

## **Business and Politics in the Muslim World**

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## **Summary**

### Political Front

#### **Clinton: U.S. Remains “Open to Engagement” With Iran**

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said the United States remains "open to engagement" with Iran amid tensions over its nuclear aims, according to an interview transcript released Sunday. "We remain open to engagement. But they do know what they have to do. They have to reassure the international community by words and actions as to what their nuclear program is intended for," she said in an interview with The New York Times.

#### **President Lauds Initiative of Holding Lebanon-Syria-Saudi Meeting**

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad here on Sunday evening said that the Zionists are trying to sow discord between the regional resistance movement, Lebanon and Syria. In a meeting with visiting Lebanese Foreign Minister Ali al-Shami, he appreciated the initiative of Lebanese President Michel Suleiman to form the trilateral Lebanon-Syria-Saudi Arabia meeting.

#### **Mottaki, IGAD Secretary-General Discuss Solutions to Somali Crisis**

Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki and Secretary-General of the African-based Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Mahboub Ma'alim discussed ways to resolve the ongoing crisis in Somalia. During the meeting held here in Tehran on Sunday, the two sides explored ways to help Somalia resolve the existing crisis and restore peace, security and tranquility in the African state.

#### **MP: Iran-Vienna Group Talks Should Be in Fair Circumstances**

Any future talks with the Vienna Group should be held within the frameworks and in a fair, identical and smooth circumstance, a senior member of the Iranian Parliament said yesterday. "Iran has always believed that resolving various regional and international problems, including the country's nuclear issue, would only be possible through conducting targeted negotiations," spokesman for the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Commission Kazem Jalali said.

### **Iran, Guinea-Bissau Ink Several MoUs**

Iran and Guinea-Bissau on Monday signed 6 memoranda of understanding (MoUs) and a joint statement at the end of President Malam Bacai Sanha's visit to Tehran.

Guinea-Bissau's President Malam Bacai Sanha, heading a high-ranking delegation, arrived in Tehran on Saturday and met with senior Iranian officials and discussed ways to develop relations between the two countries.

### **Iran, Syria Stress Support for Resistance**

Iran and Syria voiced their unrelenting support for the Palestinian and Lebanese resistance movements, saying it is the only way to confront the Zionist regime.

Ali Akbar Velayati, senior foreign policy advisor to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, met with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in Damascus on Sunday to discuss regional issues. Velayati and Assad also urged Iraqi politicians to promptly form a new government and called for unity between the Lebanese army and Hezbollah against any Israeli aggression, a Press TV correspondent in Damascus reported.

### **Castro Warns Obama Against Attack on Iran**

Former Cuban leader Fidel Castro on Saturday urged U.S. President Barack Obama not to order an attack on Iran. Castro made the remarks at a special session of the Cuban parliament discussing the "main threats to mankind." "Leaders of the world's most powerful countries -- allies or adversaries, with the exception of Israel -- would agree with me and urge President Obama to avoid the aggression," said Castro.

### **S. Korean Gov't Mulls Indirect Trades With Iran**

South Korea's government is considering letting traders with Iran use indirect money wired through a third country to fend off the impact from international sanctions. The Ministry of Knowledge Economy said the measure is to reduce the damage local firms would suffer as direct transactions with Iranian banks become difficult if Korea is to comply with the U.S.-led campaign. "Use of the letters of credit with Iranians have become virtually impossible with U.S.-led sanctions," a government official here said.

### **MP: No Negotiation Under Threat**

An aid to Iran's parliament (Majlis) speaker has reiterated Iran's refusal to negotiate with the West under dual approaches of imposing sanctions and then pushing for talks.

Hossein Sheikholeslam, advisor to the Majlis speaker on international affairs, rejected in an interview with Fars news agency the so-called 'carrot and stick' approach employed by the West to gain an upper hand in negotiations as unproductive and based on uneven terms, adding that such tactics are commonly employed by oppressive powers.

### **Jannati Has Evidence of U.S. Funding Opposition**

Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati can hand in proof of his recent accusations of U.S. financial aid to Iranian opposition when they stand trial in court, his spokesman said yesterday. Abbas-Ali Kadkhodaei, spokesman for the top watchdog Guardian Council, recently said the United States has offered one-billion-dollar aid to the opposition to overthrow the Islamic Republic. Kadkhodaei said there is no doubt on the hostile stand of the U.S. and the West.

He went on to say that in recent years the U.S. Congress has allocated considerable budgets to confront the Islamic Republic.

## **Politico-Strategic Front**

### **Belarus Denies Delivering S-300 Missiles to Iran**

Iran did not procure S-300s missile systems from Belarus or anyone else, Channel 2 reported on Sunday night. The report quoted Western intelligence sources, who it said had checked into Iran's claims to have obtained the sophisticated Russian-made missile defense systems. Last week, a semi-official Iranian news agency claimed Teheran had obtained four S-300 surface-to-air missile systems despite Russia's refusal to deliver them under a valid contract.

### **Minister Denies Kuwait's Claim on Espionage**

Iranian Intelligence Minister Heidar Moslehi has denied reports over the arrest of seven people in Kuwait on charges of espionage for the Islamic Republic. "This is a sheer lie because they [Kuwaiti officials] have not managed to prove the case," ISNA quoted Moslehi as saying. Elaborating on Jundallah's recent activities and the arrest of some members of the group in northwestern Iran, Moslehi said, "Rigi's group is not strong enough to penetrate deep into country."

### **VP: S. Korea Should Be Punished Properly**

South Korea should be punished properly if they join the countries who are imposing anti-Iran sanctions, First Vice President Mohammad Reza Rahimi was quoted as saying by Fars News agency. Speaking in the meeting of education ministry officials, some countries joins the U.S. in imposing sanctions while their goods are sold in Iran's market and the cities are filled with their advertisements.

