of Shahr-e-Soukhteh (Burnt City) and Lut Desert, shared with Kerman Province.

## Mazandaran registers 91 million overnight stays in ten months: official



TEHRAN –Holidaymakers have made some 91 million overnight stays in hotels and guest houses of Mazandaran province during the first ten months of the current year (started on March 21, 2022).

“Since the beginning of this year, 91 million overnight stays have been registered in the province,” ISNA quoted Rouhollah Solgi, the deputy governor-general, as saying on Wednesday.

The official noted that the number of passengers arriving in Mazandaran during this year's Noruz holiday exceeded expectations.

For the next Noruz (which marks the Iranian new year, 1402), we are expecting to somehow face a tsunami of passengers, the official said.

According to data compiled by the provincial tourism directorate, a total of 7,979,076 overnight stays were registered by the hotels, guest houses, ecolodge units, traditional lodging houses,

apartment hotels, and tourist centers during the first three weeks of the summer this year.

Mazandaran has 63 hotels, 51 motels, 91 apartment hotels, 293 eco-lodge complexes, 4,939 guest houses, 8 recreational complexes, 123 beach facilities, and 12 camping sites, with a total capacity of 1,246,177 people per night.

This year, domestic vacationers made almost 14 million overnight stays across Mazandaran during the two-week Noruz holidays.

Sandwiched between the towering Alborz mountain range and the Caspian Sea, Mazandaran has a rich yet turbulent history. An early civilization flourished at the beginning of the first millennium BC in Mazandaran (Tabarestan).

Its insecure eastern and southeastern borders were crossed by Mongol invaders in the 13th and 14th centuries. Cossacks attacked the region in 1668 but were repulsed. It was ceded to the Russian Empire by a treaty in 1723, but the Russians were never secure in their occupation. The area was restored to Iran under the Qajar dynasty.

The northern section of the region consists of lowland alongside the Caspian and upland along the northern slopes of the Alborz Mountains. Marshy backlands dominate the coastal plain, and extensive gravel fans fringe the mountains. The climate is permanently subtropical and humid, with very hot summers.

## UNESCO sites at a glance

### Boyana Church

Located on the outskirts of Sofia, Boyana Church consists of three buildings. The eastern church was built in the 10th century, then enlarged at the beginning of the 13th century by Sebastocrator Kaloyan, who ordered a second two-story building to be erected next to it.

There are several layers of wall paintings in the interior from the 11th, 13th, 15-17th and 19th centuries which testify to the high level of wall painting during the different periods.

The frescoes in this second church, painted in 1259, make it one of the most important collections of medieval paintings.

The ensemble is completed by a third church, built at the beginning of the 19th century. This site is one of the most complete and perfectly preserved monuments of east European medieval art.

According to UNESCO, the integrity of the



Boyana church is fully assured. In 1917 a park was created around the church, thereby securing its immediate surroundings by being separated from the impact of modern traffic.

The property has also remained intact from historic invasions, and other destructive threats. Three separate zones are defined in the property boundaries and buffer zone, through which appropriate control measures are applied.

TEHRAN –Even though a frozen fall by definition is no longer a waterfall, many of them, like Abshar-e Akhlamad in northeast Iran, still hold appeal for ardent tourists.

Situated in a village of the same name some 85 kilometers from Mashhad in Khorasan Razavi province, Akhlamad waterfall is about 40 meters high. Fossils and mineral deposits in its pond testify that the cascade has a very long history.

The waterfall entirely freezes during the harsh winters when it presents magnificent natural views on the one hand and offers a challenge to rock climbers, on the other hand.

According to some sources, Abshar-e Akhlamad supposedly dates from the Late Jurassic. It boasts enormous amounts of pouring water during the first few months of the year as a result of the intense downpours.

Visitors may stay for a couple of



## Frozen falls rare but still appealing

## Quake damages historical monuments in Khoy

TEHRAN – The historical sites across the ancient city of Khoy have been damaged due to an earthquake of a magnitude of 5.8 on the Richter scale that occurred on Wednesday.

