

Martyrdom of Gen. Soleimani, Al-Muhandis commemorated in Mumbai

When the entire world rings the New Year, there will be millions in Iran, Iraq, and Syria who will silently mourn the death of a man who gave them a new life. A life without fear of Daesh.

Also thanking General Qassem Soleimani will be 39 Indian nurses who were taken hostage by the brutal and dreaded Daesh.

The world not only needs to mourn the death of Qasem Soleimani but also celebrate his life.

General Soleimani's unwavering efforts ensured that Daesh was wiped off the face of the earth. Their evil plans to install a fake 'Islamic State' ▶ Page 5

Report Russia-China ties "concern" U.S.

The video meeting between Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin will strengthen cooperation between the two countries.

The video call came at a time of change in the global world order that is currently dominated by the United States and its Western allies as well as global allies.

Albeit the U.S. is the main player here and the rest are sitting on the substitute bench and have been sitting on the bench for a long time now.

Sometimes, players move away from their managers and coaches when they only sit on the bench as their future becomes uncertain.

The meeting also comes during a sensitive year in 2022 that saw the eruption of a war in Ukraine, the biggest conflict on the continent since World War 2. ▶ Page 5

Doc tracing Gen. Soleimani's childhood years to hit Iranian theaters

TEHRAN – A documentary recalling episodes from General Qassem Soleimani's childhood years will hit the silver screens across Iran today.

Directed by Sasan Fallahfar, "A Trace of a Man" was produced at the School of Hajji Qassem Foundation and the theater will offer free tickets for all to commemorate the third anniversary of his assassination.

In the documentary, Fallahfar takes the audience to Qanat Malek, a village near the southern Iranian city of Kerman, where Soleimani was born, and explored his childhood experiences.

"To know Hajji Qassem, we need to go to the past, when he lived a nomadic life," Fallahfar said in a synopsis he wrote for the documentary.

"We go to Qanat Malek, his birthplace, to visit the villagers, each shares a story about the great man," he added. ▶ Page 8

IPL among lowest scoring leagues

By Masoud Hossein

TEHRAN – Iran Professional League (IPL) is among the lowest average goals per game.

The results of the IPL Matchday 14 showed that 10 goals were scored with an average of 1.25 goals per match.

Somewhat surprisingly, games in some top leagues have been averaging three goals per 90 minutes.

A total of 198 goals have been scored in 111 matches so far which means 1.78 goals per contest have been scored.

Tractor forward Mohammad Abbaszadeh and former Persepolis striker Jurgen Locadia have scored six goals both in 14 matches and sit top of the goalscorers table. It means they have scored 0.42 goal per game. That's a very chaotic stat. ▶ Page 3

Gen. Soleimani Breathed New Life Into Resistance Front ▶ Page 3



China launches direct shipping line to Iran's Chabahar port

TEHRAN – The first container ship departing from China docked at Iran's key port of Chabahar on Saturday, marking the establishment of the first direct shipping line between China and Iran's southeastern seaport.

The announcement was made by Amir Moghadam, the managing director of the Chabahar Free Zone Organization, Tasnim news agency reported.

According to Moghadam, Chinese ships previously unloaded in Bandar Abbas, the capital city of the southern province of Hormozgan, with their cargos then being transferred to Chabahar in Sistan-Baluchestan Province via smaller ships.

With the establishment of the direct shipping line between China and Chabahar, cargos are delivered ten days earlier, while the cost of loading and unloading is reduced by \$400 per container, the official explained.

In addition, the establishment of the mentioned shipping line plays a great role in the development of transit via Chabahar Port, he added.

As Iran's only oceanic port on the Gulf of Oman, Chabahar port holds great significance for the country both politically and economically. The country has taken serious measures for developing this port in order to improve the country's maritime trade. ▶ Page 4

Iranian universities offer education to Afghan girls

TEHRAN – Three universities have expressed readiness to enroll hundreds of Afghan girls after the Taliban banned female students from higher education.

Female-only centers of Alzahra University of Tehran, Kosar University of Bojnurd, and Hazrat-e Masoumeh University of Qom will accept Afghan girl students, deputy science minister for international affairs Vahid Haddadi-Asl announced.

Alzahra University announced readiness to admit up to 50 students, but the quota will be increased if more dormitories become available, he added.

Hazrat-e Masoumeh University of Qom will also accept at least 300 Afghan female students, both in offline and online courses, according to Haddadi-Asl.

The Taliban-run higher education ministry has announced that female students would not be allowed access to the country's universities until further notice.

"You all are informed to immediately implement the mentioned order of ▶ Page 7



Christians in Iran celebrate New Year

Iranian Christians celebrated the New Year at Surp Targmanchats Church in the capital, Tehran, on Saturday night. Approximately 150,000 Christians live in Iran, and they are separated into two branches, Armenians and Assyrians.

Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians are the most significant religious minorities in Iran, with Christians constituting the bulk.

Sassanid landscape one step closer to UNESCO status

TEHRAN – Iran is completing an all-inclusive dossier for a Sassanid archeological landscape in the western province of Kermanshah, to have it registered on the UNESCO World Heritage list, the provincial tourism chief has said.

With a high concentration on Taq-e Bostan, which embraces a magnificent series of large bas-relief carvings in Kermanshah, the

archeological landscape is sought to be extended to Ctesiphon, an ancient city located 32 km southeast of modern Baghdad that served as the winter capital of the Parthian empire and later of the Sassanid empire, Mohammadreza Soheili explained on Sunday.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts has decided to pursue a World Heritage listing for a Sassanid axis

centered on Taq-e Bostan, the official added.

He also asked all organizations related to the dossier to make their best efforts to accelerate the preparation.

Taq-e Bostan embraces incredible Persian heritage on the base of a towering cliff, featuring extraordinary Sassanian bas-reliefs of ancient victorious kings. ▶ Page 6

From Inside

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Tehran Papers

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

Netanyahu's sinister plans

Both Joe Biden and the Europeans need the role of Netanyahu's new cabinet to confront Russia, Sharq wrote, quoting Mohsen Fayezi, a senior expert on Israeli issues. ▶ Page 2

Renovating governance system a necessity: speaker

TEHRAN – Speaker of Iranian Parliament Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf said Saturday that he is creating consensus for making decisions on overhauling the governance system, underlining that renovating the system in all fields is a necessity.

Speaking at an open session of Parliament on Saturday, Qalibaf said reforming the governance system is now necessary given that security has been restored.

"I do believe that renovating the governance system in all fields based on the Imam [Khomeini] school and the political thoughts of the Supreme Leader of the Revolution is a necessity, which should be placed on the agenda now that security has been restored," he said. "Now, we are creating consensus for making the necessary decisions in this regard." ▶ Page 3

Iran simulates attack on Israeli naval base: report

TEHRAN– An Israeli media outlet claimed that in the recent large-scale military drills conducted by the Iranian Army, a homegrown Iranian explosive-laden drone was utilized to target an alleged mock version of an Israeli Navy base.

The Iranian Army's combat drones conducted on Saturday close air support (CAS) operations and launched ground attacks during the major stage of the Zolfaghar 1401 joint drills.

Based on footage punished on the social media, the Hengam-class landing ship IRIS Lavan launched an Ababil suicide drone onto selected targets, dubbed the "simulated naval base" by Israeli media.

Israeli media cited open-source intelligence-gathering Twitter accounts, highlighting that the fake facility was created with a similar architectural plan to the Eilat Naval Base in the Red Sea coast city of the same name.

Mersad air defense system eliminates enemy drones

A mock hostile unmanned aerial vehicle was shot down by an indigenously-developed air defense system as it flew over a region where the Iranian Army was conducting extensive military exercises involving several divisions of its troops. ▶ Page 2

TEHRAN PAPERS

Netanyahu's sinister plans

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

from page 1 ► The Zionist regime could not seriously elicit cooperation from Ukraine and the West, nor could it fully implement the confrontation with Russia. Fayzi believes that Netanyahu is on the path to manage the war situation in Ukraine in the right way.

In continuation of Tehran's reactions to the intensifying anti-Iranian tone in the Zionist regime with the appointment of Netanyahu's cabinet and the possibility of war, Iran emphasized that any country that cooperates with the Zionist regime to threaten its national security will be attacked by Iranian armed forces.

Netanyahu's cabinet will not move towards the military conflict with Iran, due to lack of power and potential, and the claims to attack Iran are just political rhetoric. In the new term, they will try to use their previous experience in the field of foreign policy to create a global coalition and consensus against the Islamic Republic, he predicted.

The increase in tensions between the United States and Iran has created other opportunities for Netanyahu. With tensions between Tehran and Washington escalating, Netanyahu is likely to encourage Biden to adopt a regionally deterring stance toward Iran, bringing Israel and Saudi Arabia closer together in the process.

The actions of Netanyahu's radical and extreme cabinet can create a serious split in the Arab world.

Arman-e Melli: Oman's effective role in JCPOA revival

The positive role of the Sultanate of Oman in resolving disputes between Iran, the United States, and the European Union, and on the other hand, Iran and the countries of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council, shows that this country has a high capacity to cooperate with Iran in all political, economic, and security fields, Arman-e Melli reported in a note.

The publication considered the foreign minister's trip to Oman and his meeting with the Sultan, as a completely strategic act with positive results.

Hopes have been renewed for the resumption of the Vienna negotiations, and the JCPOA, the report suggested.

In addition, Iran's economic relations with Oman are growing and it seems that Oman is ready to have an economic partnership and trade exchange with Iran. The volume of commercial exchange between the two countries in the coming years will reach 5 billion dollars, Arman-e Melli predicted.

Javan: Commander Soleimani's role in America's failure

Martyr Soleimani was influential in defeating America's strategies that aimed to shape new political and security policies in the region, conservative Javan publication wrote.

The Americans pursued four main policies to advance their strategic goals in the region, including, trying to rebuild their power in the Middle East, stabilization of the Zionist regime, weakening and restraining the Islamic Republic and, putting the axis of resistance in continuous crisis, the author said, highlighting Soleimani's role in the failure of the mentioned goals of the United States.

The strategy adopted by Soleimani to defeat the American and Israeli conspiracy strategies, international attacks and propaganda,

was a method relying on a set of public diplomacy, defense and security diplomacy, media diplomacy along with military and security tactics and methods, it concluded.