### **Commander: Sanctions, Threats against Iran "Futile"**

A senior commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) downplayed the significance of the U.S. and Israeli war rhetoric against Tehran, and stressed that threats and sanctions against the country will prove "futile". "Enemies should know that these threats will lead them to nowhere because the Iranian nation is now prepared more than ever to safeguard the values of the Revolution and defend its religious values," Commander of the Corps of Beit ul-Moqaddas Allahnour Nourollahi said.

### **4 Light Submarines Launched in Persian Gulf**

Iran launched four home-built advanced submarines on Sunday to protect shipping vessels in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman. The Ghadir submarines, made by the Defense Ministry's Marine Industries, joined the Iranian Army's naval fleet in an official ceremony held this afternoon. The ceremony was attended by a large number of senior Iranian military commanders and officials, including Defense Minister Brigadier General Ahmad Vahidi and Commander of the Iranian Army's Navy Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari.

### **Iran Artilleries Get Anti-Aircraft Systems**

A senior Iranian commander says the country's armed forces are boosting their surface-to-air firepower with the introduction of new anti-aircraft missile systems. Iran's "artillery units will soon receive new anti-aircraft missiles and radar systems" to enhance the country's defense capabilities, Fars news agency reported the commander of the anti-aircraft post of the Khatamolanbia Headquarters, Brigadier General Ahmad Miqani, as saying yesterday. The military chief said that the Khatamolanbia anti-aircraft post is "rapidly upgrading its defense systems in every way."

### **Iran Enrichment More Efficient**

Iran has found a more efficient way to enrich uranium, said a recent online report by the Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS) based in Washington DC on Friday. According to the report, Iran has improved its uranium enrichment capabilities and strives to attain a higher enrichment level. "ISIS has learned that Iran is now using the second cascade at the Pilot Fuel Enrichment Plant (PFEP) at Natanz to recycle the tails from the first cascade that produces 19.75 percent enriched uranium from 3.5 percent low enriched uranium (LEU)." The report explained that the move to recycle the tails in the second cascade, "is not to increase the output of 19.75 percent material but to maximize the use of the 3.5 percent low enriched uranium (LEU)."

## **Economic Front**

### **Iran's Persian Gulf Oil Reserves Increased**

The Islamic Republic of Iran's oil reserves in Persian Gulf region have increased to 113 billion barrels. After the exploration of new oilfields through recent years, the capacity of Iran's oil reserves had increased to 94 billion barrels but after the increased recycling capacity projects in Soroush and Norouz oilfields, the reserve capacity rised 15 and 4 billion barrels respectively in each mentioned oilfields.

### **Tehran Keen on Joint Venture With Khartoum**

Tehran Governor-General Morteza Tamaddon announced here yesterday that his province is interested in starting joint investment projects in Sudan, specially in the capital city of Khartoum. "Iran and the province of Tehran are implementing industrial projects in many world countries through joint venture and we are eager to practice the same pattern and implement joint projects in Khartoum," Tamaddon said.

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## **Foreign Investment in Iran Up 87%**

Iranian expatriates invested about 2.8 billion dollars in Iran in 2009 which registered 87 percent increased compared with a year before, economy and finance minister said yesterday. Shamseddin Hosseini made the above remark at a press conference and said Iran ranked sixth in terms of investment growth in the world.

### **CBI: Iran Confronts Sanctions by Cutting Imports**

The head of Iran's Central Bank announced 7 percent growth in industrial sectors and calls for cutting imports to defeat the sanctions. Iran has to cut imports to overcome the latest round of economic sanctions imposed by world powers over Iran nuclear program, Mahmoud Bahmani said on Sunday. "Reducing the consumption of imported goods means confronting the sanctions. There is no other way," Bahmani told a news conference.

### **Petchem Exports Rise**

Arrival of ships to Mahshahr Port increased by 5 percent while petrochemical products exports rose by 3 percent in the first four months of the current Iranian year (started March 21) compared with the same period last year. Operations Manager of Terminals and Tanks Petrochemical Company in Mahshahr, Ramin Mahmoudi told Shana that during the first four months of the last Iranian year (ended March 20), Iran's exports and imports of petrochemical products from Mahshahr Port stood at 1.8 million tons and 288,463 tons, respectively.

### **\$85b Investment in Oil Sector Planned**

A senior Iranian Oil Ministry official has announced Iran plans to attract 85 billion dollars investments to fund 40 percent of the country's Fifth Development Plan. "This year permits were issued for 5 billion dollars in participation bonds and 9 billion dollars in foreign currency participation bonds," Shana quoted Acting Deputy Oil Minister Masoud Hashemian as saying. "The country's revenues indicate that the Oil Ministry can rely on domestic sources to implement its investment plans," Hashemian added.

### **Iran's Special Zone to Attract \$4.1b**

The Islamic Republic of Iran's Persian Gulf Mining and Metal Industries Special Zone (PGSEZ) will attract 4.1 billion dollars of investments in the mineral sector. According to the Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), the investment will be used in the industries such as steel, aluminum, zinc and construction of a power plant.

### **Crescent Petroleum Gas Deal Still On**

Crescent Petroleum Co., which is the biggest shareholder in Dana Gas PJSC, said a contract with Iran to supply natural-gas to the United Arab Emirates has not been cancelled. "The 25-year contract between National Iranian Oil Co. and Crescent is valid, internationally binding and currently in international arbitration, as is known, and neither side has cancelled it," a Crescent spokesman said by e-mail to Bloomberg yesterday.