Following the powerful earthquake and its aftershocks, the historical monuments and aging buildings across the northwestern city have taken some 60 billion rials (\$150,000) in damages, Khoy's tourism chief said on Friday.

Groups of assessors and cultural heritage experts have been dispatched to the region to investigate possible damages, Aziz Mirzai added.

The earthquake damaged monuments such as the Ayatollahi mansion, the historical bazaar of Khoy, the historical church of Qeris, and Shams-e Tabrizi's brick minaret, he noted.

Last October, a magnitude 5.6 earthquake rattled the city and inflicts 30 billion rials (\$75,000) of damage to the city's historical sites.

Back then, the tourism authorities made promises to restore and revive the damaged monuments as soon as possible.

The recent earthquake, however, caused further damage to the monuments that had already been damaged.

The historical city is encircled by vast sunflower farms under the shadow of snow-capped towering mountains. It is also teeming with centuries-old mosques, churches, caravanserais, bathhouses, fortresses, and ramparts, each telling its own tales.

Khoy is also a destination for lovers of Persian literature, who come visit the mausoleum of Shams Tabrizi, a renowned Iranian poet, and mystic who lived between 1185 and 1248.

The economy of its surrounding regions is primarily based on agriculture; various fruits, grains, timber productions, and sunflowers. The latter is what Khoy is nicknamed for.

Situated near the ancient Silk Road in West



Azarbaijan province, Khoy was enormously fortified in different eras of its history, most recently by a decree of Qajar rulers in the 18th and 19th centuries.

During bitter times in its history, Khoy was occupied by foreign military forces; for instance, in 1911, when the county was at odds with the then Ottoman Empire, and at some points during World War I and II by Russians.

## Historical underground structure discovered in Gilan



noted.

For more than three millennia, silk thread produced in Iran has been used to make clothing fabric and for weaving Persian rugs and there are silk makers in Gilan, who still practice the trade their ancestors did some 3,000 years ago.

In 2021, traditional skills

of silk spinning and keeping silk cocoons were collectively inscribed on the national heritage list.

Last year, sericulture and traditional production of silk for weaving gained UNESCO status jointly for Iran, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

Gilan is known for its tourist attractions and warm-hearted and hospitable people. The people of Gilan from different ethnic groups, including Gilak, Talesh, and Tat, have come together and formed a very rich and diverse culture and customs.

The northern region was within the sphere of influence

of the successive Achaemenian, Seleucid, Parthian, and Sasanian empires that ruled Iran until the 7th century CE. The subsequent Arab conquest of Iran led to the rise of many local dynasties, and Gilan acquired an independent status that continued until 1567.

Besides, its sophisticated capital city of Rasht has long been a weekend escape for residents of Tehran who are looking to sample the famous local cuisine and hoping for some pluvial action—it's the largest and wettest town in the northern region. Gilan is divided into a coastal plain, including the large delta of Sefid Rud and adjacent parts of the Alborz range.

## Decade of archaeology excavation in Jahrom uncovers 548 sites and relics

TEHRAN – During 10 years of archeological studies, 548 sites and relics, dating from the Paleolithic era to the late Islamic centuries, have been discovered in Jahrom, southern Fars province, ISNA reported on Friday.

In this project, the majority of sites identified from the central part of Jahrom were related to the Achaemenid and Sassanid periods, and are mostly impassable castles built in mountainous terrain, said Majid Mansuri who presided over the project.



There were also numerous sites and monuments from different Islamic eras, such as castles, roads, bridges, caravanserais, and cisterns, he added.

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

## World tourism expected to reach pre-pandemic levels in 2023

TEHRAN – International visitor arrivals may surpass pre-pandemic levels by 80% to 95% this year, according to UNWTO's projections for 2023.

As mentioned by the UN Body, the rebound depends on several factors including the extent of the economic slowdown, the ongoing recovery of travel in Asia and the Pacific, and the evolution of the Russian-Ukraine war, among other factors.

Available data suggest that more than 900 million tourists traveled internationally in 2022 – double the number recorded in 2021 though still 63% of pre-

pandemic levels.

