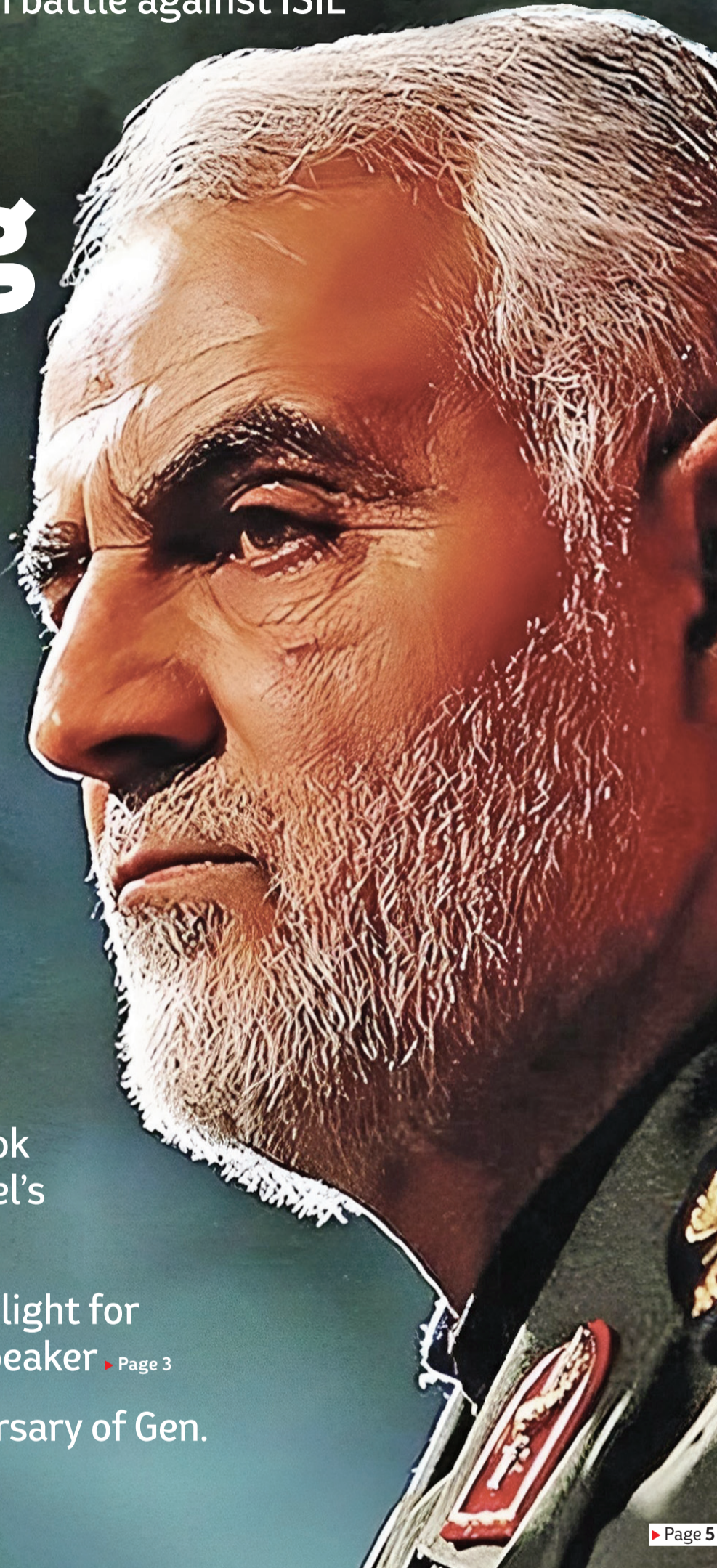


Iraqi PM hails martyr Gen. Soleimani and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis for their role in battle against ISIL

Hero of Combating Terrorism



- **Hezbollah leader: Gen. Soleimani took the lid off US regional projects, Israel's expansionist schemes** ▶ Page 5
- **Martyr Soleimani's vision is guiding light for liberation of Al-Quds: parliament speaker** ▶ Page 3
- **Foreign ministry marks fifth anniversary of Gen. Soleimani's martyrdom** ▶ Page 3

President Pezeshkian praises law enforcement forces as pillars of security, justice

TEHRAN – Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has addressed graduates at the Imam Hassan Mojtaba Police University during their formal graduation ceremony, lauding their vital role in upholding law and order in Iran.

Speaking to the newly commissioned officers on Sunday, the President described them as “the fortresses, shields, and pride of our country,” underscoring their indispensable contribution to maintaining peace and security.

The ceremony featured a tactical demonstration by the graduates, showcasing their training and commitment.

President Pezeshkian referred to the teachings of Imam Ali, who emphasized the essential role of defense and security forces in society. “Imam Ali described security forces as the fortresses of the people, the adornment of governance, the source of a nation's dignity, and the foundation of peace. Without them, society cannot endure,” President Pezeshkian noted.

Addressing the graduates directly, the President underlined their critical responsibility to uphold justice ▶ Page 2

Yemen targets Israeli power plant

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – The Yemeni Armed Forces announced that their missile unit targeted the Israeli Orot Rabin power plant, south of Haifa with a hypersonic ballistic missile.

In a televised statement, the spokesperson for the Sanaa government's armed forces, Brigadier General Yahya Saree, confirmed that the operation successfully achieved its objective.

Saree noted that the hypersonic missile was the Yemeni-made Palestine 2.

He stated that the operation was carried out in response to the massacres in Gaza as part of the fifth phase of support in the battle of “The Promised Liberation and Sacred Battle,” and in retaliation for the Israeli aggression against Yemen.

Saree added that the Yemeni leadership, people, and army remain committed to fulfilling their religious, moral, and humanitarian obligations toward the oppressed Palestinian people. ▶ Page 5

China-Iran relations entering into stage of mutual political trust

By Dr. Jin Liangxiang

SHANGHAI – China-Iran relations have been developing in a steady way in the last decades. And the year 2024 particularly saw more frequent and more profound interactions between the two, which suggests that China-Iran relations are progressing toward a new high level of mutual political trust.

China-Iran relations are strongly founded, and the three mutual's should be particularly mentioned. The first should be the mutual appreciation of the civilization of the other side. China represents the civilization of East Asia while Iran represents the achievements of the human civilization of West Asia. The two have been learning from each other for more than two thousand years. The shared heritage of Karez is just one example of the mutual learning of the two. And the two have been interacting with each other peacefully along the ancient Silk Road.

The second should be mutual acknowledgment of the importance of the other side as a strategic actor. China is well aware that Iran is a great regional power with diligent and intelligent people. ▶ Page 2

Tehran hosts intl. conference on AI in health

TEHRAN –An international conference on artificial intelligence (AI) in the health sector was held from January 1-5 at Razi Conference Center in Tehran.

Currently, artificial intelligence plays a key role in prevention, early detection of the diseases as well as the development of personalized treatment by analyzing data and comparing the results, IRIB reported.

Statistics have shown noticeable cost saving, about 40 percent, using artificial intelligence in health in advanced countries. In some specific case, like breast or lung cancers, artificial intelligence can lower healthcare costs by 80 percent, hence knowledge-based economy should aim to utilize AI to save healthcare costs, IRIB quoted Mostafa Qaemi, the secretary of the Biology Development Headquarters, as saying. ▶ Page 7



Pezeshkian lauds Razi Institute for scientific achievements

TEHRAN –President Masoud Pezeshkian has congratulated the 100th anniversary of Razi Vaccine and Serum Research Institute establishment, highlighting that the institute, as a reliable scientific center, has played a pivotal role in developing needed vaccines in the country.

The production of various vaccines for livestock and poultry, seven vaccines for the human vaccination portfolio, and the development of the first injectable-inhalation vaccine for Covid-19 in the world are only parts of the valuable services of the institution, which is a source of pride for any Iranian, ISNA quoted Pezeshkian as saying.

Razi Vaccine and Serum Research Institute has a wide range of pharmaceutical products that can flourish the health economy and lead to further development of non-oil exports by selling various biological products to regional countries. It has recently established a research and development center for the new generation of recombinant vaccines. ▶ Page 7

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Traitor by nature

In a note, Sobh-e-No discussed the shameful demand of some foreign-based opposition groups for military attacks on Iran. It wrote: Recently, some foreign-based opposition groups have sent messages to Donald Trump demanding that sanctions against Iran are not enough and that Iran's infrastructure should be destroyed. This is not the first time that some oppositionists are threatening Iran's national interests through their actions and requests. Previously, these groups strongly supported the policy of "maximum pressure" and publicly demanded the imposition of tough sanctions against Iran. Now, they have changed policy from economic boycott to military attack, entering a new stage of betrayal. Such demands show that these opposition groups have no understanding of the conditions of the people of our country. This obvious contradiction between slogans of freedom and anti-people actions only leads to the weakening of the position of these groups.

Jam-e-Jam: Eurasian Union and Iran's opportunities

Recently, Iran became an observer member of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU or EEU). Some EEU member countries are our neighbors with whom we can have good economic and political relations. This provides a very good opportunity for the commercial sector of our country to buy goods from this group of countries as they are very rich. They are producers of gas, oil, electricity, and energy in general. If we succeed in the Eurasian Union, our political relations with the member countries of the union will definitely be strengthened and we can help each other in the difficult times. Such economic cooperation can lay the foundation for the country's economic growth, and economic growth can guarantee the best political relations. Our relations with the EEU member states are good both bilaterally and politically, but if the political relations do not help to improve the economic conditions, the goals will not be realized in the long term.

Arman-e-Emrooz: Propagation of an attack on Iran's nuclear sites

In a commentary, Arman-e-Emrooz dealt with the propagation of an attack on Iran's nuclear facilities by Israel and the United States. It wrote:

Undoubtedly, the situation in the region is highly dangerous. However, based on the knowledge gained from Trump's policies (in his first term), and the current situation in the region there will be no war with Iran. In the first two years of his presidency, Trump will most likely impose heavy economic and political pressure on Iran, and Europe will also accompany him. In such a situation, a possible activation of the trigger mechanism and the return of sanctions and UN resolutions are high. Given the developments in the region, the most important challenge for the West is the nuclear issue. Trump is looking for a direct negotiation and an agreement, but an agreement beyond the JCPOA. America and others are looking for a deep integration of Israel into the security and economic order of the region. But if an agreement is reached with Trump, we will likely see the reduction or suspension of sanctions, not a lifting of them. Efforts will be made to tie the fundamental lift of all sanctions to issues other than Iran's nuclear program.

Siasat-e-Rooz: Now is the Western side's turn to take the first step

Siasat-e-Rooz devoted its editorial to FATF and America's disloyalty and wrote: One of the significant points in the negotiations between Iran and the European troika is that Iran should join FATF. Supporters of joining FATF at home insist that this issue can be a step toward resolving some of the country's economic problems. By doing this, they say, Iran will send a positive signal to the Western parties and this would give Tehran an upper hand in the negotiations. But the record of the West is full of disloyalty. Neither Europe nor the United States fulfilled their JCPOA commitments. Considering the history of the West's behavior, the correct policy for Iran is to link FATF to lifting sanctions, verifying their removal, and a commitment by the Western sides not to restore the sanctions. In the JCPOA, Iran was the pioneer in implementing its commitments, but the West did not honor any of its undertakings. Therefore, this time it is the turn of the Western side to lift sanctions in the first step, and after a verification, Iran's first step, which is to join the FATF, is to get guarantees that the West's non-commitment to the JCPOA is not repeated.

President Pezeshkian praises law enforcement forces as pillars of security, justice



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The ceremony featured a tactical demonstration by the graduates, showcasing their training and commitment. President Pezeshkian referred to the teachings of Imam Ali, who emphasized the essential role of defense and security forces in society. "Imam Ali described security forces as the fortresses of the people, the adornment of governance, the source of a nation's dignity, and the foundation of peace. Without them, society cannot endure," President Pezeshkian noted.