Etemad: No development without national understanding

Both the government and the people must accept that it is in real public interaction and cooperation that the country will be organized, progressed and developed. Azar Mansouri, secretary general of the Union of Islamic Iran People Party told Etemad.

She warned about current economic crisis, inflation rate, investment rate, employment, distribution of income and wealth, value of national currency against foreign currencies, position of the country in the world economy, lamenting that the international economic relations, the JCPOA and the FATF are not in a hopeful condition.

"We still consider public participation and meaningful political competition in free and fair elections to be one of the ways to achieve good governance," she said, highlighting the significant role of national dialogue in solving the recent issues.

Vatan-e Emrooz: America's reasons for continuation of war in Ukraine

The Vatan-e Emrooz newspaper analyzed the United States' involvement in the Ukraine war.

Although the United States declared from the beginning of the war that it would not take militarily participation, it seems that this country is paying the costs of a full-scale global war against Russia, and every day it is more determined to continue this war, the author stated, asking, what benefit does the United States get from Russia's war with Ukraine?

After the war in Ukraine, the increase in energy prices and the uncertainty of European countries in how to get the fuel they need, especially gas for the winter, it was the United States that established itself as one of the largest sellers of gas to Europe.

The increase in American gas production has reached a figure far beyond imagination and has made the United States the first seller of LNG gas in the world.

The next issue in this regard is the high profit of the U.S. from increasing the military budgets of the European NATO member countries.

Jomhuri Eslami: Be careful in foreign policy with Saudi Arabia

Jomhuri Eslami, in its editorial, quoted two different views of Iranian officials about developing bilateral relations with Saudi Arabia and advised them to be careful in foreign policy with this country.

Citing several examples of Saudi's anti-Iranian actions, the publication considered making relations with Saudi Arabia as a detrimental to Iranian national interests.

Naturally, the officials of the Islamic Republic face complications in deciding how to treat this country. This is a matter that must be carefully examined by considering various aspects and the national interests to lead to a wise decision. Until reaching such a decision, everyone should prefer self-restraint over personal opinions, the author suggested.

from page 1 ► In a night operation during the drills late on Saturday, the radars of the medium-altitude surface-to-air Mersad (Ambush) missile system intercepted the airborne target on the third day of the joint drills known as Zolfaghar 1401, which are taking place in a region stretching from the country's southern ports and waterways to the northern tip of the Indian Ocean.

The system then launched a missile in collaboration with the Integrated Air Defense System of the Iranian Army, striking the spy drone as it flew at a distance of 150 kilometers and a height of 25,000 feet.

The transportable, adaptable, and tactical missile defense system Mersad was created by Iranian military experts.

It now has detecting range of 150-kilometer instead of just 100 kilometers. The system uses advanced technology, and enjoys excellent operating precision and continuity, and can lock on and kill targets at a distance of 40 kilometers.

After launching a missile, Mersad may shift positions in the same amount of time and can be launched in less than 7 minutes.

Additionally on Sunday, the Iranian Kilo-class Tareq attack submarine fired its first Miad torpedo at a predetermined naval target.

During the wargame, Qadir submarines also exploded a variety of naval targets using their own smart, fast-moving Valfajr torpedoes.

Aerial torpedoes were also thrown into the water by Sikorsky SH multi-mission helicopters of the Iranian Army, which advanced to the target and then obliterated it.

The torpedo's massively destructive payload allows it to sneak up on targets, destroy them, and sink large naval warships in a matter of seconds.

IRIB head blasts sanctions as blatant instance of 'media dictatorship'

TEHRAN- The director of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) has criticized the sanctions imposed on the broadcaster by the West, asserting that they are a flagrant violation of the right to free expression and a clear example of "media dictatorship."

In an interview, Peyman Jebelli made the statement while commenting on the monopolistic and authoritarian tactics of anti-Iran media as well as the West's enforcement of stringent sanctions on the IRIB and its affiliates in response to recent foreign-backed riots in Iran.

Speaking to Fars News Agency, Jebelli underlined that "for years, we have witnessed obvious inconsistency between the claims and actions of those who claim to be champions of free speech, democracy and respect for society, one of the examples of which is the U.S. violation of human rights by sanctioning the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting."

He went on to say, "When Western and international organizations act to boycott the IRIB, they demonstrate how easily restrict free speech, with which they have long blinded the eyes of the whole world, occur."

Jebelli emphasized that the IRIB is Iran's national media and that it generates content and offers information in accordance with societal demands and helps the growth of the country.

"If there is supposed to be freedom of expression, Iran's national media as a platform for expressing people's views and managing



Iran simulates attack on Israeli naval base: report

The quick pre-launch preparation time of Valfajr is a unique characteristic that significantly improves the tactical capabilities, performance, and quick response of the combat forces, whether they are warships or submarines.

Compared to other torpedoes, Valfajr has a greater range, more accuracy, and greater destructive capability.

The Zolfaghar 1401 exercises began late Thursday night and include infantry, armored and mechanized forces, surface, sub-surface, and floating boats, air defense systems, marine commandos, and strategic bombers.

The exercises, according to the drills' spokesperson, Brigadier General Alireza Sheikh, are intended to advance training and combat preparation as well as carry out some tactical and intelligence plans to enhance

regional security.

He cited the use of local military gear and equipment as one of the war game's notable features.

The military drills' commander, Deputy Army Chief Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, stated earlier on Thursday that the message they convey is that regional countries can maintain peace in their communities via cooperative efforts, rather than depending on outsiders.

Sayyari also said that Zolfaghar 1401 drills encompass locations north of the Indian Ocean as well as the Jask region, which is situated in southern Iran close to the Strait of Hormuz.

The Iranian Army's ground, air, and naval units take part in the joint exercises, which are undertaken to demonstrate the Iranian armed forces' self-confidence and fighting might, as well as their capacity to secure

the region's long-term security and stability.

One of the key goals of the Zolfaghar 1401 drills, based on remarks made by Sayyari, is to improve Army units' abilities to conduct operations in unique situations and environments.

Drills warn off a reconnaissance plane striving to garner data

The military said that a drone was fired to scare away a spy plane attempting to approach Iranian military drills in the Persian Gulf.

Furthermore, it stated that the fire of a Karrar drone by air defense, during the drills, caused a P-8 manned intelligence aircraft belonging to extra-regional forces, which had attempted to lower altitude to gather more precise information from the exercise zone, to be compelled to depart the location.

Army commander says missions in Pacific boost morale

Major General Abdollah Mousavi, the Commander-in-chief of the Iranian Army, has praised an ongoing mission by the Army's 86th Naval Fleet in the Pacific Ocean as evidence of the country's independence and a stimulus to morale.

General Mousavi made the comments in a phone call with the commander of the Iranian mission in the Pacific on Sunday.

The top commander went on to say that the current Navy operation in the Pacific shows Iran's commitment to maintaining a presence in far-off areas and gives the Iranian armed troops a chance to gather maritime expertise.

The 86th Fleet's operation in the Pacific, the major general said, has been successful in flying the Iranian flag in far-off waters.

He noted that this is a further reinforcement to the confidence of the Iranian people as well as the country.



public opinion will do its job, and their media will also do their job, and both sides should have the freedom to do their job," the IRIB head added.

"How come the anti-Iran media act with impunity in the center of Europe and none of the media regulatory requirements are applied to them," Jebelli continued.

He also noted that "they are busy day and night whipping sedition off, inciting riots, instigating subversion, and weakening the security of Iran and other countries."

But they believe that the IRIB, an ensuring transparency media outlet that is specific to the borders of the Islamic Republic of Iran, breaches the law, and they are unwilling to even permit their presence on satellites.

"This is one of the very evident examples of media tyranny that we have plainly encountered in recent events," the chairman of Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting highlighted.

VP arrives in Brazil to attend Lula da Silva's inauguration

TEHRAN- The vice president of Iran for parliamentary affairs arrived in Brasilia to take part in Lula da Silva's inauguration as the new president of Brazil.

The Brazilian Assistant Minister and Director General of Asia and the Iranian Ambassador to Brazil welcomed Mohammad Hosseini, Iran's Vice-President for Parliamentary Affairs, when he arrived in Brasilia to take part in the swearing-in ceremony of the



country's new President, Lula da Silva.

During his visit to Brazil, Hosseini is set to hold talks with certain heads of state and top officials in attendance for the official inauguration ceremony and banquet of Brazil's new president.

The vice president of Iran's tour to Brazil is also expected to include meetings with Muslims and Iranian citizens residing there as well as discussions with Brazilian

authorities on how to enhance bilateral cooperation, particularly in the economic sector.

Brazil is the biggest and most populated country in South America, with an area of more than 8 million square meters and 212 million people.

It has established trade ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran and is the tenth-largest economy in the world.

420 kg of drugs seized



TEHRAN- Iran's IRGC Navy Force seized on Sunday a cargo of 420 kg of drugs off the coast of Chabahar.

Rear Admiral Nozari pointed out that the force is adamantly serious in fighting smuggling and drug dealers in the region.

General Soleimani breathed new life into Resistance Front: Leader

TEHRAN – The Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, has showered General Qasem Soleimani with praise in his third martyrdom anniversary.

Ayatollah Khamenei received members of the family of General Soleimani on January 1 as Iran prepares for commemorating the third anniversary of the martyrdom of the general who was assassinated by the United States in the early days of 2020.

The meeting was also attended by the chief commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), General Hossein Salami, and IRGC Quds Force commander Ismail Qaani as well as members of the Headquarters for Commemoration of the Martyrdom of General Soleimani.

During this meeting, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution stated that breathing new life into the Resistance Front was truly an outstanding, fundamental part of Martyr Soleimani's endeavors. "By strengthening the physical, spiritual, and mental aspects of the Resistance, the General preserved, equipped, and revived this eternal, growing phenomenon against the Zionist regime, the influence of the US, and against other arrogant countries," the Leader said, according to a readout published by khamenei.ir.

Ayatollah Khamenei believes that the testimony of Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah, a unique human being, about General Soleimani's struggles is a great means for understanding the importance of General Soleimani's work in reviving the Resistance.

The Leader of the Revolution spoke about the progress that the Palestinians have made in confronting the Zionists as well as



The Leader of the Islamic Revolution visits the Exhibition of Cultural Products on Martyr Soleimani

the achievements of the Resistance Front in Iraq, Syria, and Yemen. Imam Khamenei stated, "General Soleimani used the experience that he had attained during the period of the Holy Defense as well as the advice of his comrades to strengthen the Resistance by relying on the internal capacities of these same countries." Imam Khamenei also praised General Soleimani's accomplishments and referred to the manner in which the General uprooted and put an end to the activities of the Daesh terrorist group. He stressed the fact that Martyr Soleimani had done very well in that test.