Every global region recorded notable increases in international tourist numbers. West Asia enjoyed the strongest relative increase as arrivals climbed to 83% of pre-pandemic numbers.

Europe reached nearly 80% of pre-pandemic levels as it welcomed 585 million arrivals in 2022. Africa and the Americas both recovered about 65% of their pre-pandemic visitors, while Asia and the Pacific reached only 23%, due to stronger pandemic-related restrictions which have started to be removed only in recent

months.

The first UNWTO World Tourism Barometer of 2023 also examines regional performance and highlights top destinations in 2022, including several that have already attained levels similar to those of 2019.

UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili said: “A new year brings more reason for optimism for global tourism. UNWTO anticipates a strong year for the sector even in the face of diverse challenges including the economic situation and continued geopolitical uncertainty. Economic factors may influence

how people travel in 2023 and UNWTO expects demand for domestic and regional travel to remain strong and help drive the sector's wider recovery.”

Even though the industry must contend with economic, health and geopolitical obstacles, the UNWTO expects the recovery to last through 2023. For the recovery of the tourism industry in Asia and the Pacific as well as globally, the recent lifting of COVID-19-related travel restrictions in China —the largest outbound market in 2019— is a significant step.



From page 1 ► In this regard, 900 female CEOs of knowledge-based companies have been identified, 100 of them were selected as the best in the field of science and technology, and finally, the top 50 participated in this exhibition, ISNA reported.

Guests from 28 countries, including Sri Lanka, Australia, Japan, China, Thailand, Pakistan, Cameroon, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sweden, Austria, Kazakhstan, and Canada visited the exhibition.

It should be noted that the congress for women of influence was held for the first time this year at both national and international levels. Its national level was held on Tuesday, January 27, and its international level was held on Friday, January 30.

The event aimed to appreciate women of influence, support and help them grow, and promote their creativity and ideas.

Women in various sectors, including science, research, innovation, economy, healthcare, art, photography, painting, society and environment, law, and media participated in the congress.

#### Valuable experiences

Addressing the congress on Thursday, President Ebrahim Raisi said: "I hope that the women present in this meeting will be able to use the valuable experiences that the Islamic Republic of Iran gained after the Islamic Revolution in the field of women's rights and attention to women in society."

Fortunately, more than 30 percent of university professors, more than 34 percent of experts in the field of medicine and healthcare, almost 60 percent of the capacity of scientific and academic centers, as well as 30 percent of managerial positions belong to women in the country, Raisi added.

Also, the number of Iranian women who gain championships in various domestic and interna-



## Tehran hosts First International Congress for Women of Influence

tional sports fields is more than ever, he noted.

The president also pointed to the influential role of Iranian women in the economy and entrepreneurship, saying: "We believe that women can be effective in various scientific, economic, political, cultural, social and sports fields alongside men."

Referring to the fact that despite claims, women's rights are violated in many cases in Western countries, Raisi said that according to the statistics, many women are killed by the police in these countries every year just for the crime of demanding their rights.

"The reason why today the Islamic Republic of Iran is angered by these countries is because it has presented a new way of life by preserving the principles and values of the women of the society who have been able to reach high cultural, political, social and sports peaks."

In the Islamic Republic of Iran,

we have always emphasized in the laws and regulations related to women that the protection of women's rights and the issue of family formation should be given special attention, he stressed.

#### Decadent Western culture

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, met with a group of prominent Iranian women on January 4, castigating the "decadent Western culture" and its crimes against women.

"On the issue of women, our stance towards the hypocritical Western claimants is a position of demand, not the defense. There was a time many years ago, when a number of students at a university asked me, 'What do you have to say for yourself in defense of such and such a case?' I told them, 'I don't have a defense. I have an attack.' That is how it is with the issue of women. The world is to blame. When I say 'the world' I mean the Western world, Western

philosophy, and the existing Western culture. Of course, [what I am talking about] is the modernized West. I am not concerned about the historical West."

Ayatollah Khamenei then pointed to Islam's view toward women. He said, "Unlike the deeply patriarchal Western capitalist system, in Islam, both men and women are prominent and have legal, intellectual, theoretical, and practical privileges. But the Westerners untruthfully attribute their inherent patriarchy to Islam."