Addressing the graduates directly, the President underlined their critical responsibility to uphold justice and maintain order. "Through your relentless efforts, supported by modern tools and technologies, you ensure the safety and stability of our society. Without your presence, chaos

and injustice would dominate, and tyranny would thrive," he remarked.

The President also acknowledged the broader role of law enforcement in providing reassurance and hope to citizens. "You are the strongholds of our society. Your presence offers a sense of peace and security, inspiring confidence as we strive toward justice and progress," he added.

Referring to a symbolic display during the ceremony that depicted national unity, President Pezeshkian emphasized the importance of cohesion under the guidance of the Leader's policies. "To achieve our national goals and fulfill the vision set by the leader of the Islamic Revolution, we need solidarity, clear policies, and unified leadership. Without these, society cannot achieve its aspirations," he stated.

Concluding his speech, President Pezeshkian pledged the government's unwavering support for law enforcement officers. "We are committed to ensuring your welfare and equipping you with the tools and technology needed to carry out your duties effectively. Your tireless efforts are deeply appreciated, and we will continue to stand by you as you uphold justice and security in our society," he assured.

Iran to conduct extensive military drills in air, land, and sea

TEHRAN – Brigadier General Ali Shadmani, the deputy coordinator of the Khatam al-Anbia Central Headquarters, announced that Iran will host anti-terrorism military exercises across its skies, lands, and waters for the next two months.

"These exercises will be conducted according to a scheduled timeline, starting today and continuing for the next two months," Shadmani said on Sunday.

He further explained that "elite forces will be engaged in these exercises, and the command network of the forces will be tested."

General Shadmani emphasized the use of modern equipment and methods, stating, "All these drills will utilize state-of-the-art technologies and approaches, aimed at maintaining and enhancing the readiness of the armed forces as per our annual calendar."

He detailed the participation of various units, noting, "Army ground forces units in the east and west of the country, Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) units in the west, southwest,



and south, and tens of thousands of Basij volunteers in provincial guard units will participate in these anti-terrorism drills across different provinces."

These exercises align with the initiation of the "19th Great Prophet Exercise" by IRGC

Ground Forces, which began on Saturday.

The first phase, led by the Mirza Kuchik Khan Brigade, focused on rapid response operations in Kermanshah province, particularly in the Oramanat region and its surroundings.

The exercises are set to ex-

pand with combined and joint maneuvers involving multiple branches of the armed forces across Iran and in the Persian Gulf, aiming to improve coordination, showcase defensive, offensive, and anti-terror capabilities, and operationalize new military hardware.

China-Iran relations entering into stage of mutual political trust

From page 1 ▶ abundant resources and geopolitical location while Iran is well aware that China is one of the leading actors situated in East Asia but with global influence. The two are interdependent partners on strategic issues.

The third should be mutual economic complementarity. While Iran is rich in natural resources including oil and gas and a number of very important rare minerals, China has advantage in financial investment and advanced technologies, and is in need of energy as a major consumer.

The complementarity has served to bind the two together economically.

The three mutual's have served to maintain the relations between the two in stable ways for decades. But worthy of special mention is that the last years, the year 2024 in particular, have seen that the relations between the two have entered a new stage of mutual political trust as a result of both the natural development of bilateral relations and the evolution of global politics.

Mutual political trust is firstly manifested in the frequency of high-level exchanges.

President Xi Jinping met with Iranian acting President Mohammad Mokhber and President Pezeshkian respectively in the sidelines of SCO summit in early July 2024 and of BRICS+ summit in late October 2024.

China's Vice Premier Zhang Guoqing visited Iran with a high-level delegation in early December. And Seyyed Abbas Araghchi, Iranian Foreign Minister, paid a visit to China in late December, concluding a very intensive one-year-round of interactions between China and Iran. In addition, more high-level exchanges took place in the sidelines of various multilateral institutions.

It is rare that the two sides have had so many high-level talks in person in one single year.

This should be partly attributed to Iran's entrance into SCO and BRICS while Iran's full membership in the two organizations itself demonstrated the high level of mutual political trust.

The two organizations are the ones China playing leading roles in though they are not exclusive by origins.

Mutual political trust is secondly manifested in the will of both sides in enhancing friendly relations. In Kazan meeting, President Xi Jinping said that no matter how the international and regional situation evolves, China will unswervingly develop friendly cooperation with Iran; President Pezeshkian said that Iran will continue to support China on issues concerning China's core interests and opposing hegemony and bullying.

Besides, President Pezeshkian mentioned his appreciation for China's assistance in difficult times in his "My Message to the New

World" shortly after his inauguration, which has been well received in China.

Mutual political trust is thirdly manifested in the depth of cooperation and coordination between the two sides.

China and Iran cooperated in reaching the joint statement leading to the reconciliation between Iran and Saudi Arabia on March 10, 2023, which has been solidified in the two consecutive meetings in December 2023 and November 2024 at deputy foreign minister level.

The reconciliation marks a major shift in regional geopolitics, which used to be dominated by the West.

The two sides have also been coordinating with each other on various critical regional and international issues, for instance the Palestine issue.

China represents the civilization of East Asia while Iran represents the achievements of the human civilization of West Asia.

While receiving interviews in Beijing upon his arrival, Abbas Araghchi, Iranian Foreign Minister, said that for years, we have consistently maintained close consultations with China on all regional and international matters.

Mutual political trust is fourthly manifested in the mutual support of the main foreign policy doctrines and agendas of the other side.

While Chinese leaders would always mention supporting Iran in safeguarding national sovereignty and security and national dignity, Iranian side firmly supports China on issues concerning its core interests.

Iranian Foreign Minister Araghchi particularly mentioned that President Xi Jinping's diplomatic thought of building a community of a shared future for mankind as ushering a new macro historical trend in his article published in People's Daily, the most influential Chinese newspaper, on December 27, 2024, shortly before his visit to China.

In the same article, he also cited the three initiatives proposed by President Xi Jinping, namely Global Development Initiative (GDI), Global Security Initiative (GSI) and Global Civilization Initiative (GCI).

All these latest moves indicate that China and Iran are more than willing to cooperate with each other with growing trust, and China-Iran relations are entering a new stage featuring mutual political trust, in addition to the previous three mutuals.

However, the term of mutual political trust has very profound political implications, which are worthy of more thoughtful interpretations of think tank people and policymakers.

Judging by the turbulent change of the world in the coming decades, the two sides will have to work together to deal with bad weather, and will have to construct mutual political trust at even higher level.

Jin Liangxiang is a Senior Research Fellow of Shanghai Institutes for International Studies

Tehran warns of regional instability as US, UK continue pummeling Yemen in support of Israel



Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson
Esmail Baqaei

TEHRAN – The Iranian Foreign Ministry has issued a stern condemnation of the recent airstrikes conducted by the United States and the United Kingdom on Yemen's northern province of Saada.

In a statement released on Sunday, Spokesperson Esmail Baqaei denounced the attacks as flagrant violations of Yemen's national sovereignty and territorial integrity, pointing out that they contradict the principles of international law.

Baqaei highlighted the recurrent nature of these military violations, involving not only the U.S. and UK but also the Israeli regime, against Yemen.

"These acts of aggression will lead to increased insecurity and further instability in West Asia," Baqaei warned.

In the early days of the new year, U.S. and British forces launched multiple airstrikes targeting vital infrastructure in Saada.

These attacks have caused significant damage to power stations, communication networks, and other critical infrastructure.

Analysts believe these repeated airstrikes aim to undermine Yemen's ability to support Gaza and are part of a broader strategy to destabilize the region.

Baqaei also criticized the ongoing support provided by the U.S. and UK to the Israeli regime, describing it as "direct involvement in committing heinous international crimes against the people of Gaza."

He praised the Yemeni people's solidarity with Palestinians and urged the international community, particularly Islamic countries, to take more decisive action to halt the violence in occupied Palestine.

"The international community must take swift and decisive measures to end the suffering of the Palestinian people and ensure their protection," Baqaei asserted.

Foreign ministry marks fifth anniversary of Gen. Soleimani's martyrdom

TEHRAN – A solemn ceremony commemorating the fifth anniversary of the martyrdom of Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani was held at the Iranian Foreign Ministry in Tehran on Sunday.

The event was attended by Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri, Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy.

General Soleimani, the revered commander of the IRGC's Quds Force, was assassinated in a U.S. drone strike near Baghdad International Airport on January 3, 2020, alongside Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the deputy head of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units.

The strike, ordered by then-U.S. President Donald Trump, was widely condemned across the region and the world.

Both commanders were highly revered across West Asia because of their key role in fighting the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group in Iraq and Syria.



Resistance will not falter with martyrdom of commanders: FM

During his speech, Foreign Minister Araghchi praised General Soleimani's contributions to the "Resistance school of thought," emphasizing the enduring legacy of his leadership on the battlefield.

"Martyr Soleimani founded an indestructible regional movement. The Axis of Resistance is not reliant on any one individual and will not falter with the martyrdom of one commander,"

Araghchi said. He highlighted the pivotal role of martyrdom as a unifying force for the Resistance, asserting that General Soleimani's vision continues to guide regional efforts.

Diplomacy, military efforts needed to advance national goals: IRGC navy chief

Rear Admiral Tangsiri, in his remarks, acknowledged the synergy between diplomacy and military efforts in advancing national goals.

Commander of the IRGC Navy

expressed gratitude for the bravery demonstrated by Foreign Minister Araghchi, particularly during his visit to Beirut amid bombings in the region. "Diplomacy combined with field operations yields results. The world and our nation commend the courage of our foreign minister, who landed in Beirut under such conditions," he stated.

Tangsiri also reflected on Soleimani's unparalleled qualities, describing him as fearless, deeply reliant on God, and tireless in his dedication.

"I knew Martyr Soleimani since 1983 during Operation Kheibar. He was a man of strong faith and immense trust in God. Whether during operations or in everyday life, he was relentless, deeply committed, and beloved by the people," he shared.

Iran has continually reiterated its commitment to pursuing legal action against the United States for the assassination of General Soleimani, citing the act as a violation of the 1973 Protection of Diplomats Convention.

Martyr Soleimani's vision is guiding light for liberation of Al-Quds: parliament speaker

TEHRAN – In a speech during Sunday's parliamentary session, Speaker of the Iranian Parliament Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf reaffirmed that Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani's mission remains a guiding principle for the nation.

"The path of Martyr Soleimani will continue until the liberation of Al-Quds and the elimination of the Zionist regime," he declared, underscoring Iran's steadfast commitment to the causes of Resistance and justice.

The Speaker commemorated the enduring legacy of General Soleimani, emphasizing his decades-long service to the nation and his pivotal role in resisting terrorism and oppression.

Qalibaf expressed deep gratitude to the people of Iran, particularly the residents

of Kerman Province, who paid tribute to Soleimani on the anniversary of his martyrdom.

"I sincerely thank the appreciative people of Iran, especially the noble and martyr-loving people of Kerman, who went above and beyond by mourning at the grave of this national hero, a symbol of resistance and a champion in the fight against terrorism."

Qalibaf highlighted General Soleimani's remarkable contributions over four decades, describing him as a figure of unparalleled courage, sincerity, and devotion to leadership.

"Martyr Soleimani dedicated over 40 years of his blessed life to combating aggressors, bandits, occupiers, and terrorist groups. His noble presence brought peace, security, and protection to vulnerable communities, particularly women and children, in the face



of danger," he said.

General Qassem Soleimani, the former General of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) of Quds Force, was targeted by a drone strike conducted by the United States near Baghdad International Airport in Iraq on January 3, 2020.

The politics of fear: how Western diplomacy shapes perceptions of Iran

A Last Chance for Iran

America Should Give Diplomacy a Final Shot—While Preparing to Use Military Force

RICHARD NEPHEW
January 2, 2025



RICHARD NEPHEW is Senior Research Scholar at Columbia University at the Center on Global Energy Policy and an Adjunct Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. He served as Deputy Special Envoy for Iran during the Biden administration and was the National Security Council and State Department's lead on the Obama administration.