The Leader of the Revolution expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the Commander of the IRGC Quds Force, Brigadier General Ismail Qaani, by saying, "Praise God, the void due to the absence of the General [Soleimani] has been filled in many instances."

The Leader added, "The Resistance Movement considers itself to be the strategic depth and influence of the Islamic Republic and the wings of Islam, and this Movement will continue moving in this direction."

In another part of his speech, Ayatollah Khamenei explained that the public honoring of General Soleimani and the voluntary attendance of people in various commemoration ceremonies is a result of General Soleimani's sincere nature. He said, "This year, like last year, people are attending these ceremonies with enthusiasm. By the grace of God, there are no problems or lacks in the meaningful presence of the nation and their appreciation for General Soleimani."

The Leader of the Revolution referred to some of the General's personal characteristics, including his courage, faith, sense of responsibility, willingness to take risks, intelligence, rationality, the way he took the lead in performing unfinished tasks, and the manner in which he moved forward without hesitating or stopping. The Leader emphasized, "The 'sincerity' of the Martyr [Soleimani] was the best of his qualities, and that is why the Lord made him so highly respected, admired, and honored in this world. At the same time, the reward that he will receive in

the hereafter is unfathomable to human beings' minds."

Ayatollah Khamenei spoke of "honesty" as being another of General Soleimani's attributes and said, "Even though he was involved in complex political issues and undertook great tasks, he was a sincere, honest person. We must all try to produce these qualities within ourselves."

The Leader of the Revolution went on to highlight an important point in honoring the General and describing his characteristics, "We must not speak or act in a manner that may cause the General's qualities seem to be something beyond reach and unattainable."

Ayatollah Khamenei stressed that it is necessary to keep the memories of all the martyrs alive, with General Soleimani being among the most prominent of the martyrs. He said, "We must use different forms of art to keep alive the memory of the Martyr and his characteristics in his personal life and at work. We also need to provide explanations so that people will perpetually, continuously honor him."

In the beginning of this meeting, the Commander-in-Chief of the IRGC, Major-General Salami, described January 3, 2020 – the day when Martyr Soleimani was martyred – as being the day of Martyr Soleimani's spiritual revival. He also listed some of Martyr Soleimani's outstanding personal traits, stating that, "The eternal legacy and glorious flag of Martyr Soleimani means that the flag of Resistance is advancing on all fronts."

General Soleimani's daughter, Zeinab Soleimani, also presented a report on the cultural and social activities of the Qasem Soleimani Foundation in this meeting.

they put all their weight behind the recent riots in Iran, but now they have acknowledged their miscalculation about the unrest, the Iranian Foreign Ministry said on Monday.

"The governments that bet on Iran's internal developments bet on a losing horse. We had warned them not to sacrifice their interests to no avail," Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani told a regular news briefing.

Even though Western governments claim that they were not pursuing regime change in Iran, Tehran will never forget their roles in the protests, Kanaani added.

Amini, from the Kurdish city of Saez, died on September 16 in the hospital three days after she fainted at a police station. A medical examination revealed that she had died because of a chronic illness, dismissing rumors that she had suffered a blow to her head or other vital bodily organs.

The statement added, "It was also stressed that the Islamic Republic of Iran views selective and dual approaches toward human rights as unacceptable and totally rejected, and that it is the opposite side that has violated the Iranian nation's rights and severely harmed its interests by imposing unlawful sanctions on the country."

It noted, "The Italian envoy was also told that the negative and irrational stances taken by some Italian officials have nothing to do with the historical background of ties between the two countries."

According to the statement, the Italian ambassador said he would relay Iran's protest to his government in Rome.

and replaced him with Mohammadreza Farzin.

The governor of the Central Bank of Iran, resigned amid the recent volatility in the foreign currency market and depreciation of Iran's national currency the rial against other currencies, IRNA reported.

Farzin has served as the head of different Iranian banks including Bank Mellī, and Bank Karafarin; he has also served as the deputy Finance and Economic Affairs Minister.

SPORTS

IPL among lowest scoring leagues

From Page 1 ▶ IPL leaders Persepolis have scored 15 goals in 14 matches and that's disastrous because they have scored 1.07 goals per game.

English Premier League (EPL) leaders Arsenal have scored 40 goals in 16 matches; 2.5 goals per match. Barcelona have scored 34 goals in 15 matches (2.26) and Bayern Munich scored 49 goals in 15 matches (3.26).

The comparison shows that IPL is among the world's lowest scoring leagues this season.

Vujovic names 20-man team for 2023 IHF World Championship

TEHRAN – Iran handball head coach Veselin Vujovic announced his 20-man team for the 2023 IHF Men's World Championship.

The Championship will be held in Poland and Sweden from Jan. 11 to 29.

Team Mellī have been drawn along with Chile, Spain and Montenegro in Group A.

The National Team will depart Tehran for Poland on Tuesday. The Persians will meet Chile on Jan. 12 in their opener.

Iran Squad:

Mohammad Siavoshi, Ali Rahimi, Omidreza Sarpoushi, Mojtaba Heydarpour, Mohammadreza Oraei, Salaman Barbat, Afshin Sadeghi, Shahab Sadeghzadeh, Vahid Masoudi, Mohammadmehdi Behnamnia, Milad Ghalandari, Pouya Norouzzinejad, Mohammad Kiani, Mehrdad Samsami, Yasin Kabirianjoo, Yadegar Dehkordi, Mehdi Mousavi, Saber Heydari, Mohammadreza Kazemi and Ali Kouhzad

FIBA hails Zob Ahan for first WASL win

TEHRAN – Zob Ahan logged the first WASL win, 75-54, over Lebanon's Al-Ittihad Ahli in Tehran on Thursday. It was the first game at home for the Iranian team who were rebounding from a tough loss to Beirut Club in Lebanon the previous week.

Nine of the 11 fielded players got on the scoreboard for Zob Ahan, with five scoring in double-digits in this big victory, FIBA reported.

Leading the way in scoring was Farid Aslani who had 15 points, but Mohammad Hossein Ahmadi (13 points), Arman Zangeneh (11 points), Sajjad Masheyekhi (11 points), and Arsalan Kazemi (10 points) were not too far behind.

Al-Ittihad Ahli had a bit more help for Ronald Delph (17 points, 13 rebounds) in Chris Darrington (19 points) but there's still a lot left to be desired from this Syrian squad who remain winless in WASL – West Asia play.

Arsalan Kazemi just continues to put up Arsalan Kazemi numbers. After barely missing out on a double-double in his first game by one points, the Iran national team forward finally gets one in this win with 10 points and 12 rebounds. He also had 4 assists on only 1 turnover and missed only one field-goal attempt.

"It was a tough game for us after the loss to Beirut Club, so we were prepared for this game. We are so happy that we won this game," Arman Zangeneh said.

"If we could play in home in Esfahan, we are sure we could have more fans. If we were playing in Esfahan we could have thousands, but we are proud that they could be here and we could win for them," he added.

"Each team in WASL are strong... each game is really hard for all teams," Zob Ahan coach Farzad Kouhian said.

Jahanbakhsh receives interest from German and Greek clubs

TEHRAN – The agent of Alireza Jahanbakhsh recently confirmed that the attacker has received interest from European clubs.

The Bundesliga could perhaps soon welcome another World Cup player. Alireza Aahanbakhsh's advisor confirmed to the Greek news portal 'sdna.gr' that clubs from Germany have expressed an interest.

"Besides Panathinaikos, there is another Greek club interested in Alireza, along with teams from the U.S. and Germany," said Amir Hashemi.

Hashemi did not reveal which clubs are specifically interested in Germany and the United States. However, other reports claim MLS side Vancouver Whitecaps had shown interest.

Jahanbakhsh is under contract with Feyenoord until 2025. A move to the Bundesliga would be the second trip to one of the top five leagues for the Iranian international. The 29-year-old was active at Brighton & Hove Albion from 2018 to 2021.

Issa Alekasir rejoins Persepolis

TEHRAN – Persepolis football club completed the signing of Issa Alekasir on Sunday.

The 33-year-old forward has joined the Iranian giants on a one-and-half years contract for an undisclosed fee.

Alekasir joined Persepolis in September 2020 on a two-year contract. He helped Persepolis qualify for the final of 2020 AFC Champions League, where the Reds lost to Korean team Ulsan Hyundai 2-1.

He suffered a knee injury in January 2022 and Persepolis terminated deal with the player by mutual consent.

Now, the player has returned to his former team in the January transfer window.

Persepolis signed the player as a replacement for the Dutch striker Jurgen Locadi who left the team in late December.

Taremi among top scorers in 2022

TEHRAN – Iranian international forward Mehdi Taremi is among the top scorers for club and country in 2022.

Taremi has scored 37 goals in 51 matches for Porto and Iran.

Kylian Mbappé has finished as the top Europe-based goalscorer for club and country for the first time, the Paris Saint-Germain forward coming in comfortably ahead of Erling Haaland and the man who ended the last three years top of the pile, Robert Lewandowski.

Mbappé, 24, scored 56 goals in as many games in all competitions for club and country, including five hat-tricks and eight penalties. Haaland was ten goals behind the Frenchman after playing 13 games fewer – the Norwegian averaged better than a goal per game in 2022.

Polish forward Lewandowski has also scored 42 goals in 51 matches.

Iran athlete maintains Guinness record in full extension punches

TEHRAN – Iranian athlete Yousef Imani maintains his Guinness record of most full extension punches in one minute.

On 7 June 2021, Imani from Lorestan Province participated in a competition at Milad Tower in the capital Tehran, where he succeeded in showing 403 full extension punches in one minute, and his name was registered in the Guinness World Records.

Earlier, an athlete from Slovakia conducted 334 full extension punches in one minute to stand first in the world records.

In 2022, another Iranian athlete, Mehran Niazi from Sanandaj, attempted to break Imani's record and see his name in Guinness Book.

Niazi succeeded in recording 414 full extension punches in 60 seconds in the presence of some sports officials in Sanandaj, Kordestan Province, on December 21.