#### Plans to empower women

The National Headquarters for Women and Family Affairs has approved six plans to support families and empower women and improve their status in society.

The formation of a loan guarantee fund for women heads of households was one of the plans of the National Headquarters for Women and Family Affairs.

Due to the fact that many female breadwinners could not use business loans due to the lack of a guarantor, the fund was established to help them.

According to official statistics, there are 3.5 million female heads of households, but according to unofficial statistics, the figure reaches more than 6 million.

A plan is entitled 'Upgrading the structure of the vice president and advisors related to the vice presidency for women and families.'

The national budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year 1402, which starts on March 21, has increased the budget for women's affairs by over 50 percent compared to the current year's budget.

Some 580 billion rials (about \$1.5 million) have been proposed by the budget bill for the next year compared with 320 billion rials (about \$800,000) for the current year.

## RAMSAR SITES IN IRAN

### Part 46

Some of the irrigation canals are becoming silted up, and parts of the drained land are reverting to marsh.

In addition, new areas of marsh have developed at the mouths of the two main drainage canals where they enter the western end of Lake Tashk.

The climate is characterised by hot, dry summers and mild winters.

The basin receives low winter rainfall which varies greatly from year to year, average 100-400 mm, mainly between December and February. Frosts are rare and heavy snowfalls are exceptional.

#### Hydrological values

Lake Bakhtegan serves as a sediment trap for the water of the Kur River.

The Neyriz Lakes are oligotrophic and support a dense submerged vegetation including various algae, pondweed and stonewort, especially in areas with relatively low salinity.

Amongst the abundant phytoplankton, diatoms are the most significant. The shoreline vegetation is dominated by species of tamarisk, glasswort and seablite.

Kamjan marshes support and emergent marsh vegetation dominated by sedges, reeds, and species of goosefoot (Chenopodiaceae) and grasses.

This vegetation also occurs at the mouth of the Kur River in Lake Bakhtegan, and around the Gumoon and Sahlabad springs.

Parts of the Kamjan Marshes have been reclaimed for rice cultivation. On the adjacent plains of the lower Kur Valley, the land is either undercultivation for weed, barley, cotton, sugar beet and fruit, or remains as heavily grazed semi-desertic steppe.

The area between the lakes consists of sparsely vegetated mountain ranges with some woodland and steppic plains dominated by Artemisia sp. and Astragalus sp.

### Noteworthy flora

The submerged vegetation in the lakes consists of Chara canensis (stonewort), Lamprothamnium aragonensis, Ruppia maritima (pondweed) and Althenia filiformis. Of the phytoplankton, the diatom Nitzschia loffleri is the most predominant species in hypersaline areas.

At the shoreline the vegetation is dominated by Tamarix, Suaeda (seablite), Cressa cretica and Salicornia (glasswort).

The vegetation at the Kamjan Marshes consists primarily of Carex sedges, Phragmites reeds, the goosefoot family Chenopodiaceae and grasses. The area between the lakes and the islands there have some woodland with Prunus amygdalus (almond) and Pistachio pistacia. The steppic plains are dominated by Artemisia sp. and Astragalus sp.

### Noteworthy fauna

Lake Tashk and Lake Bakhtegan regularly hold huge numbers of waterfowl in winter (e.g. 120,000-140,000 surface feeding ducks and 50,000 Phoenicopiterus ruber in January 1992).

Other waterfowl occurring in large numbers in winter include white stork (Ciconia ciconia), glossy ibis (Plegadis falcinellus), greylag goose (Anser anser), common shelduck (Tadorna tadorna), crane (Grus grus) and some shorebirds.

In recent years Dalmatian pelican (Pelecanus crispus) has been a frequent visitor, with up to 67 percent.

Marbled teal (Marmaronetta angustirostris) is present year-round, with good numbers breeding in wet years.

A wide variety of waterfowl occur on migration, and several species including Baillon's crane (Porzana pusilla), black-winged stilt (Himantopus himantopus), pied avocet (Recurvirostra avocetta) and white-tailed plover (Vanellus leucurus) breed at the lakes.