Missing: Richard Nephew

By Xavier Villar

MADRID – The latest article by Richard Nephew, published in Foreign Affairs under the title "A Last Chance for Iran", brings a recurring issue back to the forefront: even the most liberal advocates of a diplomatic solution continue to operate from a Western unilateralism that systematically overlooks the political aspirations of the other side — in this case, those of Iran.

Modern diplomatic theory faces challenges beyond the interpretation of ideas from renowned thinkers of statecraft — from Machiavelli to Kissinger — or the evolution of diplomacy from its traditional forms to 21st-century practices. The underlying problem is far more profound and structural: it is a theory born in the West, for the West, that seeks universal application without critically examining the cultural and epistemological biases that underpin it.

The Eurocentric perspective that dominates diplomatic theory perpetuates epistemic injustice by ignoring the voices, experiences, and knowledge of non-Western societies. In other

words, diplomacy has been complicit in sustaining a colonial worldview that continues to shape international discourses and practices today.

The origin of this bias lies in global coloniality, a power structure that emerged in the 15th century with European expansion and established hierarchies based on culture, race, gender, and knowledge. Within this system, the West positioned itself at the apex of all categories, from religion and language to the construction of knowledge itself.

However, it is essential to distinguish between colonialism and coloniality. Colonialism refers to the territorial occupation and political-administrative reorganization carried out by European powers. Coloniality, on the other hand, is a deeper, more persistent organizing principle that extends across various spheres of social life, from economic structures to gender dynamics and knowledge systems.

Coloniality permeates economic relations, political structures, gender and sexual dynamics, knowledge systems, and even intimate spaces such as

households and spiritual practices. It represents the hidden dark side of European modernity, a project that, since the Renaissance, has shaped the world through interwoven power hierarchies that continue to endure today.

This matrix of domination goes beyond the imposition of colonial political structures; it also extends to the construction of identities and the very notion of humanity. Categories such as civilized vs. barbaric, rational vs. irrational, and modern vs. backward have been built on a Eurocentric foundation that dictates who is given a voice and who is condemned to silence.

From this logic emerges the concept of coloniality of power, coloniality of identity, and coloniality of knowledge. The latter — coloniality of knowledge — has perhaps been the most persistent and effective. It manifests in Eurocentrism's ability to present itself as the sole legitimate narrative of what is modern, rational, and universal. Under this framework, other knowledge systems and ways of thinking have been marginalized and delegitimized, perpetuating an epistemic injustice that continues to shape how we interpret and organize the world today.

In this context, the diplomatic theory presented by Richard Nephew in his article is nothing more than a monologue among Europeans about what they already agree on: diplomacy as a Western narrative that asserts its own role in the modernization of the world.

This approach perpetuates the idea that diplomatic practice and its theoretical foundations arise exclusively from Western

experiences, effectively erasing other ways of managing political affairs throughout history. From this Eurocentric perspective, diplomacy is presented as a universal manifestation of modernity, disregarding the knowledge and diplomatic practices of non-Western civilizations.

However, forms of negotiation, mediation, and conflict resolution have existed in numerous cultures and historical moments: from diplomatic agreements between Asian empires to African tribal councils or community diplomacy practices in Latin America. Incorporating these experiences would not only enrich diplomatic theory, but also help break the epistemic hegemony that the West has imposed for centuries.

Building a plural and global dialogue does not mean discarding Western contributions, but rather situating them in a broader context, recognizing that modernity and its institutions are not a single destination, but rather the result of multiple historical trajectories that have coexisted — and often been ignored — in the construction of the world order.

The diplomatic theory that has dominated international thought remains, in essence, a closed conversation centered around the West: a narrative focused on its achievements, its voices, and its historical archives. This conceptual framework originates from a monotypic design, where other cultures and peoples are only seen as "the other" — subjects to be observed, analyzed, or civilized, but not as full-fledged actors in diplomatic history.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Persepolis reluctant to continue with Lucas João

TEHRAN – Persepolis football club have reportedly deemed their French forward Lucas João surplus to requirements.

He joined Persepolis in September from Qatari side Umm Salal but failed to live up to expectations.

The media reports suggest that the club will also part company with its midfielder Masoud Rigi in the January transfer window.

Persepolis are looking for a replacement for head coach Juan Carlos Garrido, who left the club by mutual consent in late December.

Shahab Zahedi joins Avispa Fukuoka on permanent deal

TEHRAN – Iranian forward Shahab Zahedi joined the Japanese football club Avispa Fukuoka on a permanent deal.

Zahedi has signed a one-year deal with Avispa.

The 29-year-old striker joined the Japanese team on loan from Ukraine's Zorya Luhansk last season.

Zahedi scored 11 goals in 34 matches for Avispa.

Avispa Fukuoka, based in Hakata, Fukuoka, are a prominent Japanese professional football club competing in the top-tier J1 League.

Pasandideh elected head of Rural Sports, Local Indigenous Games federation

TEHRAN – Alireza Pasandideh was elected as president of the Iran's Rural Sports and Local Indigenous Games federation on Sunday.

Pasandideh was elected for a four-year term till 2029.

In the elections held at Iran's Academy Olympic in Tehran, Pasandideh secured 39 of 48 votes cast.

Persepolis face coaching dilemma

TEHRAN – Persepolis are currently facing a coaching dilemma. Two weeks after parting ways with Juan Carlos Garrido, they still haven't found a new coach.

Under leadership of the Spanish coach, they experienced some disappointing results in recent matches, leading to frustration among supporters.

Persepolis had conceded a number of goals in recent games, raising concerns about the team's defensive solidity.

Persepolis interim coach Karim Bagheri, earned two vital wins over struggling teams Kheybar and Havadar to keep their title hopes alive.

Persepolis have worked with four coaches in the last year and changing coaches frequently can disrupt the team's rhythm and negatively impact performance.

Finding a suitable replacement for Garrido may be challenging, especially during the season.

Persepolis are scheduled to face Saudi Arabian giants Al Hilal on Feb. 4 in the 2024/25 AFC Champions League Elite and this crucial time could be detrimental to their chances of success.

The media reports suggest that Persepolis

have negotiated with several coaches however they have not made agreement with anyone so far.

Portuguese Jose Vitor dos Santos Peseiro, Croatia coach Slaven Bilic, ex-Dortmund trainer Edin Terzic, former Bayern Munich head coach Niko Kovac, ex-Real Madrid coach Rafael Benitez, Foolad coach Yahya Golmohammadi, and Igor Stimac have been shortlisted to lead the Reds.

Defending champions Persepolis sit third in the 2024/25 Iran's Persian Gulf Professional League (PGPL), three points behind Tractor and Sepahan.

Mehdi Taj registers for Iran Football Federation presidential bid

TEHRAN – Mehdi Taj submitted his bid to remain president of Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI).

Taj was elected as FFIRI president for a two-year term in August 2022.

He had replaced Shahaboddin Azizi Khadem, who was removed from the presidency of the football federation.

Former president of the federation Ali Kafashian has also registered for the post.

The Football Federation Islamic Republic of Iran's (FFIRI) elective General Assembly will be held on March 1.

Olympiacos interested in Mehdi Ghaedi

TEHRAN – Mehdi Ghaedi is in the transfer target of Olympiacos, according to reports from the footballer's homeland. The "reds" are rumored to have found in the face of the 26-year-old, the winger they are looking for.

Olympiacos is interested in the international Iranian, Mehdi Ghaedi, who plays for the UAE team Ittihad Al Kalba. The international Iranian plays mainly as a winger, a position that the "reds" will focus on the January transfer window. Nottingham Forest and Rio Ave are also interested in the footballer.

The 26-year-old has never come to a European team, as his action is limited to the regional countries.

With the national team of Iran, he has recorded 25 entries, from 2020 onwards. The player's features are the long shot and his ability to dribble, especially in "one versus one" situations. The Iranian's height "results" up to 1.66, but his low stature replaces his confidence, as he likes to do tricks with the ball.

Ghaedi's value is four million euros, according to Transfermarkt. This season counts a total of eight goals and four assists, in 11 appearances.

For the record, we just mention that the 26-year-old has coexisted with Karim Ansarifard and Ehsan Hajisafi, in the national team of his country.

Azmoun, Ezatollahi score as Shabab Al Ahli beat Al Nasr

TEHRAN – Shabab Al Ahli football team defeated Al Nasr 2-0 on Matchweek 10 of the UAE Pro League on Sunday.

In the match held at the Al Rashid Stadium, Sardar Azmoun was on target for Shabab Al Ahli in the 76th minute from the penalty spot and Saeid Ezatollahi doubled the advantage four minutes later.

Shaba Al Ahli sit second one point behind leaders Sharjah.

The 2024-25 UAE Pro League (also known as ADNOC Pro League for sponsorship reasons) is the 50th edition of the UAE Pro League. Al Wasl are the defending champions.

Iran's stock market valued at \$120b

TEHRAN – The total value of Iran's stock market reached \$120 billion in January 2025, equivalent to 10.485 quadrillion rials, according to official statistics.

Data reveals that the chemical products sector holds the highest market value at \$33 billion, followed by basic metals at \$23 billion and multi-industry companies at \$11 billion, Tasnim News Agency reported.

The metal ore extraction sector reached a market value of \$9.0 billion, while banks and

credit institutions, as well as petroleum products, coke, and nuclear fuel stood at \$8.0 billion. Investment companies recorded a value of \$7.0 billion, automotive and parts manufacturing \$4.0 billion, and cement, lime, and gypsum, along with pharmaceuticals stood at \$3.0 billion.

The seven largest sectors together accounted for a combined market value of \$99 billion, highlighting their substantial contribution to the overall stock market valuation.

ICCIMA calls for greater government engagement with private sector

TEHRAN – The heads of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and agriculture (ICCIMA) committees have urged the government to leverage the expertise of the private sector in economic decision-making, emphasizing the legal frameworks available to enhance collaboration.

During a meeting with Masoumeh Aghapour Alishahi, the president's advisor on economic cooperation, chamber officials highlighted challenges faced by private sector operators.

They called on the government to utilize Articles 24 and 30 of the Law on Continuous Improvement of the Business Environment.

As the ICCIMA portal reported, these articles mandate transparency in economic decision-making, requiring governmental bodies to publish draft regulations at least one week before their issuance

to solicit feedback from economic actors.

The ICCIMA leaders stressed that the private sector possesses substantial technical expertise and could work alongside the government to propose practical, well-informed solutions for overcoming economic challenges.

They also underscored the importance of attracting foreign investment for the development of the Makran coastal region, which represents a key strategic growth area for Iran. However, they noted that achieving this goal hinges on addressing international sanctions and Iran's accession to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

The meeting highlighted the need for strengthened collaboration between the government and private sector as a crucial step toward economic resilience and sustainable development.

About 80 ha of land allocated for National Housing Movement in Hamedan



inaugurating them, and from now on we will continue at the same speed."

The deputy minister for housing and construction at the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development has announced that President Masoud Pezeshkian has directed banks to finance the construction of 400,000 housing units under the National Housing Movement initiative.

Habib Taherkhani made the remarks in a special News Talk program focused on the government's first Supreme Housing Council.

The National Housing Movement is one of the major policies of the government in the housing sector, and according to this policy, the construction of four million residential units is planned for four years.

It is one of the projects through which the government is trying to help low-income individuals in society become homeowners.

According to the plan, out of these four million residential units, 3.2 million units will be constructed in cities and 800,000 units in villages.

After the National Housing Action Plan (started in 2018), the National Housing Movement is the government's second major program to provide affordable housing units for the low-income classes.

The operation for the construction of 209,212 residential units of the National Housing Movement began in February 2022.

Iran's ports handle 175m tons of cargo in 9 months

TEHRAN – Iran's ports handled nearly 175 million tons of cargo in the first nine months of the Iranian year (March 20–December 21, 2024), according to the Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO).

During this period, 20.83 million tons of oil goods and 39.55 million tons of non-oil goods were unloaded, bringing total unloading operations to 60.38 million tons. Cargo loading operations included 58.84 million tons of oil goods and 55.77 million tons of non-oil goods, totaling 114.61 million tons, IRNA reported.