The Kurdish youth said that he has sent documents to Guinness and he is waiting for his record to be registered in the Guinness World Records.

Hadi Rezaei, the head of the Record Committee of Iran's Public Sports Federation, said that Imani is still the one whose name is in Guinness Book.

TEHRAN – A member of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) was killed on Saturday night in the city of Semirom, Isfahan, Iranian media reported.

The deputy commander of the Isfahan provincial branch of the IRGC, General Morteza Amu Mehdi, announced Saturday that the member of the IRGC, named Mohsen Rezaei, was shot dead by gunmen amid unrest in the city, which is located 160 km south of Isfahan.

According to the local general, a number of people illegally gathered in front of the office of the governor-general of Semirom County on Saturday and security forces were deployed in the city. In some cases, they clashed with rioters, General Amu Mehdi said.

Over the last three months, Iran has been dealing with a wave of unrest that broke out in the wake of the death of Mahsa Amini. Iranian officials

Intelligence minister briefs lawmakers on recent developments

TEHRAN – Iran's Minister of Intelligence, Esmail Khatib, attended a meeting with a number of Iranian lawmakers to brief them on a range of issues, particularly the recent wave of unrest.

Nasrullah Pejmanfar, a lawmaker who attended the meeting, told ISNA that "this meeting was about various topics, especially the recent events of the country and the issue of currency disturbances. The lawmakers raised their concerns and the minister responded."

The lawmaker also said that "we are trying to explain the deterring measures that are being carried out in the country to the lawmakers."

Pejmanfar added, "Today, the

most important issue is the war of narratives, and the enemy is widely spreading fake narratives. When real reports are presented, we will see that the enemy has managed to dominate people's thoughts in a part of the society. Therefore, naturally, we should be able to provide better information. The government was asked to reflect the measures taken in different sectors, especially in the economic and currency fields. God willing, we will have media management and narrative space management."

Over the last three months, Iran has been grappling with a wave of unrest that erupted after the death of Mahsa Amini.

Iranian officials have said that

necessity, and I thank him for this action. Of course, it is necessary to complete this change with structural, policy-making and management reforms in order to solve the problem in a sustainable way. We have a lot of hope that these things will happen when the new governor takes office," he added.

Ali Saleh-Abadi left his job as the governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) on Thursday and President Raisi's cabinet accepted his resignation

Renovating governance system a necessity: speaker

From Page 1 ▶ Qalibaf said that addressing economic problems is prioritized in the reform agenda he seeks, according to ICANA.

"As I said from the outset, economic issues are a priority in this renovation," he asserted.

He also thanked Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi for ousting the governor of Iran's Central Bank amid a currency fluctuation. "The action of the honorable president to change the governor of the central bank was an inevitable

247 ha of lands allocated to National Housing Movement in Gilan province



TEHRAN- As announced by a provincial official, 247 hectares of lands has been allocated for the construction of National Housing Movement units in Gilan province, in the north of Iran.

Hadi Rahmani, the director-general of the province's Transport and Urban Development Department, said that 13,280 units are planned to be constructed in the mentioned allocated lands.

Most of the land was allocated in the cities of Rasht and Bandar Anzali, the official added.

In early November 2022, a board member of the National Land and Housing Organization announced that about 57,000 hectares of land within the boundaries of the cities has been provided for the National Housing Movement plan.

Arsalan Maleki also said that the private sector owners in provinces with land shortages can participate in the National Housing Movement to

provide land.

National Housing Movement to construct four million housing units in four years is one of the major plans of the current government in the housing sector.

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, some of these units are currently being constructed after providing lands and preparing the necessary conditions.

In early November, Hadi Abbasi-Asl, the deputy minister of transport and urban development, announced that currently, at least one million units of the National Housing Movement are under construction with average progress of about 30 percent.

After National Housing Action Plan (started in 2018), 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 early February.

The ceremony to begin the mentioned operation and also to launch some development projects in the housing sector was attended by the former Transport and Urban Development Minister Rostam Qasemi.

TEDPIX drops 26,000 points on Sunday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), lost 26,119 points to 1.564 million on Sunday.

As reported, over 12.887 billion securities worth 69.993 trillion rials (about \$184 million) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index dropped 17,319 points, and the second market's index lost 58,196 points.

TEDPIX climbed 151,114 points (10.1 percent) to 1.647 million points in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

The index has risen 87,603 points (6.22 percent) to 1.496 million points in the previous Iranian calendar month Azar (ended on December 21, 2022).

Iran, Finland could expand water co-op: envoy

TEHRAN - The Finnish Ambassador to Iran Kari Kahiluoto has said there is great potential for the expansion of cooperation between Iran and Finland in the water industry, IRNA reported.

Speaking to the press on the sidelines of a visit to the 18th International Water and Wastewater

Exhibition at Tehran Permeant International Fairgrounds, Kahiluoto said: "We can hope that Finnish companies will have a good market in Iran in terms of providing knowledge and selling products in the field of water and energy in a long-term horizon."

China launches direct shipping line to Iran's Chabahar port

from page 1 ► In this regard, the Islamic Republic has been welcoming investors from all over the world to take part in the development of this port and benefit from its distinguished position as a trade hub in the region.

Chabahar port consists of Shahid Kalantari and Shahid Beheshti terminals, each of which has five berth facilities. The port is located in Iran's Sistan-Baluchestan Province and is about 120 kilometers southwest of Pakistan's Baluchistan province, where the China-funded Gwadar port is situated.

In May 2016, India, Iran, and Afghanistan signed a trilateral agreement for the strategically-



located Chabahar to give New Delhi access to Kabul and Central Asia.

Based on an agreement with Iran, India is going to install and operate

modern loading and unloading equipment including mobile harbor cranes in Shahid Beheshti Port in Chabahar.

While Iran is combating the U.S. unilateral sanctions on its economy, the country's ports as the major gates of exports and imports play a significant role in this battle. This role makes all-out support to ports and more development of them serious and vital.

Such necessity has led the government to define projects for more development of the ports and also take some measures to encourage investment making in ports, in addition to facilitating the loading and unloading of goods, especially basic commodities, there.

Petchem output rises 7% in 8 months yr/yr



TEHRAN - Petrochemical production has risen seven percent in Iran during the first eight months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-November 21, 2022), compared to the same period of time in the past year, according to an official in the National Petrochemical Company (NPC).

Bijan Chegeni, the NPC's director for production control, put the eight-month

petrochemical output at 47 million tons, and highlighted that the petrochemical plants operated at 71 percent of their optimum capacity during this period, IRNA reported.

In the mentioned eight months, 2.5 million tons of aromatics, 5.4 million tons of polymer materials, 5.6 million tons of fertilizers and related materials, 14.1 million tons of hydrocarbon materials, and 19.5 million tons of basic and chemical materials were produced by the country's petrochemical sector, according to the official.

The petrochemical industry plays a crucial role in Iran's non-oil economy, as petrochemical export is the second-largest source of revenue for the country after crude oil. Petrochemical exports already constitute nearly 33 percent of the country's non-oil exports.

According to NPC Head Morteza Shahmirzaei, the company plans to increase

its annual petrochemical production capacity to 200 million tons over the next 10 years.

In this regard, Iranian Oil Minister Javad Oji said that more than 100 petrochemical projects with a total investment of about \$70 billion have been defined and will be implemented across the country.

Oji noted that the country will also be completely self-sufficient in producing the catalysts used in the petrochemical industry by the end of the current government administration's incumbency (August 2025).

He put the country's current petrochemical production capacity at 90 to 95 million tons, saying that \$10.5 billion worth of petrochemical products have been exported in the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 21).

According to Oji, over \$12.5 billion was earned from the export of petrochemical products in the previous year.

Cement production up 5.7% in 9 months on year



previous year.

As reported by IRIB citing international statistics released in previous month, Iran produced

63 million tons of cement in 2021 to be ranked the world's seventh biggest cement producer.

The Islamic Republic also exported 14.4 million tons of cement in that year to stand in fourth place among the world's top cement exporters.

The Islamic Republic was ranked the world's fifth biggest cement producer in 2020, producing 69 million tons of the product.

Iranian cement industry has a history of more than eight

decades of activity.

Currently, there are 96 cement production lines active in 74 factories across Iran, and nearly half of them are less than 10 years old. This is an indication that new production units have a greater share of the total output in this sector.

Neighboring countries are not only consumers of Iranian cement but also demand the transfer of the cement industry's technology to their countries.

Govt. allocates over \$394m to CMSDF for supporting small shareholders

TEHRAN - Iranian government has allocated 150 trillion rials (about \$394.7 million) to the country's Capital Market Stabilization and Development Fund (CMSDF) in the budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year 1402 (begins on March 21) to support small shareholders.

As Tasnim news agency reported, the government has decided to supply the mentioned fund from the shares of state-owned companies to protect small shareholders against the risks of the capital market.

Also, in order to strengthen the companies active in the market, a part of their profit which is allocated to increasing their capital is going to be exempted from tax; this will encourage such companies to increase capital and expand their activities.

In late October 2022, Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) unveiled a comprehensive support package to encourage activities in the capital market as shareholders were getting reluctant to invest in the market.

One of the major measures considered in this package was the insurance of shareholders' capital and dividends over



the next Iranian calendar year.

Insuring the shares of real entities up to one billion rials (about \$2,625) per person, issuing subordinated warrants on shares of fixed income funds up to 400 trillion rials (about \$1.05 billion), injecting new resources into the market by sovereign funds to buy shares, depositing up to 50 trillion rials (about \$131.2 million) of the resources approved in the national budget bill for the CMSDF, as well as direct and continuous coordination, supervision and monitoring of the legal entities active in the capital market, including companies and semi-governmental financial institutions, pension funds and military institutions were among the measures considered in

the mentioned support package.

The package also stressed cooperation between the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs to manage the interest rates.

Increasing SEO's direct investment in CMSDF, limiting the activities of marketers, and suspending the underwriting of securities and initial offerings until further notice were also among the issues considered in SEO's support package.

Earlier in February 2022, the government's economic coordination headquarters had also unveiled a support package for the capital market, which included measures such as reducing the price of petrochemical feed, reducing taxes on manufacturing companies, defining new regulations for the mining sector, increasing the capital of the Stock Market Stabilization Fund, controlling the release of government bonds, and determining the exchange rate of the banks; but this package, despite the temporary positive effects, was not able to change the general trend of the market and prevent the continuous fall of the stock prices.