Source: Ramsar.org  
To be continued

## First round of university entrance exam held

From page 1 ► With 120,095 candidates, the mathematical sciences group has the least number of candidates among the three main

groups, where 35 percent of the candidates are women and 65 percent are men. In the two groups of arts and foreign languages, 39,055

candidates and 58,514 candidates participated respectively. The oldest and the youngest participants are 78 years old and 13 years old.

## Nicaragua welcomes Iranian expertise to develop knowledge-based centers

TEHRAN - The Rector of the National Autonomous University of Nicaragua UNAN-Managua, Ramona Rodriguez, has called for using the experiences of Iran for developing knowledge-based centers.

"In recent years, growth and technology centers have been set up in Nicaragua, and we would like to use Iran's experiences to strengthen and grow these centers and knowledge-based companies," she said.

Rodriguez made the remarks in a meeting in Tehran on Thursday with the Iranian science minister, Mohammad-Ali Zolfigol, IRNA reported.

During the meeting, Rodriguez welcomed Zolfigol's proposal about starting a system of needs and ideas and Iran's readiness to share experiences with Nicaragua.

She went on to say that in Nicaragua, there is a national innovation center that operates under the supervision of

the president and is in charge of coordinating the various technology and innovation sectors of the country.

"We also intend to launch a center like the system of ideas and needs," she added.

The Nicaraguan official cited Iran's experience in setting up technical and vocational universities for training specialized forces to be very important and asked Iran to share its experiences in this field with Nicaragua.

Within the framework of the joint committee for scientific and technological cooperation, the transfer of these experiences should be pursued, she stressed.

The Iranian minister, for his part, said that after the victory of the Islamic Revolution, notable achievements have been made in the country's higher education sector, including ranking first in the region by publishing 78,000 articles in international journals in 2022.

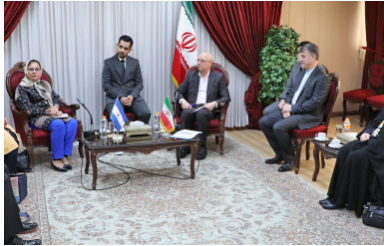
When innovative ideas reach the stage of commercialization and presentation in the market, researchers can establish a knowledge-based company, he said.

The issue of setting up centers for teaching the Persian language in Nicaraguan universities was also proposed by the Iranian science minister.

In July 2022, Peyman Salehi, the deputy science minister, said despite U.S. sanctions, the international activities of Iranian scientists have increased year by year, so that more than 35 percent of Iranian articles in Scopus have been multi-national projects.

He made the remarks at the COMSTECH (the Ministerial Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation) ceremony.

Science diplomacy is the use of scientific collaborations among nations to address common problems and build



constructive international partnerships.

Pointing to the history of Iran's scientific activities in the past two decades, Salehi said that Iran ranked 56th in science production in 1996 and ranked 15th in 2021. Accordingly, we are leading the region in science production.

Out of a total of 77,000 articles published by Iranian scientists in the Scopus database last year, 35.7 percent were related to international joint activities. Despite the sanctions, the amount of joint scientific activities of Iranian researchers has increased every year.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## Special plan prepared to attract overseas Iranian researchers

The Vice Presidency for Science and Technology has prepared a special plan to attract scientists and researchers living abroad, IRNA news agency reported on Saturday.

The project aims to promote "supporting technological activities and startups", "postdoctoral facilities", "supporting employment in innovation centers and accelerators as a trainer and consultant", "providing facilities for opportunity studies", "providing housing facilities", "supporting employment in reputable domestic companies", "support for lectures and specialized workshops" and "support for cooperation as invited and appointed professors".

It is estimated that about one percent of all Iranian students are studying abroad, which is not above the international average of around 3 percent.

## طرح ویژه برای جذب پژوهشگران ایرانی مقیم خارج

جذب محققان و پژوهشگران خارج از کشور یکی از اولویتهای کشور محسوب می‌شود و در این راستا معاونت علمی و فناوری ریاست جمهوری طرحی ویژه پیشنهاد کرده است.