Combined loading and unloading operations amounted to 174.99 million tons, with 79.67 million tons of oil goods and 95.32 million tons of non-oil goods.

Additionally, Iran's ports handled 2.33 million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) of containers during this period, reflecting a 14 percent increase compared to 2.05 million TEUs in the same period last year.

The growth in container operations highlights increased efficiency and rising trade volumes at Iranian ports.

Iran's ports have a total nominal capacity of over 260 million tons per year, allowing them to handle a wide range of oil and non-oil commodities. Key ports, such as Shahid Rajaei Port in Hormozgan Province, account for a significant portion of the country's trade activity due to their advanced infrastructure and strategic location along international shipping routes.

Investments in port infrastructure have further enhanced the efficiency of loading and unloading operations, reducing turnaround times for vessels.

The PMO has emphasized the importance of increasing port capacity to accommodate growing trade volumes and support Iran's economic development goals. Upgrades in equipment, digitalization of operations, and expanded storage facilities are part of ongoing efforts to optimize port efficiency.

Transit of goods via Iran rises 31% in 9 months on year

TEHRAN- Transit of commodities through Iran has increased by 31 percent during the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20–December 21, 2024), the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Foroud Asgari said that 16.5 million tons of goods were transited via the country in the mentioned nine-month period.

The head of the International Affairs Center of the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development has recently announced the achievement of the record of 20 million tons of transit via Iran by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20).

Amin Taraffo' also said: "To achieve the goals of the Seventh National Development Plan, which is transit of 40 million tons of commodities via the country per year, we must reach the transit of three million tons per month, which is now 1.5 million tons; of course, our capacity is estimated to be more than this figure."

TEHRAN – A professor at Seoul National University has proposed a pilot project and the formation of a joint working group involving government entities, universities, research centers, and industrial companies from Iran and South Korea to establish long-term collaboration in renewable energy development.

In a message to the 14th International Renewable Energy and Electricity Efficiency Exhibition in Iran, Professor Hwang highlighted the state of the electricity industries in both countries and outlined potential areas for cooperation in transitioning to cleaner energy, ISNA reported.

Professor Hwang emphasized the integration of smart electricity



The continuous trend of recent transit records via the country and the increasing interest of governments, traders, and those active in transport sectors from neighboring, regional, and extra-regional countries in the transit and logistics situation of the Islamic Republic of Iran indicate the fruitfulness of the transformational approach of the government to the strategic issue of transit, with emphasis on the development of all-round economic relations with neighbors.

As stated by the former Transport and Urban Development Minister Mehrdad Bazrpush, the "Iran Way" initiative made by the current Iranian government, lets the neighboring countries use Iran as a route or a solution that facilitates their access to international waters.

Iran Way initiative is the gateway to Iran's land of transit opportunities, the minister has underlined.

As previously announced by the Transport Ministry, 10.8 million

tons of commodities were transited through the country in the Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20, 2023).

Iran is one of the countries with a special status in trade and transit relations due to its strategic location and special geography, as the country is the passage of several important international corridors.

Considering its geographical location, Iran can play a significant role in the transit of goods in the region and benefit a lot from its status in this due.

Paying attention to upstream documents, especially the country's development plans, and the government's decision to develop transit, paying special attention to infrastructure development, reducing transit time, making it cheaper to cross Iran, and making more advantages over competitors, due to the short path for customers, can lead to facilitating the development of transit so that the country can reach the desired growth in this due.

Iran, South Korea to collaborate on renewable energy development

TEHRAN – A professor at Seoul National University has proposed a pilot project and the formation of a joint working group involving government entities, universities, research centers, and industrial companies from Iran and South Korea to establish long-term collaboration in renewable energy development.

The professor also referenced South Korea's experience with smart grid projects, underscoring the coordination between renew-

able energy plants, smart meters, electric vehicle charging stations, and energy storage systems within the grid.

South Korea aims to reduce carbon emissions by 40 percent by 2030 and achieve full carbon neutrality by 2050. To date, the country has installed nearly 25 gigawatts of solar power plants, 10 gigawatt-hours of battery storage capacity, and approximately 600,000 electric vehicle charging points. However, meeting its 2050 targets of 508 gigawatts of clean energy generation and 20 million electric vehicles on the roads will require a fully digital and intelligent power grid.

Professor Hwang noted that Iran derives nearly 90 percent of its en-

ergy from fossil fuels. Achieving its target of 30 gigawatts of renewable energy capacity by 2030 will necessitate a comprehensive plan, including smart grid development, significant financial investment, workforce capacity building, and the creation of new business models. He suggested that advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence and big data analytics could play a vital role in household, industrial, and grid automation sectors.

In conclusion, he reiterated the importance of initiating a pilot project and forming a joint task force with a clear timeline to foster sustained collaboration between the two nations in renewable energy and smart grid advancements.

NDF announces cooperation with China on foreign investment

TEHRAN – Hossein Eyvazlou, a member of the executive board of Iran's National Development Fund (NDF), announced plans for collaboration with China in the field of foreign investment in Iran.

Speaking at a press conference on Saturday, January 4, Eyvazlou highlighted the importance of attracting foreign capital to boost Iran's economic projects, emphasizing the role of strategic partnerships with countries like China.

Details on the scope and nature of the cooperation were not disclosed, but it is expected to focus on key sectors that align with Iran's long-term development goals.

On December 20, a Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) representative announced that the Chinese investors are prepared to fund the construction of combined-cycle power plants in Iran's energy-rich Khuzestan province to help address the country's energy imbalance and boost regional economic development.

Zhao Bin He, the Executive Director of SCO's Iran Office, made the remarks during a meeting with Khuzestan's governor and local religious leaders. "We are here to pay our respects to provincial authorities and outline China's plans for strengthening economic and trade ties, with a particular focus on Khuzestan," Zhao said.

He highlighted the historical and enduring relationship between Iran and China, describing it as built on mutual respect, economic cooperation, and cultural exchange.

"Khuzestan's strategic position in southwest Iran and its vast economic potential make it a key player in enhancing Iran-China relations," Zhao added. "With access to the Persian Gulf and proximity to strong regional economies, Khuzestan offers exceptional opportunities for port infrastructure development and maritime transport."

Zhao reiterated China's readiness to actively participate in developing Khuzestan's infrastructure, expanding port capacity, and exploring joint projects in energy, industry, and agriculture.

"We are also open to collaborating on sports

infrastructure development in the province," he added. "Despite sanctions, Iran has achieved remarkable progress in scientific, economic, and political arenas, reflecting the determination and capabilities of its people."

Also in a meeting between the economic operators of Iran's southern Hormozgan province and Cong Peiwu, China's Ambassador to Iran, held on December 10 to explore opportunities for economic, cultural, and trade cooperation between the two nations, Mohammadreza Safa, the head of the Hormozgan Chamber of Commerce, highlighted the province's investment potential in maritime and mining industries, saying: "We hope the challenges facing Hormozgan's economic operators will be resolved. Our request is to facilitate visa issuance for business and tourism professionals to streamline processes."

He emphasized the Chamber's readiness to send trade delegations to China and welcome Chinese investors to Hormozgan.

China's Ambassador Cong Peiwu underscored the province's strategic significance for trade relations, calling Hormozgan "one of the best regions" to expand economic and investment partnerships.

"China's economic growth, which has secured the second global ranking in recent years, benefits not only China but also other nations, including Iran," Cong stated.

He noted that diplomatic ties, strengthened since 1971, reached a milestone with the 25-year cooperation agreement signed in 2016.

Cong highlighted the agricultural and food sectors as key areas for enhanced cooperation, stressing the potential for exporting Iranian produce, such as fruits, dried fruits, and seafood, to China.

"Chinese consumers have a strong preference for seafood, creating significant opportunities for Iranian products in the Chinese market," he said.

Addressing educational and cultural exchanges, the envoy pointed out that Chinese universities offer favorable conditions for

Iranian students, while Chinese students also show interest in studying in Iran. "The presence of Chinese students at the University of Hormozgan strengthens cultural ties," he added.

The ambassador further emphasized maritime transportation as a vital area for cooperation, particularly through the revival of maritime trade routes known as the "Maritime Silk Road." He described these routes as essential for bolstering sustainable trade between the two countries.

The ambassador further acknowledged external pressures on China-Iran relations, asserting their resilience. "The ties between our two countries are stronger than ever. We do not support financial warfare of any kind. The future of Iran-China cooperation is bright, with economic, cultural, and trade relations as top priorities," Cong stated.

During the meeting, the strategic capacities of Bandar Abbas and Jask were introduced as key economic hubs, with Hormozgan officials reiterating the province's readiness to attract Chinese investors.

The discussions laid the groundwork for further initiatives to capitalize on economic, cultural, and academic opportunities between Iran and China.

Iran and China have strengthened their economic relations in recent years, particularly through the 25-year Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement signed in 2021. The deal includes cooperation in areas such as energy, infrastructure, transportation, technology, and trade, with China committed to investing billions of dollars in Iran's key sectors.

China remains Iran's largest trading partner, with bilateral trade exceeding \$14 billion in 2023. Iran exports crude oil, petrochemicals, and minerals to China, while importing industrial machinery, electronics, and consumer goods. Additionally, both countries are partners in major international frameworks, including the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which aim to enhance regional connectivity and infrastructure development.

Hero of combating terrorism

Iraqi PM hails martyr Gen. Soleimani and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis

for their role in battle against ISIL

TEHRAN - The Iraqi prime minister has hailed Iran's anti-terror icon General Qassem Soleimani who was assassinated by the United States in Baghdad five years ago.

Mohammed Shia' al-Sudani said General Soleimani "stood by" Iraqi people amid the Arab country's war against the ISIL terror group.

The Iraqi premier was speaking in a ceremony in Baghdad marking the fifth anniversary of the martyrdom of General Soleimani, Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the second-in-command of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), and their companions. They were assassinated in a US drone strike authorized by then-US President Donald Trump near Baghdad International Airport on January 3, 2020.

"Martyr Qassem Soleimani supported us across all battlefronts and stood by martyr Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis to defend Iraq in the most difficult situations," al-Sudani said.

The Iraqi premier said General Soleimani and al-Muhandis sal-



vaged Iraq and the region from the clutches of terrorism.

He said high religious authorities have characterized them as heroes who have triumphed in the fight against ISIL terrorists.

Al-Sudani also threw his full weight behind the PMU which has played an instrumental role in the defeat of ISIL.

"The PMU is a fundamental force in defending Iraq. Iraq is at the peak of readiness and is ready to respond to any aggression re-

gardless of its source. Our security forces are capable of ensuring the security of the country. Our government has moved in the direction of strengthening PMU like other security forces," he noted.

Last week, the PMU's chairman praised the role of Iran and General Soleimani in combating terrorism in Iraq.

"The triumph over terrorism is an achievement attained by martyred commanders, which we must safeguard. Our victories were due to the support of the

Islamic Republic of Iran, especially martyr Soleimani," Falih al-Fayadh said.

He added, "The PMU is fully prepared for any confrontation and is not concerned with baseless accusations. There is interaction with the government of Prime Minister al-Sudani. Our forces provide this government with symbols of dignity and strength."

The PMU was formed in the summer of 2014 when ISIL rapidly seized large parts of northern and western Iraq, including Mosul.

In 2016, the Iraqi Parliament passed a law officially integrating the PMU into the National Armed Forces, granting it legitimacy as part of Iraq's defense system.

Despite mounting pressure from Washington, Iraq's government has refused to dismantle the PMU. Officials have reiterated that the organization plays a critical role in safeguarding Iraq's territorial integrity.

Iraq's Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani has also rejected the dissolution of the PMU.

Hezbollah leader: Gen. Soleimani took the lid off US regional projects, Israel's expansionist schemes

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN - Israel is trying to maintain the illusion that Hezbollah's compliance with the November ceasefire deal stems from the Lebanese resistance movement's weakness.

Under such erroneous views, the regime of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu continues to violate the truce agreement that took effect on November 27, 2024.