Oman welcomes investment in Iran's renewables sector

TEHRAN - Rashid Al-Ghilani, Oman's Chargé d'affaires in Tehran, has said his country welcomes investment in Iran's renewable energy sector.

Al-Ghilani made the remarks in an Iran-Oman business forum in Tehran on Sunday, the portal of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) reported.

The forum, focusing on the trade and investment opportunities of Iran and Oman, was hosted by Trade Promotion Organization (TPO).

The forum was also attended by the head of the Iran-Oman joint chamber of commerce and a group of businessmen and private sector representatives.



Iran Alumina

IN HIS EXALTED NAME

Jajarm Power & Steam Co-generation Project, on EPCF Basis
(Located in Northern Khorasan)

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFICATION

In respect to the implementation of Memorandum No. 172246/60 dated 11/10/2021 between the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade and the Ministry of Energy, and in order to provide stable electricity for Jajarm alumina and aluminum factories, Iran Alumina Company intends to award engineering, procurements, construction and financing of the 1st phase of Jajarm Power & Steam Co-generation Plant (the "Project"), including all ancillaries, auxiliary equipment and common systems, with 90 MW (±5%) electrical capacity (at Site Conditions) and 72 Ton/ hr steam capacity (at any conditions), at a site in Jajarm Alumina complex located next to Jajarm city, to a qualified and competent contractor through an international bid.

In this respect, Iran Alumina Company (the "Company") will prepare a short list of bidders possessing the necessary qualifications via this invitation to prequalification after the required process and evaluation. The Company will then select an eligible contractor (successful bidder) possessing the required financial and technical capabilities and will award the engineering, procurement, construction and financing of the Project to the aforementioned contractor (the "Contractor") based on a EPCF contract.

Lia Niroo Asia (LNA) company is the Project's consultant.

Applicants are hereby invited to upload letter of intent (including the list of shareholders, the gazette of the board and a deposit receipt of fifty (50) million Rials to account IBAN number 170100004001054704019296, Central Bank of I.R. Iran, Account Holder: Revenue of government's companies, Iran Alumina Co., Deposit ID: 342054779294000600010860294339 to purchase Prequalification Documents), up to three (3) calendar days after the second posting of this invitation notice, on the Iran Alumina Company website: <https://www.iranalumina.ir>

After reviewing the applicants' documents, the instructions for prequalification questionnaire and other required documents will be provided to the applicants whose documents have been approved. The deposit amount of the purchase is irreversible and will not be refunded at all.

applicants must have a valid EPC certificate of qualification type 1 for industrial design and construction or combination of consulting certificate (Grade one or two) and construction certificate (Grade one) in field of energy generation, issued by Plan and Budget Organization. In addition, applicants must have at least one similar or higher capacity power plant project implemented on EPC basis in Iran as well as financing experience of at least one project with fifty (50) percent of project estimated price.

Deadline for submitting the completed prequalification documents is thirty (30) calendar days after the deadline of obtaining the Prequalification Questionnaire as indicated in second posting of this invitation notice.

Second Announcement

Tender No.: J/61

From page 1 ► The global order is a very fluid situation at the present time. What is unfolding at these current times and entering 2023 is pitting Beijing and Moscow against Washington.

Washington just passed nearly a billion dollars on its military, with ten million allocated to military assistance to Taiwan, a province of China.

The U.S.-led NATO military alliance also triggered the war in Ukraine with its very heavy military presence, expanding to Russian borders.

The problem is that policymakers in America appear none the wiser as if they are still living in the dream world and not addressing or viewing the situation with a clear eye.

Despite warning China against sending arms to Russia as being a “gigantic mistake,” President Joe Biden says President Xi is distancing himself from Putin.

Both of these remarks are incorrect as Beijing has declared its mutual position toward the Ukraine war and has been playing a major role in calling for a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

The joint statement that has been published following the meeting noted “the path of peace talks will not be a smooth one, but as long as parties do not give up, there will always be prospect for peace. China will continue to hold an objective and impartial position, work to build synergy in the international community, and play a constructive role toward a peaceful resolution of the Ukraine crisis.”

As for China distancing itself from Russia, through video meeting, President Xi expressed his pleasure in meeting President Putin virtually at the year-end, which he said: “has become a good tradition between them.”

According to the Chinese government, President Xi noted that under the guidance of both President Putin and himself, the China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era has grown more mature and resilient, with the internal impetus and special value of bilateral cooperation further brought out.

In the first 11 months of 2022, two-way trade volume reached a record high. Investment cooperation has been improved and integrated. Energy cooperation continues to serve as an anchor.

Analysts say the Chinese and the Russians are trying to demonstrate to the whole world that they are together in this mess that the U.S. has created



Russia-China ties “concern” U.S.

and are supporting each other.

The mess is the global insecurity and instability that has been created as a result of the U.S. military adventurism around the globe.

There is nothing the U.S. policymakers say or complain about that can change the strategic partnership, which has stretched to military cooperation.

As seen in the joint Russia-China military drills, where ships and planes from both sides exercise together.

According to President Xi, China stands ready to join hands with Russia and all other progressive forces around the world that oppose hegemony and power politics, to reject any unilateralism, protectionism, and bullying, firmly safeguard the sovereignty, security, and development interests of the two countries and uphold international fairness and justice.

President Xi also says the two sides need to maintain close coordination and collaboration in international affairs, uphold the authority of the United Nations and the status of international law, stand for true multilateralism, and fulfill their responsibilities as major countries and lead by example on such issues as protecting global food and energy security.

Again, it has to be emphasized that the policymakers in Washington are living in a dream world as growing superpowers are not dreaming, but

strategically thinking with wisdom.

As Washington seeks to destabilize China with its latest ten-million military allocation for Taiwan and U.S. House Speaker, Nancy Policy, making a highly controversial visit to Taipei to meet with separatist forces, Russia's position is in line with the United Nations.

Russia firmly supports China's position on Taiwan and has stayed firmly committed to the one-China principle along with a wider international community.

During the virtual meeting, President Putin told his Chinese counterpart that the two sides are looking forward to a trade turnover of 200 billion dollars over the next two years.

Sino-Soviet relations back in the 1960' stood at roughly 200 million dollars.

President Putin also said Russia commends China for its objective and impartial stance in international affairs and speaks highly of China's work during its BRICS chairmanship. It stands ready to maintain close coordination with China at multilateral fora including the United Nations, the SCO, BRICS, and the G20, jointly promote the building of a more just and reasonable international order, safeguard respective legitimate interests, and work together to uphold international fairness and justice.

The two presidents exchanged views on the Ukraine crisis. President

Xi stressed that China has noted Russia's statement that it has never refused to resolve the conflict through diplomatic negotiations.

It is a sign of how close Beijing and Moscow's economic, military, and strategic cooperation has become in the face of the U.S. provocations.

But more importantly, the growing ties between these two sides are a direct result of U.S. policies.

In addition to that, the two countries have close cultural ties and a geographical relationship. This has been consolidated by the emergence of China as a superpower.

Among other issues both sides share in common is that they have both been targeted by the U.S. military-industrial complex.

The United States has said it was concerned by China's alignment with Russia after Putin and Xi held their video meeting, the U.S. State Department said.

“Beijing claims to be neutral, but its behavior makes clear it is still investing in close ties to Russia,” a State Department spokesperson said, adding Washington was “monitoring Beijing's activity closely.”

The facts on the ground show that Chinese forces are not militarily wreaking havoc around the world like the U.S. military has been doing and continued to do.

On the other hand, Chinese soldiers have been dispatched as part of the United Nations Peace Keeping Force in Africa, keeping the peace on the continent.

One works unilaterally to destabilize different parts of the world and the other words to bring peace to a volatile part of the world.

Beijing has also expressed no desire to be the “number one superpower” in the world. China's objective is to advance its economy, technology, and military just like every sovereign nation has the right to do to maintain its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The frustration of U.S. global dominance goes beyond China and Russia and extends to Latin America and West Asia.

This includes most of the developing sectors of the world that are at odds with the policies of Washington DC.

Countries such as India, Indonesia, Russia, China, Iran, and many others are going to be leading a just world order over the next century that will witness adherence to international law and order.

WORLD HEADLINES

Former UK PM suggested bringing Putin into Western fold

Former UK prime minister Tony Blair believed Russian President Vladimir Putin should be encouraged to embrace Western values and allowed “a position on the top table” after he was elected in 2000, papers released by the National Archives on Friday reveal.

Blair reportedly described Putin as “a Russian patriot, acutely aware that Russia had lost its respect in the world” in a meeting with then-U.S. vice president Dick Cheney in 2001, likening his mindset to that of “a Russian de Gaulle” while cautioning against any further comparison with the French leader.

While acknowledging Putin's “low approval rating in the U.S.,” the Labour politician told Cheney he thought it best to “encourage Putin to reach for Western attitudes as well as the Western economic model.”

Blair's cabinet was not so convinced, according to a briefing note included in the archives, which complained about “the Russian intelligence effort against British targets” continuing “at Cold War levels.”

Despite reassuring Blair that he did not want to be considered “anti-NATO,” Putin was nevertheless attempting “to try to post active and hostile officers to work against British interests worldwide,” the author of the memo claimed.

India, Pakistan exchange lists of nuclear facilities, prisoners

Pakistan says it has handed a list of its nuclear installations and facilities to the Indian mission in Islamabad under a decades-old agreement between the two nuclear-armed rivals.

Pakistan's foreign office said in a statement on Sunday that India had simultaneously handed over a list to the Pakistani mission in New Delhi.

It said lists are exchanged annually on January 1. The practice has been in place since 1992.

The neighbors have fought three wars and have had a number of military skirmishes in recent years. Last year an Indian missile accidentally landed in Pakistan, setting off alarm bells across the world.

“The list of nuclear installations and facilities in Pakistan was officially handed over to a representative of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs today [Sunday],” Pakistan's foreign office said.

The annual exchanges come at a time diplomatic ties between the two are near non-existent.

Pakistan first officially tested nuclear weapons in 1998 and has since developed a significant stockpile of nuclear-capable missiles, as has India.

With the help of China, Pakistan has recently increased its use of nuclear energy to meet the rising demand for electricity.

In a separate statement, Pakistan's foreign office said the two countries had also exchanged a list of each other's citizens held in prisons.