### **Indonesia a Good Market for Iranian Goods**

Indonesia is a good market for Iranian goods to be presented and Iranian businessmen and traders should take advantage of this opportunity. Deputy Commerce Minister and Head of the Trade Promotion Organization, Babak Afghahi, said that regarding to the Muslim population of Indonesia and good sale of halal products, Iranian traders should take advantage of the situation and expand their market to Indonesian market.

### **Iran's Free Zone Welcomes Chinese Investors**

Managing Director of Aras Commercial and Industrial Free Zone Organization said Aras Free Zone welcome Chinese investors and companies to invest in this region. Abbas Ranjbar made the above remark in a ceremony to unveil three new heavy automobiles in Aras Industrial Township. He said Aras Free Zone provides appropriate facilitations for foreign investors and is ready to build special industrial township for Chinese investors.

### **Persian LNG Project Suspended**

Iran is suspending some liquefied natural gas projects, including Persian LNG, and shifting its focus to pipeline exports instead, the head of the country's state oil company said Friday. Iran's ambitious LNG schemes have been hit by the pullout of Western oil companies, which play a dominant part in the supply of such technologies. In an interview with Iran's oil ministry website Shana, Ahmed Ghalebani, managing director of the National Iranian Oil Co., said some LNG projects--including those in South Pars gas field phases 13 and 14--have been suspended.

## **Social Front**

### **Iranian Doc on Srebrenica Massacre Ready for Screening**

Iranian director Reza Borji has completed making a documentary on the Srebrenica massacre, entitled "Mothers of Srebrenica". According to Mehr News Agency, the documentary has been produced by Iran's Experimental and Documentary Film Center (EDFC). Borji had five trips to Bosnia during the past three years and conducted several interviews with mothers of the victims.

### **Prominent Sunni Cleric Escapes Assassination**

A senior Iranian Sunni Muslim cleric escaped an assassination attempt by the Jundollah terrorist group in the border town of Sarbaz in southeastern Sistan and Balouchestan province. Jundollah terrorists entered the house of Molavi Mostafa Jangi Zehi, the Friday Prayers Leader of Hajiabad, near the town of Sarbaz, and locked up his wife and children but the Sunni cleric was not at home at the time. The terrorists, who had previously threatened to kill the cleric, warned Molavi's family members that they would return to kill him in future.

### **Police Seize over One Ton of Opium**

Police squads could discover and seize a large cargo of illicit drugs during a surprise operation in the country's northeastern province of Khorasan Razavi, a provincial police chief announced. "The police department initiated all the necessary measures after it received tips about the transit of a cargo of narcotics from the country's southeastern

provinces to northern and central provinces," Sabzevar's Police Chief Qanbar Ali Azadvari said. The commander added that two notorious drug-traffickers were arrested and 1.024kg of opium was also discovered and seized in the surprise operations of the police.

### **Iran to Join Iraq in Controlling Dust Haze**

The problems caused by the Arabian dust haze in Iran's western region endured so long that they have eventually encouraged Iranian officials to take joint efforts with the Iraqi authorities to control the haze. Iranian and Iraqi officials plan to initiate a joint program to control the critical situation caused by the Arabian dust haze. Efforts include combating desertification, providing a database of plant ground cover in the region, and covering the ground soil with mulch - a substance containing heavy hydrocarbons to build a protective covering on the ground and prevent it from blowing away.

### **Najjar: Journalists Tasked with Countering Media Imperialism**

Interior Minister Mostafa Mohammad Najjar yesterday called for the adoption of "precise methods in order to counter the prevailing media imperialism". Delivering a speech to mark Journalist Day, Najjar said: "In the era of information explosion and globalization, the role of the journalists is of critical importance." ISNA quoted Najjar as saying: "At a time when the issues of high sensitivity are being easily manipulated, it is up to journalists to inform the public." The minister said: "Journalists must on the one hand make the enemy naked and stand against them and on the other must inform the public of the developments in the country."

## Political Front

### **Clinton: U.S. Remains "Open to Engagement" With Iran**

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said the United States remains "open to engagement" with Iran amid tensions over its nuclear aims, according to an interview transcript released Sunday.

"We remain open to engagement. But they do know what they have to do. They have to reassure the international community by words and actions as to what their nuclear program is intended for," she said in an interview with The New York Times.

"And so whether it would take six months, a year, or five years, it's that deep concern about Iran acquiring nuclear weapons that is the preoccupation of our friends and partners," she said.

But Washington, she added, would pursue the sanctions path "regardless of any issue of timing, because we think it's got the best potential for changing Iranian behavior." Clinton's comments were released by the State Department Sunday, a day after brief quotes from her 20-minute Times interview appeared in the newspaper.

Earlier this week, President Barack Obama cautiously welcomed the effects of new sanctions on Iran but said he remained willing to talk with Tehran about its nuclear program, in a meeting with a small group of journalists at the White House.

Clinton did not specifically address such a deal, but said Tehran had been provided a "pathway" in order to "demonstrate that they are not attempting to obtain nuclear weapons." The top U.S. diplomat also said the sanctions packages "surprised Iran by the scope and reach of what the international community was prepared to do on the pressure front," and that the economic effects of the sanctions were "beginning to bite."

"We are hearing from many different sources around the world that this is having an impact on Iran's thinking, and they've undertaken dramatic diplomatic and commercial maneuvers to try to prevent the sanctions from being levied on them... and are falling short."

The U.S.-Iran nuclear showdown has proven to be one of the most intractable problems facing Obama in his 18 months in office, and top aides including Defense Secretary Robert Gates have consistently refused to rule out a possible U.S. military strike on Iran.

But Clinton sought to downplay suggestions that the Obama administration may be drawing a line under the latest efforts to get Tehran to curtail its nuclear ambitions.