Nonetheless, the Hezbollah leader has indicated that Netanyahu and other Israeli leaders are experiencing a period of euphoria.

Delivering a speech on Saturday night, Sheikh Naim Qassem warned Israel that Hezbollah's patience "might run out" over Israeli violations of the US and France-backed ceasefire.

He added, "The leadership of the Resistance decides when, how, and with what weapons to resist. There is no fixed timeline dictating the Resistance's actions. Our patience is tied to the appropriate timing to confront the enemy. Our actions may precede or exceed 60 days, and when we decide to act, you will witness it directly."

On October 8, 2023, Israel and Hezbollah initiated cross-border fire, following Israel's declaration of war on Gaza the previous day. In a show of support for the Palestinians in the enclave, the Lebanese resistance movement targeted Israel's strategic and military installations using drones and missiles.

Israel launched a massive bombing operation in Lebanon on September 23 last year that was followed by the deployment of its troops to southern Lebanon one week later.

Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah's secretary general, was martyred in an Israeli airstrike in a Beirut suburb on September 27.

The Israeli army killed about 4,000 people in Lebanon from October 2023 until it signed

the 60-day ceasefire deal with Hezbollah that is set to expire on January 27.

Qassem, who succeeded martyr Nasrallah, elucidated the reasons behind Israel's decision to enter into the ceasefire agreement with Hezbollah.

"When the ceasefire took effect, the Islamic Resistance capabilities were still there. The ceasefire took place, not because the Resistance lost its weapons, but the enemy requested the deal due to its ground failure," he said.

According to the ceasefire agreement, Israel must fully withdraw from Lebanon by the end of this month.

Under the terms of the deal, the Lebanese army is to deploy alongside UN peacekeepers (UNIFIL). Hezbollah should also move its military infrastructure north of the Litani River.

On Saturday, UNIFIL accused Israel of a "flagrant violation" of the 2006 Security Council resolution that forms the basis of its November ceasefire with Hezbollah.

"This morning, peacekeepers observed an (Israeli military) bulldozer destroying a blue barrel marking the line of withdrawal between Lebanon and Israel in Labbounneh, as well as an observation tower belonging to the Lebanese Armed Forces immediately beside a UNIFIL position there," the peacekeeping force said.

It added, "The (military's) deliberate and direct destruction of both clearly identifiable UNIFIL property and infrastructure belonging to the Lebanese Armed Forces is a flagrant violation of Resolution 1701 and international law."

Reports say Israel has violated the November ceasefire deal hundreds of times.

Meanwhile, the Israeli Broadcasting Authority has reported that the Israeli army has

decided to stay in the Mediterranean country beyond the 60-day withdrawal period specified in the truce agreement.

Over the past decades, Israel has martyred regional resistance leaders. The regime has been seeking to weaken resistance movements but to no avail.

The United States has also assassinated anti-terror icons in line with its nefarious schemes in the region.

The US assassinated Iran's top General Qassem Soleimani and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the second-in-command of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), in a drone strike near Baghdad International Airport in January 2020.

They played a key role in defeating the ISIL terror group.

The Hezbollah leader, who delivered his Saturday speech on the 5th anniversary of their assassination, highlighted their role in exposing the plots hatched by Washington and Tel Aviv.

"Martyr Soleimani exposed US plans, and its support for ISIL, and thwarted America's shifting projects in the region. He also unveiled Israel's expansionist schemes," Qassem said.

He also described General Soleimani as a "strategic leader on intellectual and political levels."

The Hezbollah leader added, "The martyr commander Abu Mahdi Al-Muhandis was a towering figure in Iraq, with a significant role in its liberation from the cursed Saddam and from ISIL, which sought to occupy Iraq. Abu Mahdi played a pivotal role under the banner of the religious authority in establishing the Hashd Shaabi and ending the American occupation of Iraq."

Biden awards Presidential "Medal of Freedom" to notorious figures



By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT — Joe Biden, who leaves the White House on January 20, has awarded what is considered the United States' highest civilian honor to a group of "exceptional people," including former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, former attorney general and senator Robert F. Kennedy, billionaire George Soros, and others.

We won't go into Hillary Clinton's dark and criminal history; just look at the WikiLeaks documents that exposed her notorious involvement in establishing and supporting terrorist militias.

In one document, she says that toppling then-Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and igniting a Sunni-Shiite war are "in Israel's security interests." Clinton also says Iran poses a threat to Israel because of its strategic ties to Hezbollah and other allies.

Meanwhile, Biden has received fierce criticism from Republican lawmakers. On X, Senator Rick Scott sarcastically said: "Apparently, all it takes to receive the highest civilian honor from President Biden is to donate millions to him and his family."

Senator Tom Cotton also said, "Giving Soros the Medal of Freedom is outrageous but not surprising. Democratic politicians support criminals more than cops. They want violent criminals back on the streets. If you want less crime: vote Republican."

According to Federal Election Commission (FEC) filings, during the first quarter of 2024, the Policy Reform Fund, a non-profit founded and funded by Soros, donated \$60 million to the liberal super PAC, which supported Democratic candidates during the 2024 election cycle.

Soros' Foundation to Promote Open Society (FPOS), the third largest US financial institution after the Warren Buffett and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundations, has been highly active in Iran, where "useful idiots" spare no effort to incite the people against the Islamic Revolution under pretexts of livelihood and human rights, especially during the 2022 sedition.

In the political context, "useful idiots" is a derogatory and sarcastic term used to describe any naive agent who is manipulated to

promote hostile political agendas, whether they know it or not.

As for Lebanon, Soros annually pumps millions of dollars into various suspicious institutions and NGOs that promote social, cultural and political liberalism. The annual funding for them is several times more than the funding for official institutions. This includes the American University of Beirut (AUB), the feminist organization "KAFA" and other NGOs that defend sexual perversion (LGBTQ+).

Soros-funded NGOs encourages divorce, birth control, and removing the Hijab. It further warns against early marriage (liberal ideas that are anti-Islamic), as well as distorting the image of Hezbollah and Shiism in general.

On September 24, 1973, during a meeting of the Board of Governors of the World Bank, the then President of the World Bank, Robert McNamara (former US Secretary of Defense), gave a speech in which he promoted the idea of confiscating the role of states in favor of non-governmental organizations. This liberal imperialist tendency, at the time, was promoted by Milton Friedman and Friedrich von Hayek, who opposed the Keynesian tendency that emphasizes the interventionist role of the state in the economic cycle.

After winning the US elections, Ronald Reagan adopted this approach, establishing what is called the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), which funds thousands of non-governmental organizations around the world in 6 geographical regions: Russia, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East and North Africa.

According to the website, between 2016 and 2019, NED funded non-governmental organizations in Lebanon with \$4.184 million in a bid "to influence political life and make them an alternative to traditional political forces."

While Soros-funded NGOs receive millions in sums, legislators are prevented from questioning them about where and how this money is spent, an Iranian diplomat's bag was recently inspected at Beirut Airport "for fear" that he will smuggle money donated by the Iranian people to rebuild the homes of the oppressed in Lebanon that were destroyed by the US-led aggression! Ridiculous!

World's top arms producers see revenues rise on the back of wars and regional tensions: SIPRI

Revenues from sales of arms and military services by the 100 largest companies in the industry reached \$632 billion in 2023, a real-terms increase of 4.2 percent compared with 2022, according to new data released by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), available at www.sipri.org.

Arms revenue increases were seen in all regions, with particularly sharp rises among companies based in Russia and the Middle East. Overall, smaller producers were more efficient at responding to new demand linked to the wars in Gaza and Ukraine, growing tensions in East Asia and rearmament programs elsewhere.

SIPRI Top 100 companies ramp up production and build workforces

In 2023 many arms producers ramped up

their production in response to surging demand. The total arms revenues of the Top 100 bounced back after a dip in 2022. Almost three quarters of companies increased their arms revenues year-on-year. Notably, most of the companies that increased their revenues were in the lower half of the Top 100.

"There was a marked rise in arms revenues in 2023, and this likely continued to increase in 2024," said Lorenzo Scarazzato, a Researcher with the SIPRI Military Expenditure and Arms Production Program. "The arms revenues of the Top 100 arms producers still did not fully reflect the scale of demand, and many companies have launched recruitment drives, suggesting they are optimistic about future sales."

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Yemen targets Israeli power plant

From page 1 ► He stressed that military operations supporting the resistance in Gaza will continue, alongside the ongoing development of military capabilities, to meet the demands of the phase and respond to its circumstances and objectives.

These objectives include forcing the Israeli enemy to halt its aggression against Gaza and lifting the siege imposed on the enclave.

Israeli media reported, shortly after midnight on Sunday, the sound of a massive explosion in central Israel, noting that a missile was launched from Yemen.

The missile appears to have once again evaded Israeli missile interceptor systems as well as those of CENTCOM.

On Friday, the Yemeni Armed Forces announced that they had carried out two military operations targeting Israeli-occupied

sites in Jaffa near Tel Aviv.

Saree stated that "the first operation targeted the Israeli power station, east of Jaffa, with a hypersonic ballistic missile of the Palestine 2 type, which struck its target accurately." The second operation involved a "Yafa" drone targeting a military site of the Israeli occupation in Jaffa.

The spokesperson has emphasized the Arab state's high readiness to confront any "foolish act by the American-Israeli aggression forces or any party involved with them."

The latest operation marks the second time Yemeni forces have targeted Israeli power plants.

This follows Israeli attacks on Yemeni energy facilities in Hodeidah. Likewise, Israeli attacks on Sanaa International Airport have been met with Yemeni missile strikes on Israel's Ben Gurion Airport.

Yemen has also targeted Israeli and Israeli-linked vessels from transiting the Red Sea, which has led to the regime's port going bankrupt.

Furthermore, Israeli military bases have been attacked.

On December 28, 2024, Yemeni forces targeted Israel's Nevatim military airbase in the Negev region with a hypersonic missile.

Following the attack, the Times of Israel newspaper pointed out that "missile and drone sirens triggered by attacks from Yemen have forced millions of Israelis to flee for shelter almost every night over the past ten days."

Yemeni officials have vowed to continue surprising the Israeli regime during this fifth phase of operations.

They have also praised the massive public demonstrations on the streets of the capital, Sa-



naa, and various provinces and districts in support of the Palestinian people every Friday for more than a year now.

Regular attacks by the United States and Britain as well as three rounds of Israeli airstrikes have all failed to deter Yemeni forces from its solidarity front with Gaza.

The government in Sanaa has been insisting that only stopping the war on the Gazans and lifting the blockade on the enclave will result in an end to all operations from Yemen against Israel.

Tehran-Kashan tourist train launched after years of halt



TEHRAN – A special tourist train connecting Tehran to Kashan has commenced service following years of pause.

“The new train service follows high demand from travelers and operates on the Tehran-Kashan route,” Kashan’s tourism chief has said.

According to the official, the inaugural journey welcomed approximately 300 tour-

ists departing from Tehran. “The service is scheduled to operate every 14 days, providing a consistent option for visitors.”

The benefits of this initiative include cost-effectiveness, improved travel safety, reduced road traffic, and making rail travel accessible to all social groups, the official added.

The train departs from Tehran Railway Station at 6:00 a.m. and offers tourists the opportunity to explore Kashan’s historical attractions and the desert landscapes of Abu Zeydabad before returning to Tehran at 6:45 p.m.

Kashan is situated on a route that connects Tehran to the giant destinations of Isfahan, Shiraz, and Yazd. Moreover, the ancient town is a gateway to many sights, stories, and surrounding attractive villages to discover. Amongst the highlights of the city are the lavishly decorated houses of Borujerdi, Tabatabai, Ameri, and Abbasi, as well as the UNESCO-listed Fin Garden to name a few.

Situated approximately 200 kilometers north of Isfahan, Kashan continues to grow as a key hub for tourism in Iran.

First known medieval female burial with weapons unearthed in Hungary

Archaeologists have identified the first-known instance of a woman buried with weapons in Hungary’s Carpathian Basin, which dates back to the 10th century CE. The discovery was published in PLOS ONE by a research team led by Dr. Balazs Tihanyi of the University of Szeged.