Putin allows Western countries to pay gas debts in foreign currencies

Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree Friday allowing “unfriendly” Western countries to pay debts for fuel in foreign currencies.

The repayment of debts of the countries will not mean the resumption of Russian gas shipments, according to the decree.

The decree changed an earlier decision seeking payment in rubles for gas sales from “unfriendly” countries.

On March 31, Putin said “unfriendly countries” -- those that introduced sanctions against Russia -- must pay for gas supplies in rubles after they froze the Russian central bank's currency assets because of the Ukraine war that started Feb. 24.

In late April, Russia's state-owned Gazprom cut off gas flow to Poland and Bulgaria due to their refusal to pay bills in rubles.

Gazprom also stopped shipments to energy companies supplying to Finland, the Netherlands, Denmark, Latvia, and Germany, on the grounds they did not comply with the pay-in-ruble system.

18 people killed, injured in Kabul Airport explosion

Media sources reported on Sunday morning that 18 people were killed and injured in an explosion that took place near Kabul International Airport.

Interior ministry spokesman Abdul Nafee confirmed the news, saying that a number of Afghan citizens were killed in the incident.

An Afghan security source also told Aljazeera reported that at least 10 people were killed and 8 others were injured in this incident.

According to the preliminary reports, officials and police forces have blocked the roads leading to the scene of the explosion.

The ambulances and military vehicles have been dispatched toward the scene, the sources also reported.

Some other new sources reported that a fire broke out near the building of the Afghan Interior Ministry leading to the airport.

N. Korea's Kim orders ‘exponential’ expansion of nuke arsenal

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un ordered the “exponential” expansion of his country's nuclear arsenal, the development of a more powerful intercontinental ballistic missile, and the launch of its first spy satellite, state media reported Sunday, after he entered 2023 with other weapons firing following a record number of testing activities last year.

“They are now keen on isolating and stifling (North Korea), unprecedented in human history,” Kim said at a recently ended ruling party meeting, according to the official Korean Central News Agency. “The prevailing situation calls for making redoubled efforts to overwhelmingly beef up the military muscle.”

Kim accused South Korea of being “hell-bent on imprudent and dangerous arms build-up” and openly trumpeting its preparations for war with North Korea. That, Kim said, highlights the need to mass-produce battlefield tactical nuclear weapons and push for “an exponential increase of the country's nuclear arsenal,” KCNA said.

Kim also set forth a task to develop another ICBM system “whose main mission is quick nuclear counterstrike,” KCNA said. It said Kim accused the United States of frequently deploying nuclear strike means in South Korea and pushing to establish a NATO-like regional military bloc.

Kim said North Korea will also launch its first military reconnaissance satellite “at the earliest date possible,” saying related preparations are in their final stages.

Martyrdom of Gen. Soleimani, Al-Muhandis commemorated in Mumbai

From page 1 ► were met with resistance and the strategy of General Soleimani who helped the region get rid of their presence.

According to one Indian expert on the West Asian region, who told a leading Indian newspaper, “Indian officials may have had periodical contacts with him (General Soleimani) to discuss cross-border terror groups in the wider West Asia region. Soleimani was the face of armed resistance against ISIS in Iraq and Syria and contributed in a big way to defeating ISIS.”

The bravado of General Soleimani remains unmatched and unrivaled. There are still some questions that the world still needs to answer.

Who benefitted from his assassination?

Who wanted him gone?

It is only Daesh who wanted to see him gone. However, the Deash had been hurt so brutally that they are yet to regroup themselves.

General Soleimani, along with Iraq's military chief Abu Mahdi Al-Muhandis ensured that peace has returned to the region.

On December 31, 2022 and January 1, 2023,

China accuses U.S. of ‘slander, hype’ after aircraft clash

China's defense ministry has accused the United States of violating international law and of “slander and hype” following a confrontation between a Chinese fighter jet and an American reconnaissance plane over the contested waters of the South China Sea.

The statement late on Saturday came days after the US military claimed that a Chinese J-11 fighter jet had come within 6 meters (20 feet) of a US RC-135 aircraft on December 21, forcing the latter to take evasive maneuvers to avoid a collision.

But Tian Julin, a spokesperson for China's defense ministry, said the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command had distorted facts about the incident and that it was the US aircraft that had engaged in “dangerous maneuvers” against the Chinese jet.

Tian said the U.S. aircraft was conducting intentional close-in reconnaissance on China's southern coastline when the People's Liberation Army sent fighter jets to track and monitor the plane.

Despite multiple warnings from the Chinese side, the U.S. aircraft

suddenly altered its flight stance in a “dangerous approach movement, which seriously compromised the flight safety of the Chinese military aircraft,” he said.

The defense ministry also released a video of the incident, which it said showed the U.S. aircraft maneuvering towards the Chinese jet.

“The United States deliberately misleads public opinion ... in an attempt to confuse the international audience,” Tian said.

“We solemnly request the U.S. side



condolence programs were held at Iranian Mosque, Dongri; Shia Kabrastan, Mira Road, and Zaib Palace, Yari Road.

Maulana Syed Qazi Askari delivered speeches on the occasion to commemorate the

martyrdom of General Qasem Soleimani, Abu Mahdi Al-Muhandis, and other martyrs who sacrificed their lives protecting not just human lives, but also warding off Daesh attacks on the Shrine of Bibi Zainab, the granddaughter of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), in Damascus.

to restrain the actions of frontline naval and air forces, strictly abide by related international laws and agreements, and prevent accidents in the sea and the air.”

China claims almost the entire South China Sea as its sovereign territory, but parts of it are contested by Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Brunei.

Trillions of dollars in trade flow every year through the waterway, which also contains rich fishing grounds and gas fields.

Mazandaran holds potential to develop water tourism

TEHRAN –Rivers in the west of the northern province of Mazandaran hold the potential to develop water tourism in this area, the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

Over 120 rivers cross the province, 30 of which are located in the west and have water all year round, Mehran Hassani explained on Sunday, IRNA reported.

In addition to providing an ideal environment for citizens and tourists to enjoy, some of these rivers include bridges or historical places along or beside them, which serve a very important role in promoting water tourism, the official added.

Boosting hydro tourism could lead to job creation and economic prosperity in the region, he noted.

However, proper investment and the cooperation of the private sector seem necessary, he mentioned.

Throughout the year, Mazandaran hosts millions of tourists from all parts of the country due to its many natural sights, such as the forest and the sea.

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

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

The northern section of the region consists of lowland alongside the Caspian and upland along the northern slopes of the Alborz Mountains. Marshy backlands dominate the coastal plain,



and extensive gravel fans fringe the mountains. The climate is permanently subtropical and humid, with very hot summers.

Hydro tourism or water tourism involves traveling to places specifically to take part in water-based activities. Some individuals who do not wish to partake in water-related activities embark on water tourism trips so that they can visit tourist sites that sit close to bodies of water such as lakes, rivers, dams, oceans, etc. Water tourists are regularly independent travelers, although some travel businesses do organize group trips.

While water tourism often includes active chases, some water tourists visit islands and shore regions to join more relaxed pursuits such as diving or swimming. Travel businesses organize tours of coral reefs and arrange for local tour guides to preside over excursions on which travelers can swim with local marine life such as dolphins or even sharks. Some tour operators also cater to families who are primarily focused on swimming and tanning rather than interacting with aquatic life.

Water trips occasionally involve inland destinations such as lakes and rivers. Holidaymakers can sail or swim on lakes while many rivers are ideally suited to white water rafting. Additionally, some leisure businesses operate water parks that contain swimming pools, water slides, and areas for kayaking or canoeing.

Over \$20m invested in Markazi tourism



TEHRAN – Some 8.7 trillion rials (over \$20 million) has been invested in the tourism sector of the central province of Markazi during the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 21, 2022), the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

Handicrafts workshop held for female students

TEHRAN – A pottery workshop was held on Saturday in the southwestern Bushehr province for a number of female students, the provincial tourism chief has said

The event was organized to introduce and promote handicrafts as well as increase students' creativity in this field, Esmail Sajadimanesh explained on Sunday.

Back in March, a provincial tourism official announced that the handicrafts sector generated over 300 job opportunities in Bushehr province during the past Iranian calendar year 1400.

“A total of 349 new jobs were created for the province's artisans and crafters in almost eleven months,” he explained.

Throughout the mentioned period, over 120 billion rials (\$463,000) were paid in loans to the crafters practicing various fields of handicrafts including wickerwork, woodcarving, pottery, and woodturning, the official added.

All resources would be used to boost employment and support fellow artisans and craftsmen in the province to develop and grow their home-based businesses, he noted.

From Page 1 ► Taq-e Bustan was originally the site of a Parthian royal hunting garden, but the Sassanians later added their own regal stamp. Its biggest alcove features elephant-mounted hunting scenes on the sidewalls and highlights the coronation of Khosrow II (r 590–628), beneath which the king rides off in full armor and chain mail (half a millennium before the European Black Prince made it fashionable.).

The second niche shows King Shapur III and his Roman-stomping grandfather Shapur II. To the right of the niches, is a fine tableau again showing Shapur II (r 379–383), in which he is depicted trampling over the Roman emperor Julian the Apostate (whom he defeated in 363) and receiving a crown of blessings from the Zoroastrian god Mithras.

It is said that late afternoon is the best time to visit, as the cliff turns a brilliant orange in the setting sun, which then dies poetically on the far side of the duck pond. The surrounding open-air restaurants rock out till late in the evening and the carvings are warmly floodlit. The site is 10km north of Kermanshah's city center.

The Sassanid era is of very high importance in the history of Iran. Under Sassanids, Persian architecture and arts experienced a general renaissance. Architecture often took grandiose proportions such as palaces at Ctesiphon, Firuzabad, and Sarvestan which are amongst the



Sassanid landscape one step closer to UNESCO status

highlights of the ensemble.

Generally, a Sassanid archaeological landscape represents a highly efficient system of land use and strategic utilization of natural topography in the creation of the earliest cultural centers of the Sassanid civilization.

In 2018, an ensemble of Sassanian historical cities in southern Iran, titled “Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars

Region”, was named a UNESCO site. The ensemble comprises eight archaeological sites situated in three geographical parts of Firuzabad, Bishapur, and Sarvestan.