"The president's been very clear that Iran should understand that he is leaving all options on the table and that they should take him at his word, but I don't think it benefits our efforts to go much further than that."

### **President Lauds Initiative of Holding Lebanon-Syria-Saudi Meeting**

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad here on Sunday evening said that the Zionists are trying to sow discord between the regional resistance movement, Lebanon and Syria.

In a meeting with visiting Lebanese Foreign Minister Ali al-Shami, he appreciated the initiative of Lebanese President Michel Suleiman to form the trilateral Lebanon-Syria-Saudi Arabia meeting.

Referring to the initiative as "positive and constructive", he said the meeting neutralized the Zionists' conspiracies.

President Ahmadinejad also appreciated Saudi King Abdullah and Syrian President Bashar al-Assad for attending the meeting, stressing that their presence was an indication to the regional unity and solidarity.

The meeting resulted in further strengthening of the resistance movement against the Zionists and their allies, he reiterated.

He further announced Iran's full support for the resistance movement of the Lebanese nation.

For his part, the Lebanese foreign minister appreciated the Islamic Republic's spiritual and political backing for his nation against the Zionist criminals.

### **Mottaki, IGAD Secretary-General Discuss Solutions to Somali Crisis**

Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki and Secretary-General of the African-based Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Mahboub Ma'alim discussed ways to resolve the ongoing crisis in Somalia.

During the meeting held here in Tehran on Sunday, the two sides explored ways to help Somalia resolve the existing crisis and restore peace, security and tranquility in the African state.

Mottaki lauded the efforts made by IGAD to solve the problem, and stated, "The Era of crisis, insecurity, war and instability of the Somali people as a historical and influential nation in eastern Africa should come to an end."

He noted that further institutionalization of IGAD's efforts and regional countries' commitment can open a way out of the present crisis.

The Iranian minister added that the Somali people should take control of their country's affairs and management.

Meantime, Mottaki renewed Iran's preparedness to help resolve the crisis and establish peace and tranquility in Somali.

During the meeting, Ma'alim hailed Iran's goodwill efforts to help resolve Somalia's problems, and said, "We attach much value to the goodwill efforts of the Islamic Republic of Iran in utilizing its valuable experiences and high capacities for helping the IGAD region."

The Iranian government has long sought to expand ties and cooperation with the Black continent.

### **MP: Iran-Vienna Group Talks Should Be in Fair Circumstances**

Any future talks with the Vienna Group should be held within the frameworks and in a fair, identical and smooth circumstance, a senior member of the Iranian Parliament said yesterday.

"Iran has always believed that resolving various regional and international problems, including the country's nuclear issue, would only be possible through conducting targeted negotiations," spokesman for the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Commission Kazem Jalali said.

The MP said that the U.S. and its allies did not agree with holding talks in smooth, normal and identical circumstances as they always try to change everything in their own interests before entering any negotiations.

“Based on the existing conditions, any talks should be held in a way that it would stop the talks-resolution-talks-resolution process,” Jalali said stressing that the Western states should realize that they could not hold talks with Iran “under any conditions.”

The MP noted that issuing further sanctions would only tarnish the process of talks, make Iran’s nuclear issue more complicated and add to West’s costs.

### **Iran, Guinea-Bissau Ink Several MoUs**

Iran and Guinea-Bissau on Monday signed 6 memoranda of understanding (MoUs) and a joint statement at the end of President Malam Bacai Sanha's visit to Tehran.

Guinea-Bissau's President Malam Bacai Sanha, heading a high-ranking delegation, arrived in Tehran on Saturday and met with senior Iranian officials and discussed ways to develop relations between the two countries.

The joint statement was signed by Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki and his Guinean counterpart here in Tehran.

The two foreign ministers also signed an agreement to lift political and service Visa restrictions.

Meantime, cooperation agreements on geology and mine as well as formation of an investment, economic and technical company were among other documents signed by Iran's Minister of Mines and Industries Ali Akbar Mehrabian and the Guinean foreign minister.

Also, Iran's Minister of Cooperatives Mohammad Abbasi and the Guinean foreign minister signed an MoU on cooperation in banking and insurance.

President Ahmadinejad's administration has striven hard to maximize relations with the African continent.

### **Iran, Syria Stress Support for Resistance**

Iran and Syria voiced their unrelenting support for the Palestinian and Lebanese resistance movements, saying it is the only way to confront the Zionist regime.

Ali Akbar Velayati, senior foreign policy advisor to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, met with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in Damascus on Sunday to discuss regional issues.

Velayati and Assad also urged Iraqi politicians to promptly form a new government and called for unity between the Lebanese army and Hezbollah against any Israeli aggression, a Press TV correspondent in Damascus reported.

Velayati arrived in Damascus on Saturday for a three-day visit.

Earlier in this week, Velayati was in the Lebanese capital of Beirut to meet President Michel Sleiman and Hezbollah's Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah.

The two Palestinian leaders gave him an overview on the developments in the Palestinian territories.

Velayati, for his part, expressed Iran's support for the Palestinian resistance and urged all Palestinian factions to reconcile and work towards the Palestinian cause.

### **Castro Warns Obama Against Attack on Iran**

Former Cuban leader Fidel Castro on Saturday urged U.S. President Barack Obama not to order an attack on Iran.

Castro made the remarks at a special session of the Cuban parliament discussing the "main threats to mankind."

"Leaders of the world's most powerful countries -- allies or adversaries, with the exception of Israel -- would agree with me and urge President Obama to avoid the aggression," said Castro.

If President Obama gives the order, "he would be ordering the immediate deaths of hundreds of millions of people, including an untold number of people in his homeland and the crews of all the U.S. fleet in the waters around Iran," Castro said.