The burial, which is named Grave No. 63 (SH-63), is part of the Sarretudvari-Hizofold Cemetery in eastern Hungary, a site containing 262 graves from the Hungarian Conquest period. The epoch is symbolized by the migration of Magyars to Carpathian Basin and the beginning of their power in that part of Europe. The cemetery was explored in the 1980s and ever since it has been demolished by agricultural activity. Nonetheless, extensive research on the remains has given excellent information.

The cemetery almost exclusively contained male burials furnished with arms and equestrian paraphernalia, and female burials with jewellery and housewares. The inventory of SH-63 was relatively simple but unique. It included a silver penannular hair ring, three bell buttons, a string of beads, an armor-piercing arrowhead, iron quiver parts, and an antler bow plate.

Determining the sex and potential lifestyle of SH-63 required a combination of archaeological, anthropological, and genetic analyses. Although bone preservation was poor, a histological study of the skull and genetic assessment established that the individual was female. The poor preservation limited the researchers’ ability to conduct detailed anthropological analyses. However, the presence of osteoporosis and other traits indirectly supported their con-

clusions about her gender.

Signs of physical activity were evident in her skeletal remains, including changes in joint morphology and multiple traumas. These markers align with activities such as archery or horse riding, although they do not definitively establish her as a warrior. “The three major traumas identified in her upper limbs likely resulted from falls, suggesting a physically demanding lifestyle,” Dr. Tihanyi explained.

Her skeletal remains showed signs of physical activity, including changes in joint shape and multiple traumas. These markers suggest activities like archery or riding horses, but they don’t prove for sure that she was a warrior.

Archaeologists have found women buried with weapons in earlier times, like the Sarmatian and Avar eras in this area. These graves had one weapon or talismanic items but didn’t prove women were soldiers. The SH-63 burial from the Hungarian Conquest period is different. It shows a unique mix of gender, burial items, and social complexity.

People know the Hungarian Conquest period for its mounted archers who changed the area’s history. But finding archery gear in a woman’s grave makes us rethink what we thought about gender and warfare during this era.

This finding creates new ways to look into how women lived in 10th-century Hungary. Looking at other graves in the Sarretudvari-Hizofold Cemetery might tell us more about how society worked and what women did day-to-day back then.

(Source: *Archaeology News*)

Glimpses of World Heritage sites: Ancient Beech Forests of the Carpathians

The “Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of Europe” are a transnational serial property comprising 94 component parts across 18 countries.

As mentioned by UNESCO, they represent an outstanding example of relatively undisturbed, complex temperate forests and exhibit a wide spectrum of comprehensive ecological patterns and processes of pure and mixed stands of European beech across a variety of environmental conditions.

During each glacial phase (ice ages) of the last 1 million years, European beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) survived the unfavorable climatic conditions in refuge areas in the southern parts of the European continent.

These refuge areas have been documented by scientists through palaeoecological analysis and using the latest tech-

niques in genetic coding. After the last Ice Age, around 11,000 years ago, beech started expanding its range from these southern refuge areas to eventually cover large parts of the European continent. During this expansion process, which is still ongoing, beech formed different types of plant communities while occupying largely different environments.

The interplay between a diversity of environments, climatic gradients, and different species gene pools has and continues to shape this high diversity of beech forest communities.

These forests contain an invaluable population of old trees and a genetic reservoir of beech and many other species, which are associated with and dependent on these old-growth forest habitats.

(Source: *UNESCO*)

Governor: Less than 10% of Susa’s archaeological treasures have been excavated

TEHRAN – Omid Sabripour, the governor of Shush, has called for renewed archaeological efforts in the ancient city of Susa, where, according to him, less than 10% of its archaeological treasures have been excavated.

Speaking on Sunday during a meeting with Khuzestan province’s tourism chief, Sabripour emphasized that the current level of exploration is far from satisfactory.

“We need to leverage UNESCO funding and international cooperation to initiate new archaeological campaigns in Susa,” Sabripour stated. “The city’s immense historical, religious, natural, and industrial heritage, along with its significant role in the Sacred Defense (the eight-year Iran-Iraq war), offers enormous potential for tourism development, which has remained largely untapped.”

The governor also pointed to longstanding issues that hinder the region’s progress, noting that minor challenges have often escalated into major obstacles due to years of neglect.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the



official stressed the need for better promotion of Susa’s tourism potential, lamenting that the city has become more of a transit point for visitors heading to neighboring destinations rather than a primary attraction.

Historical significance of Susa

Located in southwestern Iran, approximately 115 kilometers northwest of Ahvaz, Susa is one of the oldest and most significant archaeological sites in the world.

Registered as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2015, Susa boasts a complex of archaeological

mounds on the eastern bank of the Shavur River, alongside Ardeshir’s palace on the opposite bank. These layers of urban settlements chronicle a continuous history from the late 5th millennium BC to the 13th century CE.

The site’s architectural relics include administrative, residential, and palatial structures, offering a glimpse into the Elamite, Persian, and Parthian cultures, many elements of which have vanished over time. Susa was a winter residence for Persian kings following its capture by Cyrus the Great in 538 or 539 BC, marking its integration into

the Persian Empire.

A wealth of archaeological finds

Archaeological excavations in Susa have uncovered a treasure trove of artifacts, including pottery, bronze items, ornamental objects, and clay tablets. Despite its historical and cultural wealth, much of Susa remains unexplored, highlighting the urgent need for renewed archaeological initiatives.

Gateway to iconic destinations

Susa also serves as a portal to several prominent landmarks, including the UNESCO-listed ziggurat of Tchogha Zanbil, the Achaemenid Apadana Castle, Shush Castle (Akropol), and the Prophet Daniel Shrine. Additionally, the Museum of Susa and the Haft Tapeh archaeological site attract history enthusiasts from around the globe.

With such unparalleled historical significance and cultural assets, local authorities hope that intensified excavation efforts and better promotion will transform Susa into a leading global destination for heritage tourism.

From UNESCO tag to relocation: Tehran to host discussion on Chapel of Dzordzor

TEHRAN – A special meeting titled “The Chapel of Dzordzor: From Relocation to UNESCO Registration” is set to take place in Tehran, organized by the National Committee of Museums of Iran (ICOM).

The event will bring together archaeologists and experts involved in the preservation and relocation of this historic site, Mehr reported.

The Chapel of Dzordzor, part of the UNESCO-registered Armenian Monastic Ensembles of Iran, holds a unique place in the country’s architectural history as the only structure to have been relocated in its entirety.

This monumental effort was carried out in 1987-1988 to save the chapel from being submerged following the construction of a dam on the Zangmar River.

Relocation and preservation

The relocation process of the chapel, which stands over 12 meters tall, involved dismantling each stone and brick, numbering them meticulously, and reassembling the structure 600 meters away and 110 meters higher than its original site.

The painstaking work was completed in just 25 days with the collaboration of Armenian experts. New stones, matching the original material but differing in color, were used to restore parts of the chapel



damaged during the relocation or buried under construction debris. A plaque now affixed to the chapel’s wall commemorates the relocation, highlighting the cultural and historical importance of preserving Iran’s heritage.

A UNESCO-listed treasure

Situated in Maku County, West Azarbaijan province, the Chapel of Dzordzor is part of a historic Armenian monastery. Its origins date back to between 1315 and 1342 CE, when it was constructed under the orders of Bishop Zecharia of the Saint Thaddeus Monastery.

The chapel, known as the Holy Mother of God, is the only surviving structure of the monastery, which reached its zenith in the 14th century before its decline in the

early 17th century. The site was inscribed on UNESCO’s World Heritage List in 2008, alongside the St. Thaddeus and St. Stepanos monasteries, under the designation Armenian Monastic Ensembles of Iran.

Expert-led discussion

The Tehran meeting will feature prominent speakers, including Ebrahim Heidari, an archaeologist and key figure in the chapel’s relocation; Faramarz Tathir Moqaddam, a restoration specialist and researcher of church architecture; Behnoud Goharbin, a restoration expert; and Seyyed Ahmad Mohit Tabatabaei, president of ICOM Iran. Together, they will explore the chapel’s historical journey, its architectural significance, and the logistical challenges of its relocation.

Public engagement

Scheduled for Wednesday, January 8, the event will be held at the House of Humanities Thinkers in downtown Tehran. According to organizers, the session is open to the public, offering a unique opportunity to delve into the rich history and preservation efforts surrounding this UNESCO-recognized site.

With its rich legacy and the remarkable story of its preservation, the Chapel of Dzordzor continues to stand as a testament to the commitment to safeguarding cultural heritage.

Mahabad wetland experiences boom in migratory bird numbers



TEHRAN – The head of Mahabad’s department for environmental protection has re-

ported a significant increase in migratory birds at the Kani Barazan Wetland, the first bird-watching site in the western Iranian region.

On Sunday, Farough Soleimani stated that the Kani Barazan Wetland, spanning over 927 hectares, is one of the most important satellite wetlands south of Lake Urmia.

It is considered among the most valuable habitats for various species of migratory and native waterfowl and shorebirds in northwestern Iran, the official said.

Soleimani added that the wetland annually hosts migratory birds such as teal, green-winged and ruddy ducks, crested grebes, northern pintails, whooper swans, great crested grebes, little grebes, shelducks, common coots, lapwings, various sandpipers, Armenian and black-headed gulls, and terns.

He noted that this year, the number of birds has exceeded 70,000, marking a 20% increase compared to the same period last year.

The increase is attributed to the restoration of the wetland

and improved living conditions for the birds.

Soleimani described the Kani Barazan Wetland as a paradise for nature photographers, attracting numerous artists from across the country and around the world. It remains a favorite destination for visitors year-round.

The wetland spreads over an area bigger than nine hundred hectares and is situated thirty kilometers north of Mahabad in West Azarbaijan province.

Spain welcomes record-breaking 88.5 million visitors in 2024

Spain is on course to shatter its tourism record, having already welcomed 88.5 million international visitors by November 2024. And there’s more to come.

Spain’s allure as a top travel destination has never been stronger. According to the National Statistics Institute (INE), the country saw an impressive €118.7 billion in tourist spending between January and November—a 16.7% jump compared to last

year. November alone brought in €7.7 billion, with visitor numbers surging by 10.3%.

In November, the Canary Islands stole the show, welcoming 25.6% of all international visitors. Catalonia came in second at 22.2%, followed by Andalusia with 13.7%. These regions also raked in the lion’s share of spending, with the Canary Islands contributing 28.6% of total tourism revenue in November.

Meanwhile, the Valencian Community continued its upward trajectory, despite being hit by severe October storms. Year-to-date, the region saw 11.2 million visitors, a 15.5% increase compared to 2023, although growth slowed slightly in November.

(Source: *euroweeklynews.com*)

TEHRAN –According to the International IQ Test, updated on January 1, Iran ranks second worldwide, with an impressive average Intelligence Quotient (IQ) of 106.63.

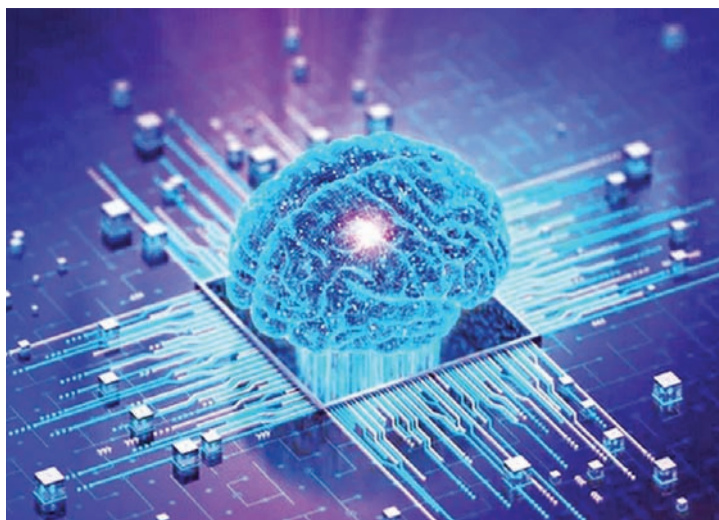
The IQ is a measure of intelligence designed to classify the population into different groups. In this classification, 98 percent of people score between 70 and 130, and 50 percent score between 90 and 110. The further an IQ score is from the average of 100, the fewer people have that score. Only 2 percent of the population scores below 70 or above 130.