The World Heritage reflects the optimized utilization of natural topography and bears witness to the influence of Achaemenid and Parthian cultural traditions and of Roman art, which latter had a significant impact on the architecture and artistic styles of

Chabahar to host first cultural-tourism festival of coastal provinces

TEHRAN – The first cultural-tourism festival of coastal provinces will be held in Chabahar port, the southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan province, the provincial tourism chief has said.

The festival will open on January 18 with the participation of cultural and tourism activists from seven coastal provinces of the country, IRNA quoted Alireza Jalalzai explained on Sunday.

The festival will feature traditional costumes, folk music, dance, local food, and traditional rituals from Khuzestan, Hormozgan, Bushehr, Sistan-Baluchestan, Gilan, Golestan, and Mazandaran provinces, the official added.

As part of the three-day event, tourists will be introduced to the diverse cultures of coastal tribes, he noted.

It also could boost maritime tourism in these regions, he mentioned.

Back in December, a provincial official announced that tourism development can be facilitated through Chabahar port.

The Chabahar port is a hub for international trade among the Persian Gulf countries and can maximize the province's tourism potential, he said.

Situated on the Makran shores, the port holds strategic importance in terms of transportation of goods and passengers along the Indian Ocean, the official added.

As one of the most important hubs of world trade in West Asia, Chabahar can contribute greatly to the development and economic growth of the region, he mentioned.

However, some measures, including developing tourism infrastructure and connecting Chabahar to the national railway, need to be done, he explained.

Chabahar is the only ocean port in Iran and the best and easiest access route of the middle Asian



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

In 2019, the High Council of Free Trade Zones announced that it was ready to start construction of a new airport inside the Chabahar free trade zone. Currently, air travelers to Chabahar need to use the airport of Konarak city.

Currently, there are some 20 tourist resorts in Chabahar, including four hotels and eco-lodges. The collective province - Sistan in the north and Baluchestan in the south- accounts for one of the driest regions of Iran with a slight increase in rainfall from east to west and an obvious rise in humidity in the coastal regions. In ancient times, the region was a crossword in the Indus Valley and the Babylonian civilizations.

The collective province —Sistan in the north and Baluchestan in the south— accounts for one of the driest regions of Iran with a slight increase in rainfall from east to west and an obvious rise in humidity in the coastal regions. In ancient times, the

Abandoned caravanserai to undergo restoration

TEHRAN – The deserted caravanserai of Simon in the northwestern city of Mahabad, West Azarbaijan province, is planned to undergo some rehabilitation works, the city's tourism chief has said.

The project will be carried out by Mahabad Municipality under the supervision of the city's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department, Nasser Sadafi explained on Sunday.

Parts of the Safavid-era (1501-1736) inn are planned to turn into a handicrafts market after being fully restored, the official added.

West Azarbaijan embraces a variety of lush natural sceneries, cultural heritage sites, and museums including the UNESCO sites of Takht-e Soleyman and Qareh Klise (St. Thaddeus Monastery), Tepe Hasanlu, and the ruined Bastam Citadel.

The region has been the seat of several ancient civilizations. It

formed part of Urartu and later of Media. In the 4th century BC, it was conquered by Alexander the Great and was named Atropatene after one of Alexander's generals, Atropates, who established a small kingdom there. The area returned to Persian (Iranian) rule under the Sasanians in the 3rd century CE. The Arabs controlled Azerbaijan from the 7th century until Turkish nomads overran it in the 11th century. Thenceforth the inhabitants of the region were Turkish speakers. The region was overrun by the Mongols in the 13th century, and, under the ruler Hulegu, Azarbaijan became the center of a Mongol empire extending from Syria on the west to the Oxus River (now Amu Darya) on the east.

Possible UNESCO tag for Iranian caravanserais

Iran has put forward a selection of 56 caravansaries as a candidate for collective inclusion on UNESCO'S cultural heritage list.

Caravansary (also Caravanserai or Caravansaray) is a building that served as the inn of the Orient, providing accommodation for commercial, pilgrim, postal, and especially official travelers.

According to Encyclopedia Iranica, from the number of surviving caravansaries and their sizes, it is clear that in Safavid and Qajar times there was a state architectural department that was specifically concerned with the construction of caravansaries and stations on the overland routes. Furthermore, in the cities, several caravansaries were erected as lodging houses, depots, and commercial offices in

the Islamic era.

Apart from architecture, crafts such as metalwork and gem engraving grew highly sophisticated, yet scholarship was encouraged by the state. In those years, works from both the East and West were translated into Pahlavi, the language of the Sassanians.

Kermanshah embraces a variety of awe-inspiring historical sites, including Taq-e Bostan and the UNESCO-registered Bisotun.

Bisotun is a patchwork of immense yet impressive life-size carvings depicting king Darius I and several other figures. UNESCO has it that Bisotun bears outstanding testimony to the important interchange of human values in the development of monumental art and writing, reflecting ancient traditions in monumental bas-reliefs.

Kermanshah was founded in the 4th century CE by Bahram IV of the Sassanid dynasty. Conquered by the Arabs in 640, it was called Qirmasin (Qirmashin). Under the Seljuk rule in the 11th century, it was the chief town of Kordestan. The Safavids (ruled 1501–1736) fortified the town, and the Qajars repulsed an attack by the Turks during Fath Ali Shah's rule (1797–1834). Occupied by the Turkish army in 1915 during World War I, it was evacuated in 1917. The construction of a road in the 1950s over the age-old Khorasan track added considerably to the importance of the city.

region was a crossword of the Indus Valley and the Babylonian civilizations.

The province possesses special significance because it is located in a strategic transit location, particularly Chabahar, which is the only ocean port in Iran and the best and easiest access route of the middle Asian countries to free waters.

The vast province is home to several distinctive archaeological sites and natural attractions, including two UNESCO World Heritage sites, namely, Shahr-e-Soukhteh (Burnt City) and Lut desert.

Coastal and maritime tourism

Over the past couple of years, the Islamic Republic has made various efforts to exploit maritime tourism potential by developing hospitality infrastructures, diversifying sea routes, and drawing private sector investors along its vast southern coasts.

Prosperous maritime tourism could help the country to meet its ambitious target of attracting 20 million annual tourists by 2025. It also keeps an eye on tourism developments in the Caspian Sea in the north.

Back in February, the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to develop maritime tourism and make the best use of its potential on the southern and northern coasts of the country.

Promoting the culture of using the sea as a tool to increase social vitality, developing coastal activities in the form of environmentally friendly plans and programs, and creating the necessary grounds for cooperation and exchange of knowledge and information was also among the topics of the agreement.

the vicinity of the bazaars.

A typical caravansary consists of a square or rectangular plan centered around a courtyard with only one entrance and arrangements for defense if necessary. Whether fortified or not, it at least provided security against beasts of prey and attacks by brigands.

The earliest caravanserais in Iran were built during the Achaemenid era (550 – 330 BC). Centuries later, when Shah Abbas I assumed power from 1588–to 1629, he ordered the construction of a network of caravanserais across the country.

Saipa wheel manufacturer company intends to purchase and commissioning steel wheel rim production line 16to24 inches in the current location of the steel rim manufacturing plant located in khorramshahr.iran the companies active in this scope are invited to refer to this link : <https://b2n.ir/q03655> to receive document (RFP and drawings) and send their proposals to commercial2@kswco.com by January5th. if you have question please contact Mr.Eftekharian email:commercial1@kswco.com
mobile: **+989378257970** _tel: **+982146079513 (284)**

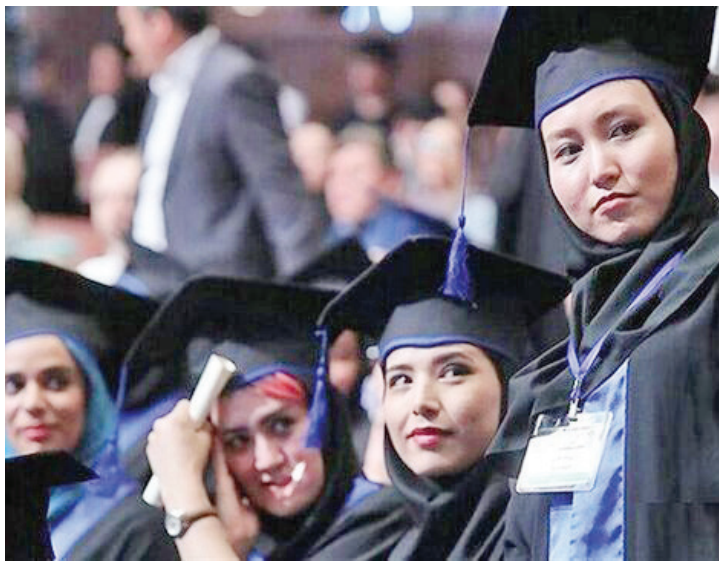
Iranian universities offer education to Afghan girls

From page 1 ▶ suspending the education of females until further notice,” said a letter issued to all government and private universities, signed by the Minister for Higher Education, Neda Mohammad Nadeem.

Iran is home to over 800,000 registered refugees and some 2.6 million undocumented Afghans. Today, more than 500,000 Afghan children- including undocumented Afghans and those who have newly arrived in Iran following the Taliban-takeover-are benefitting from Iran's inclusive education policies, one of the most progressive in the world.

Many of the refugees living in Iran are second and third-generation, according to the UNHCR.

Some 108,000 students from 117 countries have enrolled in Iranian universities for the current academic year (started September 23), Mohammad Moham-



madi Masoudi, an official with the Ministry of Science, has said.

Twenty-five percent of the foreign students studying in Iranian universities are Afghan nationals, he added.

The students are studying in

sciences, as well as engineering, agricultural sciences, animal sciences, and basic sciences.

Twenty-five percent of the foreign students studying in Iranian universities are Afghan nationals.

In the current school year which began on September 23, about 300,000 new foreign students enrolled in Iranian schools.

For the time being, 560,000 foreign students are studying in schools across the country, Education Minister Yousef Nouri said.

different fields of science, research and technology, health and medical education, and also in the fields of humanities, Islamic sciences, Persian language and literature, law, fundamentals of Islamic law, management fields, economics, psychology, social

New wave of Covid looming

TEHRAN – Three new strains of BQ1, XBB, and BA2, have been diagnosed recently in patients, deputy health minister Hossein Farshidi said, warning that the new wave of Covid began.

Fast-developing Covid-19 variants are spreading over Europe, and severely infected France and Germany, he noted.