"Simultaneously the war would break out in the near and the far East and throughout Eurasia," he said, warning that the present world order established on the planet would collapse.

The former leader, who turns 84 on Aug. 13, stood with his brother Raul, the current Cuban leader, in his traditional olive green uniform but without military insignias.

Castro received a standing ovation by more than 600 deputies when he was addressing the session. Foreign media were allowed to cover the meeting.

Castro said that only Obama can avert such a disaster. "Only one man will have to make this decision: the president of the United States."

"Despite everything, I realized there is hope, very small indeed. But if mankind loses this chance to avoid the disaster, the human race would have no possible salvation," Castro added.

This was the first time Castro attended a parliament meeting since he handed over power to his brother Raul Castro in 2006 for health reasons. He re-entered public life a month ago, meeting the Chinese foreign minister as well as artists and American peace activists.

### **S. Korean Gov't Mulls Indirect Trades With Iran**

South Korea's government is considering letting traders with Iran use indirect money wired through a third country to fend off the impact from international sanctions.

The Ministry of Knowledge Economy said the measure is to reduce the damage local firms would suffer as direct transactions with Iranian banks become difficult if Korea is to comply with the U.S.-led campaign.

"Use of the letters of credit with Iranians have become virtually impossible with U.S.-led sanctions," a government official here said.

"We're contemplating ways to transfer funds using electronic transfer via a third-country in the Arab region," he said.

Telegraphic transfer involves payments being transferred to a third financial institution outside of Iran who then wires the payment to Korean banks at an exchange rate fixed ahead of time.

Such a measure would protect financial transactions between Korean companies and Iranian business partners from a complete break-off. Iran is the fourth-largest exporter of crude and the largest trading partner of Korea in the Middle East.

Sectors excluded from U.S. sanctions such as crude oil imports would be permitted use the transfer method.

Seoul has been trying to balance the level of cooperation with the U.S. on Iran to minimize the business impact on the two-way trade between Korea and Iran which totaled \$4 billion in 2009.

High-ranking policymakers from the ministries of finance, economy, foreign affairs and other agencies held a task force meeting Friday to discuss ways to reduce any possible fallout from trade suspension with Iran.

The government is under U.S. pressure to close Iran's Bank Mellat branch in Seoul used by many Korean companies doing business transactions with Iran.

“We are at a loss, we need to discuss the matter with all the relevant ministries,” said Lee Hu-myung, a chief of the foreign currency policy division at the Finance Ministry.

Businesses have already been hurt.

A survey of 72 Korean exporters by the Korea Federation of Small and Medium Businesses Sunday said about 56 percent of them were hit by the sanctions dealt. A total of 31.5 percent said their exports came to a stop.

### **MP: No Negotiation Under Threat**

An aid to Iran's parliament (Majlis) speaker has reiterated Iran's refusal to negotiate with the West under dual approaches of imposing sanctions and then pushing for talks.

Hossein Sheikholeslam, advisor to the Majlis speaker on international affairs, rejected in an interview with Fars news agency the so-called 'carrot and stick' approach employed by the West to gain an upper hand in negotiations as unproductive and based on uneven terms, adding that such tactics are commonly employed by oppressive powers.

Sheikholeslam emphasized that in passing the anti-Iran resolution 1929, the UN Security Council acted contrary to the UN charter's principle of enhancing global security.

He explained that the resolution allows countries to inspect Iranian ships merely based on perceived suspicions and doubts and creating such an environment against Iran does not bring about a safer world.

Sheikholeslam described the sanctions approved by the European Union against Iran as "potentially dangerous" but added that Europe is yet to enforce such sanctions.

He also noted that the U.S.-sponsored anti-Iran sanctions came right after Iran, Turkey and Brazil issued a trilateral declaration in which Iran agreed to a nuclear fuel swap through Turkey, removing the major Western hurdle in advancing talks on Iran's nuclear program.

The Iranian official added that Western sanctions against Iranian banks have already been enforced but with little impact since those countries participating in the U.S.-backed sanctions never had any effective banking relations with the Islamic Republic.

### **Jannati Has Evidence of U.S. Funding Opposition**

Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati can hand in proof of his recent accusations of U.S. financial aid to Iranian opposition when they stand trial in court, his spokesman said yesterday.

Abbas-Ali Kadkhodae, spokesman for the top watchdog Guardian Council, recently

Said the United States has offered one-billion-dollar aid to the opposition to overthrow the Islamic Republic.

Kadkhodae said there is no doubt on the hostile stand of the U.S. and the West. He went on to say that in recent years the U.S. Congress has allocated considerable budgets to confront the Islamic Republic.

Jannati is the secretary of the Guardian Council who had recently accused the opposition of getting financial backing from the Western countries. He claimed that the opposition has received one billion dollars and in case of toppling the regime, the figure could reach 50 billions.

On the Guardian Council's vetting process, Kadkhodae said the council works according to the law and it will take into the consideration the performance of the candidates.

He reiterated the council pays no attention to the political background of the candidates.

### **Politico-Strategic Front**

### **Belarus Denies Delivering S-300 Missiles to Iran**

Iran did not procure S-300s missile systems from Belarus or anyone else, Channel 2 reported on Sunday night.

The report quoted Western intelligence sources, who it said had checked into Iran's claims to have obtained the sophisticated Russian-made missile defense systems.

Last week, a semi-official Iranian news agency claimed Teheran had obtained four S-300 surface-to-air missile systems despite Russia's refusal to deliver them under a valid contract.

The Fars news agency said Iran received two systems from Belarus and two others from another unspecified source. Fars didn't elaborate, and there was no official confirmation of the report.