The current result is based on 1,393,066 people around the world who took the same test on this website in 2024.

China and South Korea are placed first and third with an average IQ of 107.43, and 106.57, respectively.

The average IQ by country seems to be generally higher in East Asia. Close to average in Europe, Western Asia, Oceania, North America and North Africa. And below average in Central and Southern Africa, and Latin America.

Iran is one of the most prominent countries in the list. The achievement showcases the



high intellectual capacity of Iranian people.

China and South Korea are placed first and third, respectively.

Factors such as culture, emphasis on basic sciences, and the role of the family in nurturing talents are among the main reasons for this achievement.

However, the remarkable result can inspire new plans to make better use of these tal-

ents for the sustainable development of the country.

Japan (106.54), Singapore (105.25), Russia (103.31), Mongolia (103.13), Australia (102.67), Armenia (102.64), and Spain (102.37) are among the top ten countries.

Out of top ten countries, six are from Asia, which shows the superiority of the region in terms of human development.

Asian countries, especially East and Southeast Asia, have high achievements in the field of general intelligence due to their focus on strict education and the use of new technologies in learning.

Knowing the IQ can help indi-

viduals understand themselves better and recognize differences (or similarities) with others, especially if their scores are significantly lower or higher than average. It can explain certain ease or difficulties in social relationships, professional activities, or educational pursuits.

IQ should be seen as an indicator among other aspects of personality (such as motivations, values, etc.) and not as a definitive conclusion. IQ is just one indicative element and does not sum up a person's entire personality, which includes many other facets (personality, motivations, values, etc.).

The International IQ test is inspired by Raven's Matrices (developed by psychologist John Carlyle Raven in 1936). For each question, the candidate must complete a series using logic. This method measures the ability to reason, understand complexity, and recognize and reproduce patterns.

This technique allows for fair IQ assessment across different countries and languages, making it a good choice for an international IQ test; it is also said to be the most reliable IQ test on the internet.

Tehran hosts intl. conference on AI in health

TEHRAN –An international conference on artificial intelligence (AI) in the health sector was held from January 1-5 at Razi Conference Center in Tehran.

Currently, artificial intelligence plays a key role in prevention, early detection of the diseases as well as the development of personalized treatment by analyzing data and comparing the results, IRIB reported.

Statistics have shown noticeable cost saving, about 40 percent, using artificial intelligence in health in advanced countries. In some specific case, like breast or lung cancers, artificial intelligence can lower healthcare costs by 80 percent, hence knowledge-based economy should aim to utilize AI to save healthcare costs, IRIB quoted Mostafa Qaemi, the secretary of the Biology Development Headquarters, as saying.

At present, 17 domestic companies use artificial intelligence in their technological production, the official noted.

Developing smart healthcare document

Smart University of Medical Sciences (SMUMS) has compiled a smart healthcare document, which is currently in the final stages of approval.

Once approved, the document is a valuable step taken towards digital transformation in the country's healthcare system, the health ministry's website quoted Hassan Bakhtiari, the SMUMS president, as saying.

He made the remarks in a meeting held before the inauguration of the second international congress on artificial intelligence (AI) in medical sciences held in Tehran from December 18 to 20.

The SMUMS research center is a suitable place for conducting applied research and recruiting medical researchers. The center



can also help develop treatment and reduce treatment costs, he noted.

Highlighting that most of the regional countries are pioneers in artificial intelligence, he said: "Iran needs to strengthen its position in the artificial intelligence sector in the region."

AI plays a key role in the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of diseases. It also improves the quality of medical services.

Bakhtiari went on to say that by using AI technology, the development of medical services in disadvantaged and rural areas can be put on the agenda.

Telemedicine is one of the areas in which AI can help establish health justice by providing access to advanced medical services in remote areas, he added.

The second international congress on AI in medical sciences is organized by Smart University of Medical Sciences. It will focus on topics such as digital health, medical data processing, personalized medicine, and artificial intelligence applications in pharmaceuticals and medical equipment.

Pezeshkian lauds Razi Institute for scientific achievements

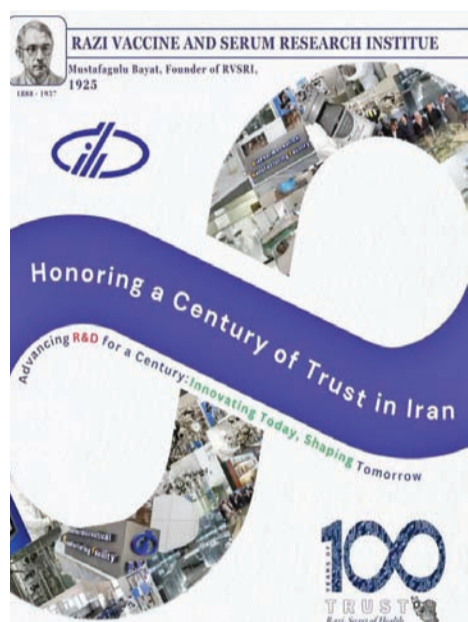
TEHRAN –President Masoud Pezeshkian has congratulated the 100th anniversary of Razi Vaccine and Serum Research Institute establishment, highlighting that the institute, as a reliable scientific center, has played a pivotal role in developing needed vaccines in the country.

The production of various vaccines for livestock and poultry, seven vaccines from the human vaccination portfolio, and the development of the first injectable-inhalation vaccine for Covid-19 in the world are only parts of the valuable services of the institution, which is a source of pride for any Iranian, ISNA quoted Pezeshkian as saying.

Razi Vaccine and Serum Research Institute has a wide range of pharmaceutical products that can flourish the health economy and lead to further development of non-oil exports by selling various biological products to regional countries. It has recently established a research and development center for the new generation of recombinant vaccines.

Moreover, motivated and hard-working researchers and professors have contributed to the creation of a platform where these objectives can be fulfilled.

Founded on January 6, 1925, in response to the devastating Rinderpest pandemic, the Razi Institute has been a pioneer in vaccine and serum production in Iran. Today, it offers a diverse portfolio of over 80 biological products, reflecting years of dedicated research and innovation by its scientists.



Razi Vaccine and Serum Research Institute operates six branches across Iran—in Mashhad, Ahvaz, Shiraz, Kerman, Marand, and Arak—ensuring that local vaccine production and research needs are met, with its main facility located in Karaj.

As the institute celebrates this significant milestone, it reflects on a century of service to public health and anticipates future advancements in vaccine development.

During Covid-19 pandemic, Razi Cov Pars, the second Iranian-made vaccine for

coronavirus, was developed by the Razi Vaccine and Serum Research Institute.

The vaccine is protein-based, which employs recombinant versions of the spike protein and tutors the immune system against the virus by producing antibodies.

It is developed in 3 doses. The first two doses are injectable and the third dose is intranasal. The second dose of the vaccine will be injected into the volunteers 21 days later and the third dose will be inhaled 51 days later.

The method applied in production of this vaccine is in accordance with the World Health Organization (WHO) regulations.

The institute started working on the vaccine in February 2020 and after initial stages, it passed animal test phase in April 2020. It has developed 8 to 9 months of immunity.

COV-Pars was developed under the leadership of Iran's Health Ministry and Food and Drug Organization expertise.

At the end of the second phase of clinical trials, Cov Pars proved 80 percent of the immunogenicity.

A number of countries have requested to purchase the Iranian-made Cov Pars vaccine for COVID-19.

The Institute (affiliated with the Ministry of Agriculture) was capable of producing 20 million doses of vaccine by the end of 2021.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Iran finds herbal medicines effective in COVID-19 treatment

The Food and Drug Administration has approved four domestically produced herbal medicine effective in the treatment of COVID-19 and has issued a production license for two of them.

Kianoush Jahanpour, the spokesman for the Food and Drug Administration, told IRNA on Monday that "none of these drugs are a cure for COVID-19, but they have effects to reduce the symptoms of this disease and should be further investigated."

The first herbal medicine in this collection is an oral spray containing six herbal essential oils, and according to the results of a clinical trial presented, if used, it helps to improve the pulmonary complications of coronavirus, including shortness of breath, cough, and arterial oxygenation, he explained.

تولید دو داروی گیاهی موثر در درمان کرونا در ایران

سازمان غذا و داروی ایران چهار فرآورده طبیعی تولید داخل با اجزای گیاهی برای بهبود علائم کووید ۱۹ را تایید کرده و مجوز تولید را برای دو مورد آنها صادر کرده است.

کیانوش جهانپور سخنگوی سازمان غذا و دارو روز دوشنبه در گفت و گو با ایرنا گفت: هیچکدام از این داروها داروی درمان کووید ۱۹ نیستند اما اثراتی برای بهبود علائم این بیماری داشته اند و باید مراحل بررسی بیشتر را طی کنند.

وی گفت: اولین داروی گیاهی از این مجموعه یک اسپری دهانی حاوی ۶ اساس گیاهی است و با توجه به نتایج کارآزمایی بالینی ارائه شده در صورت مصرف به بهبود عوارض ریوی کووید ۱۹ شامل تنگی نفس، سرفه و اکسیژن رسانی شریانی کمک می کند.

greatly contribute to the control and prevention of infectious diseases, particularly respiratory and seasonal diseases, he noted.

HMPV often causes symptoms similar to the common cold, including cough, fever, stuffy or runny nose, sore throat, wheezing, shortness of breath, and rashes.

However, the risk of severe illness is higher for people who are younger than five or older than 65, with those cases taking longer to recover from. Unlike Covid-19, there is no vaccine or specific antiviral treatment for HMPV; treatment primarily involves managing symptoms.

Like other similar viruses, HMPV usually spreads from person to person through droplets from coughing and sneezing, through human contact such as hugging or kissing, and through touching surfaces and objects contaminated with the virus and then the mouth, nose or eyes.

Experts caution against the use of antiviral drugs to treat HMPV. In an interview with the state-backed National Business Daily, a respiratory expert in Shanghai warned against blindly using antiviral medications, as no vaccine exists for HMPV, and its symptoms often resemble those of a common cold.

In 2023, HMPV cases were reported in the Netherlands, Britain, Finland, Australia, Canada, the US, and China.

WHO declares no global health emergency on HMPV pandemic: official

TEHRAN –The World Health Organization (WHO) has not flagged the outbreak of Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV) in any country as a health emergency, so there is no need to worry, an official with the ministry of health, has said.

The official made the remarks on Sunday following the recent reports and social media posts suggesting that the virus is spreading rapidly across China. Some claim that hospitals and crematoriums are overwhelmed by the influx of patients.

Videos circulating online show crowded hospitals, with users reporting multiple viruses, including Influenza A, HMPV, Mycoplasma pneumoniae, and Covid-19, as the culprits behind the surge in respiratory illnesses.

Reports indicate that the spike in HMPV cases has led to a notable increase in sudden deaths, particularly affecting individuals aged 40 to 80.

Discovered in 2001, HMPV belongs to the Pneumoviridae family, which also includes Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV). However, serological studies suggest that the virus has been present in humans for over 60 years and is globally distributed.

HMPV can cause both upper and lower respiratory diseases in people of all ages, with young children, older adults, and those with weakened immune systems being most vulnerable.

"According to the International Health Regulations (IHR), if a disease is widespread in a region, it must be reported to the World Health Organization, then the organization will determine whether or not a particular event constitutes a public health emergency of international concern," health ministry's website quoted Qobad Moradi as saying.

Observing personal hygiene, wearing masks, and washing hands continuously can





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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The best form of devotion to the service of Allah is not to make a show of it.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:10 Evening: 17:26 Dawn: 5:45 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 7:15 (tomorrow)

Eleven murals for Gaza painted across the world

Since Israel launched its retaliatory attack on Gaza in October 2023, calls to end the ensuing devastation in the enclave have grown around the world with each passing day, week and month.