Emphasizing that the transmission power of XBB is five times higher than Delta, Farshidi insisted that borders should be monitored quickly and suspicious patients should be identified.

Within the next one to two months, the new wave of the pandemic will reach its peak, he further lamented, ISNA reported on Sunday.

The rate of hospitalization of the new strains is the same as the Omicron, but the higher the number of patients, the higher the percentage of hospitalizations, he also said.

He further emphasized that people should be injected with booster doses.

Medical researchers announced the risk of an Omicron variant emerging in the world that is resistant to all existing therapeutic antibodies, and the findings indicate that new treatments must be identified to deal with this variant.

According to new research at a German institute, BQ1.1, is resistant to all approved antibody treatments.

Omicron escapes neutralizing antibodies



and causes symptomatic disease even in vaccinated or convalescent individuals due to mutations in the spike protein. This is known as an immune escape and is dangerous for high-risk populations, including the elderly and people with weak immune systems.

266 Iranian students in top 10 U.S. universities

TEHRAN – Iran ranks 10th in terms of the number of students studying in the top 10 American universities, having a share of 266 students.

One of the available indicators to measure the quality of graduation can be the share of acceptance and attendance of Iranian students in the world's top universities, ISNA reported.

Accordingly, the share of Iranian students in the top 10 universities in the United States, which were selected from the top 25 universities in the world based on the QS ranking in 2023, can partially explain the qualitative situation of Iranian students abroad.

The number of Iranian students in the top 10 American universities has always remained at a constant

level between 246 to 266. The highest number of Iranian students in the top 10 American universities is estimated at 266 in 2015 and the lowest number is 246 in 2017.

Immigrants often leave their homeland due to coercion caused by internal, and political tensions, or in the most optimistic case, to acquire science or technology, in the meantime, 1.8 million Iranians also immigrated, according to the latest available statistics in 2020, constituting 2.23 percent of Iran's population. However, according to internal sources, the population of Iranian immigrants abroad is 4.04 million people, although the statistics cannot be verified based on international sources.

Leading in attracting international students

Iran is among the 15 successful



countries in attracting international students, according to Mohammad Javad Salmanpour, the deputy head of the Organization for Student Affairs.

The education of foreign students in Iran has grown significantly compared to previous years, even last year, it has doubled, he said.

However, it is far from the desired position; Because Iranian universities have higher capacities in all respects than the uni-

versities of regional or European countries, he noted.

Iran has the ability and capacity to have more than 250,000 foreign students by 2026, he stated.

Currently, nearly 100,000 foreign nationals are studying in Iran, more than 90 percent of whom are from Iraq and Afghanistan and the rest are from other countries.

These students are studying in different fields of science, research and technology, health and medical education, and also in the fields of humanities, Islamic sciences, Persian language and literature, law, fundamentals of Islamic law, management fields, economics, psychology, social sciences, as well as engineering, agricultural sciences, animal sciences, and basic sciences.

Iran, Russia to launch joint technology center

TEHRAN – A joint international technology and entrepreneurship center will be launched in cooperation with Russia in the near future.

Representatives of a number of

Russian startups recently visited Iran met with Behrouz Abtahi, vice-chancellor of Tehran's Shahid Beheshti University, ISNA reported.

During the meeting, Abtahi an-

nounced readiness to enhance joint startup activities and to launch an international technology and entrepreneurship center.

With 49 science and technolo-

gy parks and 7,500 technological companies and numerous knowledge-based companies, Iran has valuable experiences in the field of science and technology.

Moreover, in the field of innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem development, 65 creative houses and innovation centers, and 30 specialized accelerators have

been established in Iran with the aim of empowering and strengthening the export capacity of knowledge-based, creative, and technological companies.

RAMSAR SITES IN IRAN

Part 31

Noteworthy flora

At Hamoun-e-Saberi and Hamoun-e-Helmand Tamarix thickets grow in the marshes, with reeds Phragmites australis, reedmace Typha sp., and Carex sp. sedges.

Halophytic vegetation includes Halocnemum strobilaceum, sea lavender Limonium carnosum, glasswort Salsola spp. and the orache Atriplex verruciferum.

Noteworthy fauna

The wetlands are extremely important as staging and wintering area for waterbirds, notably pelicans, herons, dabbling ducks and shorebirds, and in years of highwater levels, they are also an important breeding area for many species.

It was found in aerial surveys in the 1970s that the numbers of Anatidae wintering in the Sistan Basin vary from almost nil in extremely dry years, to over 700,000 in wet years.

It is difficult to compare these figures with current counts. The drought of the early 1990s has resulted in an enormous decline in wintering waterfowl in that period.

This has also been attributed to prolonged drought in the early and mid-1980s and large scale degradation of the aquatic vegetation.

Wintering waterfowl include Dalmatian pelican (Pelecanus crispus), great white pelican (Pelecanus onocrotalus), great egret (Egretta alba), grey heron (Ardea cinerea), greylag goose (Anser anser), ruddy shelduck (Tadorna ferruginea) and common shelduck (T. tadorna), common teal (Anas crecca), northern pintail (A. acuta), common pochard (Aythya ferina), crane (Grus grus) and black-headed gull (Larus ridibundus).

Breeding birds in years with high water levels have included great bittern (Botaurus stellaris), white spoonbill (Platalea leucorodia), little bittern (Ixobrychus minutus), ferruginous duck (Aythya nyroca), black-winged stilt (Himantopus himantopus), slender-billed gull (Larus genei), and whiskered tern (Chlidonias hybridus).

Marbled teal (Marmaronetta angustirostris) is probably a scarce resident, it is sometimes observed in winter and it is thought to be breeding.

Raptors are common in winter, and include large numbers of moustached warbler (Acrocephalus melanopogon) and clamorous reed warbler (A. stentoreus), black kite (Milvus migrans), marsh harrier (Circus aeruginosus), white-tailed eagle (Haliaeetus albicilla), imperial eagle (Aquila heliaca), greater spotted eagle (A. clanga), steppe eagle (A. nipalensis) and cinereous vulture (Aegypius monachus).

Black francolin (Francolinus francolinus), Spanish sparrow (Passer hispaniolensis) and Dead Sea sparrow (Pmoabiticus) are resident in the tamarisk scrub around the lake.

At least 170 species have been recorded around the lake. A list of bird counting results is attached.

Mammals that have been recorded around the lakes include wolf (Canis lupus), golden

jackal (Canis aureus), red fox (Vulpes vulpes), striped hyena (Hyaena hyaena), caracal (Lynx caracal), wild boar (Sus scrofa), goitred gazelle (Gazella subgutturosa) and jebeer gazelle (G. dorcas fuscifrons).

There is a ruined settlement of considerable archaeological interest at the volcano Kuh Kvajeh, just outside the Ramsar Site.

The reed-beds play a significant role in the local economy of the villages along the shoreline. The reeds are used for a number of purposes: as forage for domestic livestock, for constructing boats, for fabricating wind-breaks for houses and gardens, and as a source of fuel for cooking and heating. The rich fishery at the lake is used as a supplement to the income of the village people.

Factors affecting ecology

Irrigation schemes in both Iran and Afghanistan have reduced the flow of water into the Hamouns.

As a consequence, the wetlands are only completely filled in very wet years. Many of the drought problems in the Sistan Basin have been caused by dam construction and water diversion schemes on the Helmand River in Afghanistan.

An average flow rate that was agreed upon by the two governments did not result in any improvements, since the "average" flow was given in a winter bulk of water, not as a continuous flow.

According to the FAO, the floods in 1991 destroyed a large dam and damaged the irrigation projects in Afghanistan, so for the time being the inflow of water has increased again.

However, there is a proposal to build a new, larger dam already, the Kamal Khan Dam.

Despite the availability of water, the aquatic vegetation is almost absent, unlike in the 1970s, where it would immediately recover after a dry period.

The reason for the absence of aquatic vegetation may be, that the dry period in the 1980s lasted so long (six years at some places).

The digging up of tubers by the local people for use as fuel may also have contributed to the problem, as may the massive stocking of the lakes with herbivorous fishes (grass carp) over the last years.

Local pastoralists are concerned about the lack of aquatic vegetation, since they are dependent on it as a source of grazing for their herds of cattle and water buffalo.

The majority of them have moved to the Hamoun-e-Puzak marshes on the Afghan border.

Increasing soil salinity is becoming a very serious problem in the agricultural land bordering the wetlands, and is of considerable concern to the agricultural sector.

An increase of the human population (partly refugees from Afghanistan) together with a decrease in land suitable for agriculture cause serious problems.

Source: Ramsar.org

To be continued

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

20,000 residential units to be constructed for the deprived

The Welfare Organization and the Islamic Revolution Housing Foundation signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to construct 20,000 housing units for the financially struggling families, Mehr reported.

Alireza Tabesh, the Foundation's head, and Vahid Qobadi Dana, the Organization's head, inked the MOU during a meeting held in Tehran on Monday.

As per the agreement, 20,000 housing units will be provided to breadwinners with disabilities, breadwinner women, and the ex-addicts under the Organization's coverage residing in villages with a population of less than 25,000, Qobadi Dana explained.

احداث ۲۰ هزار واحد مسكونی برای محرومان

به گزارش خبرگزاری مهر تفاهم نامه مشترک برای احداث ۲۰ هزار واحد مسكونی برای محرومان بین بنیاد مسکن انقلاب اسلامی و سازمان بهزیستی کشور منعقد شد. تفاهم نامه احداث ۲۰ هزار واحد مسكونی روستایی با حضور علیرضا تابش رئیس بنیاد مسکن انقلاب اسلامی و وحید قبادی دانا رئیس سازمان بهزیستی کشور روز دوشنبه به امضا رسید.

قبادی دانا گفت: این تفاهم نامه به منظور ساخت ۲۰ هزار واحد مسكونی برای معلولین سرپرست خانوار، زنان سرپرست خانوار، و بهبودیافتگان از بلای اعتیاد که در روستاها و شهرهایی با جمعیت کمتر از ۲۵ هزار نفر ساکن و تحت پوشش بهزیستی هستند؛ منعقد می‌شود.

COVID-19 UPDATES ON JANUARY 1

New cases	73
New deaths	3
Total cases	7,561,213
Total deaths	144,688
New hospitalized patients	41
Patients in critical condition	96
Total recovered patients	7,336,179
Diagnostic tests conducted	54,772,229
Doses of vaccine injected	155,130,617