Russia signed a contract in 2007 to sell the S-300s to the Islamic Republic, but so far has not delivered them. The sophisticated anti-aircraft missiles would significantly boost Iran's ability to defend against air strikes and Israel and the United States have strongly objected to the deal.

A spokesman for Belarus' state military trade committee denied that any missiles had been transferred.

“Talks with the Iranian side about the delivery of such systems have not taken place and, consequently, no deliveries to Iran have taken place, neither of these systems or elements of them,” Vladimir Lavrenyuk said on Wednesday. “The Belarusian side strictly observes all international agreements on export control.”

The S-300 anti-aircraft missile system is considered the most advanced in the world.

### **Minister Denies Kuwait's Claim on Espionage**

Iranian Intelligence Minister Heidar Moslehi has denied reports over the arrest of seven people in Kuwait on charges of espionage for the Islamic Republic.

"This is a sheer lie because they [Kuwaiti officials] have not managed to prove the case," ISNA quoted Moslehi as saying.

Elaborating on Jundallah's recent activities and the arrest of some members of the group in northwestern Iran, Moslehi said, "Rigi's group is not strong enough to penetrate deep into country."

Jundallah is a Pakistan-based terrorist group, which has carried out numerous bombings, assassination attempts, and terrorist attacks in Iran.

The group's ringleader Abdolmalek Rigi was arrested by Iranian intelligence forces in February 2010 and was executed in June over 79 counts of various crimes, including armed robbery, bombing operations and armed attacks on police and civilians.

Despite being disbanded after their leader's execution, Rigi's men targeted a religious ceremony in Amir al-Mumineen Mosque in Zahedan on July 15, killing at least 25 people and injuring 125 more.

### **VP: S. Korea Should Be Punished Properly**

South Korea should be punished properly if they join the countries who are imposing anti-Iran sanctions, First Vice President Mohammad Reza Rahimi was quoted as saying by Fars News agency.

Speaking in the meeting of education ministry officials, some countries joins the U.S. in imposing sanctions while their goods are sold in Iran's market and the cities are filled with their advertisements.

He added that South Korea sells in Iran's market while they are imposing sanctions. He reiterated Koreans should be punished properly by levying heavy tariffs and taxes in order that no body can afford their products. He said the nation should not buy goods from the hostile countries.

Rahimi claimed this can be one of the ways to overcome the sanctions.

He went on to say that Iran will turn sanctions into opportunities for constructing a developed country.

Rahimi said the current volume of transit goods stood at seven million tons, adding that the figure could reach 70 million tons in the near future by interconnecting all main roads throughout the county.

He put Iran-EU transactions at \$20 billion, citing wheat, soya bean, corn as the main exporting items from European countries. He said that EU itself will sustain the main burden of loss by issuing new sanctions against Iran. He explained that the European countries are expected to loose over 150,000-200,000 jobs by imposing these sanctions, while similar job opportunities will be created for the Iranian workforce.

Referring to construction of new dams, power plants and roads across the country, Rahimi said: "We are going to establish a new order in our economy."

### **Commander: Sanctions, Threats against Iran "Futile"**

A senior commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) downplayed the significance of the U.S. and Israeli war rhetoric against Tehran, and stressed that threats and sanctions against the country will prove "futile".

"Enemies should know that these threats will lead them to nowhere because the Iranian nation is now prepared more than ever to safeguard the values of the Revolution and defend its religious values," Commander of the Corps of Beit ul-Moqaddas Allahnour Nourollahi said.

The IRGC commander further reminded Iran's strong resistance during the 8-year Iraqi imposed war in the 1980s, and said the Iranian nation proved during the Iraq war that it is never intimidated by enemies' threats.

The remarks by Nourollahi came days after Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Mike Mullen said that the United States has a plan in place to attack Iran.

### **4 Light Submarines Launched in Persian Gulf**

Iran launched four home-built advanced submarines on Sunday to protect shipping vessels in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman.

The Ghadir submarines, made by the Defense Ministry's Marine Industries, joined the Iranian Army's naval fleet in an official ceremony held this afternoon.

The ceremony was attended by a large number of senior Iranian military commanders and officials, including Defense Minister Brigadier General Ahmad Vahidi and Commander of the Iranian Army's Navy Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari.

Military officials said that the light submarines enjoy exceptional capabilities and have been armed with highly advanced torpedoes.

Iran has been pushing an arms development program in recent years in a bid to reach self-sufficiency. It has produced its own jet fighters and armored vehicles as well as radar-avoiding missiles and other high-tech weapons.

Iran announced in June 2009 that a home-made submarine, named Ghadir 948, had joined the naval brigade of the country's first naval zone.

### **Iran Artilleries Get Anti-Aircraft Systems**

A senior Iranian commander says the country's armed forces are boosting their surface-to-air firepower with the introduction of new anti-aircraft missile systems.

Iran's "artillery units will soon receive new anti-aircraft missiles and radar systems" to enhance the country's defense capabilities, Fars news agency reported the commander of the anti-aircraft post of the Khatamolanbia Headquarters, Brigadier General Ahmad Miqani, as saying yesterday.

The military chief said that the Khatamolanbia anti-aircraft post is "rapidly upgrading its defense systems in every way."

He also noted that the country's artilleries have already deployed another anti-aircraft missile, named Mersad (Ambush), as operational.

Mersad medium-range missile system is the first domestically-built air defense system, which is said to be more powerful than the US-made Hawk missile.

It features cutting-edge technology that makes it able to destroy modern aircrafts at low and medium altitudes, Iran military officials say.

Mersad is also equipped with sophisticated radar signal processing technology, an advanced launcher, and contains exclusive electronic equipment for guidance and target acquisition.