From university students to general public, many have taken to the streets demanding a ceasefire, LatAm ARTE reported.

Artists, too, have been creating work to represent their support for the cause. Named and unnamed artists have expressed their thoughts through public murals, works that depict the devastating toll on human lives and powerful messages of peace and solidarity with the victims.

In January, a street mural project entitled Heroes of Palestine was launched in London by Creative Debuts, a platform committed to providing opportunities for emerging artists.

Aiming to raise awareness of the journalists and medical professionals risking their lives in Gaza, four large murals were created in the borough of Tower Hamlets.

In December, Egyptian artist Mohamed Moataz began decorating one of Egypt's oldest areas with art.

Moataz painted four murals around the 1,000-year-old Al-Khalifa neighborhood in Cairo. They include a wall depicting Al Aqsa Mosque, the gold-domed Islamic shrine in Jerusalem, while the Palestinian flag stands erect behind it with the words "Save Gaza" and "Free Palestine."

Another mural depicts an illustration of a raised fist painted in the colors of the Palestinian flag. On the side of another building, Moataz has drawn the distinctive outline of Palestine against a red and lime green background. Inside its borders an eye stares out, framed by the patterns of the Palestinian keffiyeh.

Moataz's fourth mural once again features the Palestinian flag, this time towering more than two meters in height on the outer corner of a building.

Bo-Kaap, is a former racially segregated area in Cape Town, South Africa that has seen a number of murals, one covering a whole apartment block.

They are part of a campaign started by Obeidullah Gierdien, a nurse who launched the Murals for Gaza project in Cape Town.

Graffiti artist Akse P19, who is based in Manchester, created a mural of Palestinian photojournalist Motaz Azaiza from Gaza on a wall in Burnage, an area in the south of the city.

Belfast's International Wall in Northern Ireland is a long stretch of murals highlighting significant events and often attracts tourists. In March, a group of artists transformed the wall to showcase their solidarity with the Palestinian people.

The Jewish Voice for Peace organization created a large street mural as part of their protest, blocking traffic outside the Federal Building and demanding that Senator Patty Murray oppose further military aid to Israel.

Dublin street artist Emmalene Blake's work often focuses on human rights and equality. In November, she created a mural on the outer wall of a pub in Dublin of a woman cradling a dead child wrapped in a Palestinian flag.

A mural in support of Gaza has been painted in Washington DC by artist Joel Artista. He collaborated with Palestinian calligraphy artist Ahmad Ghassab for this mural.

Five artists in Barcelona came together in February to paint four walls in solidarity with the cause, organized by the urban art center B-Murals.

Each of the walls represents one color of the Palestinian flag and each image is inspired by the work of different photojournalists from Gaza.

In March, a group of artists in Kenya painted a mural that depicts a hand in the gesture of an upright fist, the symbol for resistance. It is holding the Palestinian flag, a reoccurring motif in the piece.

The mural in the city of Caracas in Venezuela depicts children wearing parts of the Palestinian flag and the Keffiyeh planting a tree with a dove on it. Behind them the Venezuelan flag transitions into the Palestinian flag.

Cartoon of Day



Gaza Hospitals

Cartoonist: **Derkaoui Abdellah from Morocco**

TMoCA to hold Marcos Grigorian's commemoration ceremony

TEHRAN-The commemoration ceremony of the late Iranian Armenian artist Marcos Grigorian will be held on Tuesday at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMoCA).

Organized on the occasion of the 100th birth anniversary of the renowned artist, the ceremony is held simultaneous with the exhibition "Marcos Grigorian: A Retrospective" which is underway at the TMoCA, Mehr reported.

The event will have several speakers including painter Mehdi Hosseini who was a friend of Grigorian's, painter and art critic Hassan Mourizinejad, documentarian Hamidreza Zeinali who has made a documentary about Grigorian, director of the Marcos Grigorian Foundation and visual artist Michel Allahverdian, and cultural counsellor at the Embassy of Ireland in Iran Hrachya Mkhitarian.

Marcos Grigorian (1925-2007) was an impactful artist and gallery owner, celebrated as a pioneer of modern Iranian art.

Born in Kropotkin, Russia, to an Armenian family fleeing massacre, he moved to Iran in 1930, where he later opened the Apadana Gallery in Tehran in 1949. Grigorian studied at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Rome, graduating in 1954, and subsequently established the influential Galerie Esthétique in Tehran. He was instrumental in organizing the first Tehran Biennial in 1958 and was a dedicated educator at the Fine Arts Academy. In the 1960s, he relocated to the United States, establishing Universal Galleries in



Minneapolis.

In 1975, Grigorian helped organize the Group of Free Painters and Sculptors in Tehran and was a founder member. Other founding artists included Gholamhossein Nami, Massoud Arabshahi, Mor-teza Momayez, Mir Abdolrez Dary-abeigi, and Faramarz Pilaram.

His series "Earthworks" was on canvas and it used a mixture of clay and straw called "kah-gel," which is commonly found as a building material in villages in Iran. He exhibited his clay and straw works in Yerevan in 1991. Grigorian was also an early artist with land art in Iran.

In his later years, he settled in Yerevan, Armenia, where he created the Museum of the Middle East and donated thousands of artworks. His legacy was marred by tragedy when he was fatally assaulted in 2007.

The "Marcos Grigorian: A Retrospective" exhibition, currently underway at the TMoCA, provides a scholarly overview of five key phases of Grigorian's career, highlighting his contributions to the history of art.

The retrospective features his expressionist paintings, as well as his iconic "earth art" and works created with straw and clay.

This is the debut solo exhibition of Marcos Grigorian's works at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art in over four decades of operation. The exhibit is organized by the Marcos Grigorian Foundation in Yerevan, Armenia.

This exhibition seeks to contribute to introducing this artist and his considerable influence on the evolution of Iranian contemporary painting to the current generation of painters and art enthusiasts.

The commemoration ceremony of Marcos Grigorian will start at 3 p.m. on Tuesday. Admission is free for the public.

Kamkars to return to stage after six-year hiatus

TEHRAN- Iran's leading Kurdish family music ensemble, the Kamkars, are set to return to the live concert scene with a highly anticipated performance on January 11, marking the end of a six-year hiatus.

Titled "Living Fire," the concert will take place at Tehran's Espinas Hall and feature a unique blend of Iranian and global music traditions, performed alongside a string and wind orchestra, Mehr reported on Sunday.

The ensemble will deliver a selection of pieces that showcase their signature style, which seamlessly blends tradition with innovation by blending authentic Iranian music with classical Western instruments, the report added.

The concert will feature a unique fusion of Iranian melodies with classical Western instruments like violin, viola, cello, and wind in-

struments.

"Living Fire" will also include Kurdish music, classical Iranian pieces, and selections inspired by global music, appealing to a wide array of tastes.

Additionally, the collaboration with a string and wind orchestra enriches the musical texture, providing a more profound experience for the audience.

Established in 1961 in Sanandaj, the Kamkar Family is one of the most recognized musical groups in Iran, celebrated for their Kurdish and Iranian music repertoire.

The Kamkars, led by Hushang Kamkar, is a Kurdish family of seven brothers and a sister who have performed numerous concerts in the country and around the world. They have released several music albums, including "In

Memory of Hafez," "Darya," "In Memory of Saba," "Living Fire," "Nightingale with a Broken Wing," "Chant of Drums," and "Music from Kurdistan."

Their music is characterized by beautiful melodies, diverse rhythms, and the incorporation of traditional Iranian instruments. The Kamkar Family's performances often explore themes of love, heroism, and spirituality, which have gained widespread popularity among audiences worldwide.

Key members of the Kamkar Family include Araslan Kamkar (rubab), Ardavan Kamkar (santur), Hassan Kamkar (violin), Hoooshang Kamkar (accordion), Bijan Kamkar (vocalist), Pashang Kamkar (santur), Ghashang Kamkar (vocalist and violinist), Arzhang Kamkar (tonbak), and Ardeshir Kamkar (violin).

Iranian director staging "The Brothers Karamazov" in six-hour performance

TEHRAN- An adaptation of Fyodor Dostoevsky's renowned novel "The Brothers Karamazov" is currently being staged at the Iran-shahr Theater Complex in Tehran.

Iranian stage director Ashkan Khalilnejad, along with a group of theater activists, has chosen the novel as the basis for his latest production, creating a six-hour performance, ISNA reported.

In this rendition, additional materials beyond the original novel have been incorporated.

Khalilnejad began rehearsals for "The Brothers Karamazov" six years ago, and the play officially premiered last week. Due to specific performance conditions, the show will only run on Saturdays until mid-February.

Vahid Ajorlu, Majid Aqa Karimi, Milad Shajareh, Mehrdad Babai, Shakiba Bahramian, Sajjad Hamidian, and Tahereh Hazaveh are the main members of the cast for the play, which is being staged from 3 p.m. to 10 p.m. (including intermission). There is also a possibility of morning performances on certain days in February.

"The Brothers Karamazov" is an exploration of faith, morality, and human existence, revolving around the tumultuous lives of the Karamazov family. The novel begins with an introduction to

Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov, a neglectful and indulgent father whose two marriages produced three very different sons: Dmitri, Ivan, and Alyosha. Their complicated relationships with their father highlight past grievances and differing ideologies.

The family gathers at a local monastery, hoping Elder Zosima can mediate a dispute over inheritance between Dmitri and Fyodor. However, Fyodor's provocations destroy any chance of reconciliation, leading to greater animosity. Throughout the story, Elder Zosima's attempts to console grieving individuals showcase Dostoevsky's themes of suffering and compassion, echoing the author's own experiences with loss.

As the narrative unfolds, the complexities of the love triangle involving Dmitri, Grushenka, and Fyodor come to the forefront. Dmitri's volatile emotions culminate in an angry confrontation with his father, which exposes deep psychological wounds. The introduction of Smerdyakov, the illegitimate son with a complex background, adds further depth to the family dynamics and conflicts.

A subplot involving Alyosha and a sickly boy named Ilyusha reveals themes of childhood innocence and the cruelty of society.

Alyosha's compassionate actions illustrate his desire to bridge divides and foster connections among those suffering around him.

The philosophical debates between Ivan and Alyosha set the stage for intense discussions about faith, reason, and human suffering. In a pivotal moment, Ivan presents the "Grand Inquisitor" parable, challenging the very foundation of faith and morality, which creates tension between the brothers.

Elder Zosima's teachings about forgiveness and the interconnectedness of human actions lend a moral weight to the story, becoming particularly poignant following his death. The belief in the sanctity of holy men is shaken when Zosima's body begins to decay, prompting questions about faith, doubt, and the essence of holiness.

As events escalate, Dmitri's desperate pursuit of love and money leads him to violence against his father, resulting in accusations of murder. Despite Dmitri's vehement denials, circumstantial evidence paints him as the likely perpetrator. The investigation lays bare his turbulent emotions and chaotic lifestyle while introducing the backdrop of broader existential

questions.

The narrative also captures the lives of younger characters, particularly Ilyusha and Kolya, who grapple with their own beliefs against the backdrop of societal challenges. Ivan's mental deterioration culminates in a confrontation with Smerdyakov, revealing complicity in the family's tragedy and deepening the novel's exploration of guilt and responsibility.

The courtroom drama surrounding Dmitri's trial serves as a sharp satire of societal views and legal proceedings. Katerina's dramatic testimony and the emotional turmoil it provokes ultimately seal Dmitri's fate, highlighting the pervasive themes of love, betrayal, and injustice.

In the concluding sections, hope emerges through plans for Dmitri's escape and his reconciliation with Grushenka. Alyosha's farewell to Ilyusha's funeral embodies the novel's themes of love, unity, and remembrance. He urges the youth to cherish their bonds and recalls the Christian promise of reunion. This final moment encapsulates Dostoevsky's exploration of redemption, faith, and the enduring power of love in the face of suffering and moral complexity.