به گزارش ایرنا، معاونت علمی و فناوری ریاست جمهوری، این طرح شامل «حمایت از فعالیتهای فناورانه و ایجاد شرکتهای نوپا»، «تسهیلات پسا دکتری»، «حمایت از اشتغال در مراکز نوآوری و شتابدهنده‌ها به عنوان مربی و مشاور»، «تسهیلات دوره فرصت مطالعاتی»، «تسهیلات مسکن»، «حمایت از اشتغال در شرکتهای معتبر داخلی»، «حمایت از برگزاری سخنرانی و کارگاههای تخصصی» و «حمایت از همکاری به عنوان اساتید مدعو و معین» است.

بر اساس برآوردها نزدیک یک درصد از کل مجموع دانشجویان ایرانی در خارج از کشور تحصیل می‌کنند. این رقم در مقایسه با میانگین بین‌المللی که حدود ۳ درصد است، رقم بالایی محسوب نمی‌شود.



## Rescue and relief after a snowy day

Members of the red crescent society are present as a loader attached to a truck is clearing a suburban road from snow in the central province of Yazd, January 19, 2023.



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JANUARY 19, 2023

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

*Beware! Whoever is cruel and harsh to a non-Muslim minority, curtailing their rights, overburdening them, or stealing from them, I will complain [to God] about that person on the Day of Judgment.*

**Prophet Muhammad (S)**

Prayer Times » Noon:12:15    Evening: 17:37    Dawn: 5:44 (tomorrow)    Sunrise: 7:12 (tomorrow)

Persian poetry: Bazgasht-e Adabi

Part 2

Few critics have attempted to account for the change in style that began in the middle of the 18th century, other than to say that poets in Iran became fed up with the current state of poetry and decided to begin writing in the Khorasani and Eraqi styles.

Bahar believes that knowledge of the earlier styles was spread by the market in books from royal collections in Isfahan and Delhi that had been broken up by the Afghans and Nader Shah.

Some critics more favorable to the Indian style take a different view. Shebli No'mani says "Poetry and the art of versifying in Iran began with Rudaki and ended with Mirza Saeb [d. 1677-78].

There were poets before Rudaki and after Saeb, but these two periods count for nothing. No doubt in recent times a person such as Qa'ani has appeared who all at once changed the art of poetry, but his art is not a new art.

He has, rather, remembered a forgotten dream of seven centuries and... has chosen the style of Farrokhi and Manuchehri."

Alessandro Bausani views the bazgasht-e adabi in broader terms and tries to relate the shift in style to political and religious changes in Iran. He believes that in the Safavid period Persian poetry was seriously seeking new ways and that this was an age that produced a number of new literary directions.

In the subsequent period, instead of following the leads begun in the Safavid era and grasping the possibilities of the new poetic directions, Iran renounced this opportunity and turned to a neoclassicism or neo-archaism that imitated the poetry of Sadi and Hafez, but even more so that of Farrokhi, Onsori, Ferdowsi, and Manuchehri.

Why should it have done this? He believes that the return to earlier models resulted from certain contradictory tendencies in Persian intellectual life of the Safavid period.

On the one hand Shiism produced new energies in the populace, but on the other hand it led to the isolation of Persia and a sort of nationalism. "Greater" (i.e., Sunni) Iran and its culture (Ottoman Turkey, Central Asia, and India) were cut off from Shia Iran.

Within Persia religious fervor eventually declined and led, in poetry, to a new classicism rather than to a religious poetry that developed in the classical style.

Literature in Persia became a "local" literature of the larger tradition, and a poet like Saeb, who was read from Turkey to Bengal, was worth more than Qa'ani, who became famous only in his own country.

Saeb was widely imitated and contributed a great deal to the future direction of poetry, while Qa'ani failed to do so.

There is clearly some truth in this, and in recent years critical opinion of Saeb and of the Indian style in general has been moderating in Iran.

At a major conference on Saeb held in Tehran in 1975, the first speaker deplored

the fact that until recently the professors of literature in the University of Tehran had "submitted to the tyrannical and self-interested judgment of Azar Bigdeli and his followers, and considered the poetry of [Saeb], and, in fact, the literature of two centuries of [our] country unworthy of attention and research."