It could be linked to other anti-aircraft batteries, providing the ability to combat electronic warfare.

### **Iran Enrichment More Efficient**

Iran has found a more efficient way to enrich uranium, said a recent online report by the Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS) based in Washington DC on Friday.

According to the report, Iran has improved its uranium enrichment capabilities and strives to attain a higher enrichment level. "ISIS has learned that Iran is now using the second cascade at the Pilot Fuel Enrichment Plant (PFEP) at Natanz to recycle the tails from the first cascade that produces 19.75 percent enriched uranium from 3.5 percent low enriched uranium (LEU)." The report explained that the move to recycle the tails in the second cascade, "is not to increase the output of 19.75 percent material but to maximize the use of the 3.5 percent low enriched uranium (LEU)."

The ISIS reported in July that Iran had announced it was planning on recycling the tails while producing 19.75% uranium. The efficient process is described by the ISIS: "The two percent enriched tails from the first cascade is fed into the feed point of the second cascade and emerges as about 10 percent enriched uranium. This material is then fed into an upper stage of the first cascade, while the 3.5 percent uranium is fed in at the main feed point of this cascade. With two feed points, the total amount of 19.75 percent product is not increased, but the enrichment effort embodied in the 2 percent material is more fully utilized. The assay of the tails in the second cascade is 0.7 percent enriched uranium, or natural uranium. This material can then be reused in cascades at the main Fuel Enrichment Plant (FEP) at Natanz that make 3.5 percent uranium."

According to the ISIS, the "second cascade" recycling process enables Tehran to minimize "wasting separative work units (swu) in the enrichment process and ultimately requires less 3.5 percent LEU to produce a given quantity of 19.75 percent material." The ISIS reported that Iran is not limited in its amount of 3.5 percent material to produce "research reactor fuel and will not be anytime soon." As a result, there is no need for Iran "to worry about using its tails efficiently," explained the organization.

However, the ISIS stated that Tehran is "expected to use the same type of procedure to reduce the amount of separative work left in the tails" if it will decide to enrich uranium to the level of weapon-grade. The process "stepwise increases the enrichment level of the uranium, reducing the amount of feed material it needs at each step." The think-tank explained that "Iran likely received the same plans that the Khan network gave Libya detailing how to organize and run cascades to produce weapon-grade uranium from natural uranium in four steps, including recycling the tails produced in the top three steps (the first step goes from natural uranium to 3.5 percent LEU and produces about 0.4 percent tails)."

The report adds that Tehran's current moves of uranium enrichment "while superficially justified on civil grounds, mainly make sense in the context of learning how to make significant quantities of highly enriched uranium efficiently."

## **Economic Front**

### **Iran's Persian Gulf Oil Reserves Increased**

The Islamic Republic of Iran's oil reserves in Persian Gulf region have increased to 113 billion barrels.

After the exploration of new oilfields through recent years, the capacity of Iran's oil reserves had increased to 94 billion barrels but after the increased recycling capacity projects in Soroush and Norouz oilfields, the reserve capacity rised 15 and 4 billion barrels respectively in each mentioned oilfields.

According to the latest researches made at these two fields the oil reserves have increased to 585 and 560 billion barrels. The officials have mentioned that by applying new technologies such as gas injection and choosing the best technical and economic exploitation methods, the expected reserve capacity of the fields has been boosted.

### **Tehran Keen on Joint Venture With Khartoum**

Tehran Governor-General Morteza Tamaddon announced here yesterday that his province is interested in starting joint investment projects in Sudan, specially in the capital city of Khartoum.

"Iran and the province of Tehran are implementing industrial projects in many world countries through joint venture and we are eager to practice the same pattern and implement joint projects in Khartoum," Tamaddon said.

He made the remarks in a meeting with Governor of the Sudanese state of Khartoum Abdol Rahman al-Khezr here yesterday.

At the meeting, the two sides discussed ways to expand economic, industrial and cultural cooperation as well as trade and commercial exchanges between Tehran and Khartoum.

Tamaddon underlined further consolidation of bilateral relations, and termed development of industrial, agricultural and trade ties with African states "one of Iran's priorities".

He also reiterated that the Tehran province is ready to cooperate with Sudan in implementing road and dam construction, cement production and car manufacturing projects.

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### **Foreign Investment in Iran Up 87%**

Iranian expatriates invested about 2.8 billion dollars in Iran in 2009 which registered 87 percent increased compared with a year before, economy and finance minister said yesterday.

Shamseddin Hosseini made the above remark at a press conference and said Iran ranked sixth in terms of investment growth in the world.

He added the government facilitates expats' investment in the country.

Asked about the effect of sanctions on Iran's investment market, he said the stocks indices witnessed appropriate growth despite sanctions.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran has never welcomed sanctions but will never lose opportunities created by the imposed sanctions."

"Now that we are capable of obtaining superior technologies, this would by no means be acceptable to deprive ourselves of achieving them for the sake of sanctions," Hosseini stressed.

### **CBI: Iran Confronts Sanctions by Cutting Imports**

The head of Iran's Central Bank announced 7 percent growth in industrial sectors and calls for cutting imports to defeat the sanctions.

Iran has to cut imports to overcome the latest round of economic sanctions imposed by world powers over Iran nuclear program, Mahmoud Bahmani said on Sunday.

"Reducing the consumption of imported goods means confronting the sanctions. There is no other way," Bahmani told a news conference.

"Sanctions are happening and we should not be scared or frightened. We should convert the sanctions into opportunities."

Bahmani insisted the way to thwart the effect of the sanctions was to cut down on imports.

"We need to decrease imports. We should not allow all goods to enter the country," he said, adding Iran must produce most of the goods itself and also raise taxes on inbound luxury items.