While there had been poets from the beginning of the Safavid period on who wrote in simpler styles, they were fewer in number and less well known than those writing in the Indian style.

By all accounts, the effort to reject the Indian style and return to writing in older styles was initiated by Mir Sayyed Ali "Moshtaq" of Isfahan (ca. 1689-1757).

Little is known of his life except that he had as close friends the poets Hatef, Azar, Asheq, Sabahi, and Sahba, all from Isfahan. It is said by the editor of his divan that Moshtaq founded a literary society referred to as the Anjoman-e Adabi-e Moshtaq, and this claim is repeated by other modern critics although there is no early evidence for it.

Moshtaq wrote in the Eraqi style, often in response to particular ghazals of Hafez and Sadi. The pattern that Moshaq and his circle established was followed for more than a century by poets who turned their backs on the Indian style.

An investigation of their techniques reveals in general an increased use of literary emulation (esteqbal, which generally consists in adopting the meter and rhyme of the original poem) and of the rhetorical figure tazmin, the direct quotation of a line or half-line from another poet.

These rhetorical devices, along with characteristic diction, syntax, and imagery, would be the principal means used by poets who were trying to imitate the practice of their predecessors.

The creative use of the past was common among poets from Rudaki onward. The effects created by the poets of the bazgasht were quite different, however, from those produced by earlier poets, and it is precisely because of this difference that opinions differ widely on the general quality of the poetry of this period.

A conscious effort to revert to an older style must be firmly anchored by references, direct and indirect, to specific poems of the past.

Indirect reference, or literary allusion, can be one such anchor. In an evolving tradition, esteqbal and tazmin bring about an interaction between two texts, producing intertextual patterns that can lead toward a richer interpretation of both texts.

When an element or a pattern is evoked from an earlier text, the emulating text is enriched by providing a new context for the shared elements of both texts.

An instructive example is given by Shebli when he compares the use of the same themes, and sometimes the same phrases, by Sadi, Salman Savaji, Khaju Kermani, and Hafez.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica  
To be continued.

# Colombian narrator Mauricio Patino with “The Wise Prince” crowned best at Iran storytelling festival

From Page 1 ► The story is based on “The Angry King” by Walter A. Garcia.

The organizer, the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults – Kanoon, announced the winners on the closing day of the event on Thursday in Yazd, the hometown of the renowned children's book writer, Mehdi Azar Yazdi.

Susan Hayati for “Karim and Master Karim” and Shadi Pakzad for “Very, Very Seriously”, both from Iran, won the award for second and third places respectively.

Malaysian storyteller Nor Azhar Ishak, a major competitor of the previous editions of the festival, won an honorable mention for his story “A Pangolin Story”.

In the national competition for adults, Mahdieh Keshvari-Moqaddam for “Cat Beating Stick” won first prize.

Second prize was awarded to Masumeh Shariari for “Ever-Regretful” and Alireza Roshnazamir took third prize for “The Fake Champion”.

Esmat Nasirzadeh was awarded an honorable mention for her performance “Hey! Can We Be Friends?”.

First prize in the national competition for young adults was awarded to Fatemeh Mohammadi for her performance “Ququli”.

## Berlin Film Festival bans companies, media outlets with ties to Iran

*A pedestrian walks by a Berlinale bear advertisement for the 67th Berlin International Film Festival – Berlinale near the festival cinema in Berlin, Germany, February 8, 2017. (Reuters/Fabrizio Bensch)*

TEHRAN – Film companies, delegations and journalists working for media outlets with direct ties to the Iranian government will not be allowed to attend the 73rd Berlin International Film Festival – Berlinale.

In a statement published on Thursday, the organizers said that the decision has

been made in support of the unrest that has struck Iran over the past four months.

The decision has been viewed by Iran as a politically-motivated move and an attempt at meddling in Iran's internal affairs.

Based on the statement, the festival will not accredit organizations such as the Farabi Cinema Foundation and Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting, and centers with ties to the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization.

The festival imposed a ban on Russian-backed companies and media outlets last year following the country's invasion of Ukraine. The policy was also implemented by the Cannes and Venice festivals.

The ban on Russian-backed companies and media outlets will also be upheld this year in Berlinale, which will take place in the German capital from February 16 to 26.

“The Siren” by the France-based Iranian director Sepideh Farsi will premiere in the

“Unfair Verdict” by Arezu Nikzad and “An Angel from the Sky” by Zahra Jamshidi won second and third prizes.

Tarannom Razzaqi won an honorable mention for her performance, “The Tyrant”.

Some narrators were also honored in the side sections of the festival.

“As the most ancient and

proficient way to develop concepts, storytelling has its roots in the holy books and different civilizations and cultures,” Kanoon director Hamed Alamati said at the awards ceremony.

He called Azar Yazdi a prominent model for other storytellers and praised his series “Good Stories for Good Children”.

He said that Kanoon chose Yazd as a venue for the festival this year to pay tribute to the children's writer.

Ten storytellers from across the world, including Deepa Kiran, Divya Sarkar, Grace Wangari, John Mukeni Namai, Sarah Abu-Sharar, Sila Topcam, Suheda Sahin, Mily Ponce and Claudia Montesino, gave performances at the festival.

*A file photo shows Colombian storyteller Mauricio Patino Acevedo giving a performance.*

## “First Person” comes to Iranian bookstores to brief readers on Putin

TEHRAN – “First Person: An Astonishingly Frank Self-Portrait by Russia's President Vladimir Putin” have been published in Persian by Saleess.

Nataliya Gevorkyan, Natalya Timakova and Andrei Kolesnikov have contributed to the book translated by Forugh Puryavari.

Who is this Vladimir Putin? Who is this man who suddenly—overnight and without warning—was handed the reigns of power to one of the most

*Front cover of the Persian edition of “First Person: An Astonishingly Frank Self-Portrait by Russia's President Vladimir Putin”.*

complex, formidable and volatile countries in the world? How can we trust him if we don't know him?

“First Person” is an intimate, candid portrait of the man who holds the future of Russia in his grip.

An extraordinary compilation of over 24 hours of in-depth interviews and remarkable photographs, it delves deep into Putin's KGB past and explores his meteoric rise to power.

No Russian leader has ever subjected himself to this kind of public examination of his life and views. Both as a spy and as a virtual political unknown until selected by Boris Yeltsin to be Prime Minister, Putin has been regarded as a man of mystery.

Now, the curtain lifts to reveal a remarkable life of struggles and successes. Putin's life story is of major importance to the world.

## Patrick Boucheron's book on Machiavelli published in Persian

TEHRAN – French historian Patrick Boucheron's 2020 book “Machiavelli: The Art of Teaching People What to Fear” has recently come to Iranian bookstores.

Translated by Lila Sazgar, the book has been published by Now.

In a series of poignant vignettes, a preeminent historian makes a compelling case for Machiavelli as an unjustly maligned figure with valuable political insights that resonate as strongly today as they did in his time.

Whenever a tempestuous period in history begins, Machiavelli is summoned, because he is known as one for philosophizing in dark times.

In fact, since his death in 1527, we have never ceased to read him to pull ourselves out of torpors. But what do we really know about this man apart from the term invented

by his detractors to refer to that political evil, Machiavellianism?

It was Machiavelli's luck to be disappointed by every statesman he encountered throughout his life—that was why he had to write The Prince.

If the book endeavors to dissociate political action from common morality, the question still remains today, not why, but for whom Machiavelli wrote.

For princes, or for those who want to resist them? Is the art of governing to take power or to keep it? And what is “the people?” Can they govern themselves? Beyond cynical advice for the powerful, Machiavelli meditates profoundly on the idea of popular sovereignty, because the people know best who oppresses them.

With verve and a delightful erudition, Patrick Boucheron sheds light on the life

*Front cover of the Persian edition of Patrick Boucheron's book “Machiavelli”.*

and works of this unclassifiable visionary, illustrating how we can continue to use him as a guide in times of crisis.