He also advocated reducing domestic consumption of gasoline.

Iran, OPEC's second largest exporter of oil, depends significantly on imported gasoline to meet its domestic requirements due to a lack of refining capacity.

### **Petchem Exports Rise**

Arrival of ships to Mahshahr Port increased by 5 percent while petrochemical products exports rose by 3 percent in the first four months of the current Iranian year (started March 21) compared with the same period last year.

Operations Manager of Terminals and Tanks Petrochemical Company in Mahshahr, Ramin Mahmoudi told Shana that during the first four months of the last Iranian year (ended March 20), Iran's exports and imports of petrochemical products from Mahshahr Port stood at 1.8 million tons and 288,463 tons, respectively.

He added that the tonnage of the petrochemical exports reached 1.924 million tons which were carried by 160 ships, while 35 ships unloaded petrochemical cargoes with 317,000 tons in the port during the same time.

Noting that propane was the main exported product in the region, Mahmoudi said over 336,000 tons of propane produced in Bandar Imam Petrochemical Complex has been exported during the mentioned period.

He went on to say that ammoniac with over 271,000 tons ranked the second exported products after propane.

### **\$85b Investment in Oil Sector Planned**

A senior Iranian Oil Ministry official has announced Iran plans to attract 85 billion dollars investments to fund 40 percent of the country's Fifth Development Plan.

"This year permits were issued for 5 billion dollars in participation bonds and 9 billion dollars in foreign currency participation bonds," Shana quoted Acting Deputy Oil Minister Masoud Hashemian as saying.

"The country's revenues indicate that the Oil Ministry can rely on domestic sources to implement its investment plans," Hashemian added.

Since international investors are enthusiastic to participate in Iran's energy projects, the country may also use foreign resources, he added.

"Western countries believe that by imposing sanctions they can halt the activities of the Iranian oil industry, but because of the financial crisis and the failure of Western countries to regulate the trade network, international investors have not awaited the recovery of the stock market," he noted.

On July 26, the European Union imposed new sanctions on Iran, which mainly target investment in and technical assistance to Iran's refining, liquefaction, and liquefied natural gas sectors.

The EU sanctions followed UN Security Council and U.S. sanctions on Iran over its civilian nuclear program, which the West alleges is a cover for a nuclear weapons program.

However, Iranian officials reject the allegations and say that as a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the country has the right to use nuclear technology meant for peaceful purposes.

### **Iran's Special Zone to Attract \$4.1b**

The Islamic Republic of Iran's Persian Gulf Mining and Metal Industries Special Zone (PGSEZ) will attract 4.1 billion dollars of investments in the mineral sector.

According to the Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), the investment will be used in the industries such as steel, aluminum, zinc and construction of a power plant.

The private sector is active in a wide area of the respective projects and by the completion of these projects about 10 million tons will be added to Iran's steel production capacity.

By starting the projects in the first phase, about 10,800 jobs will be created, the head of PGSEZ Masoud Hendian mentioned.

"The capacity of delivery, loading and offloading of mineral and oil products at the special zone docks will double to 6 million tons by next year," he added.

"During the last Iranian year (ended March 20) the capacity of exports and profit made by the zone has risen by 36 and 24 percent, respectively and more than 5.53 million tons of mineral and oil products were exported from the zone," he said.

### **Crescent Petroleum Gas Deal Still On**

Crescent Petroleum Co., which is the biggest shareholder in Dana Gas PJSC, said a contract with Iran to supply natural-gas to the United Arab Emirates has not been cancelled.

“The 25-year contract between National Iranian Oil Co. and Crescent is valid, internationally binding and currently in international arbitration, as is known, and neither side has cancelled it,” a Crescent spokesman said by e-mail to Bloomberg yesterday.

### **Indonesia a Good Market for Iranian Goods**

Indonesia is a good market for Iranian goods to be presented and Iranian businessmen and traders should take advantage of this opportunity.

Deputy Commerce Minister and Head of the Trade Promotion Organization, Babak Afghahi, said that regarding to the Muslim population of Indonesia and good sale of halal products, Iranian traders should take advantage of the situation and expand their market to Indonesian market.

Speaking in the First Conference on Introducing Indonesian Market here, he said that expanding trade with the Islamic countries like Indonesia has a significant place in Iran’s foreign trade.

Referring to the 240 millions population of Indonesia and being fifteenth world economy, Afghahi said that Indonesia as a one-trillion-dollar market is a target for world countries.

He said Iran’s exports to Indonesia was \$368m last year and it has potentials to be increased

### **Iran's Free Zone Welcomes Chinese Investors**

Managing Director of Aras Commercial and Industrial Free Zone Organization said Aras Free Zone welcome Chinese investors and companies to invest in this region.

Abbas Ranjbar made the above remark in a ceremony to unveil three new heavy automobiles in Aras Industrial Township.

He said Aras Free Zone provides appropriate facilitations for foreign investors and is ready to build special industrial township for Chinese investors.

He added the government approved a comprehensive law to boost relation with global economy.

He said having joint borders with Azerbaijan, Armenia and Nakhichevan, connecting to Iran's nationwide and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) railways are among the main features of Aras Free Zone.

### **Persian LNG Project Suspended**

Iran is suspending some liquefied natural gas projects, including Persian LNG, and shifting its focus to pipeline exports instead, the head of the country's state oil company said Friday.

Iran's ambitious LNG schemes have been hit by the pullout of Western oil companies, which play a dominant part in the supply of such technologies.

In an interview with Iran's oil ministry website Shana, Ahmed Ghalebani, managing director of the National Iranian Oil Co., said some LNG projects--including those in South Pars gas field phases 13 and 14--have been suspended.

Ghalebani said that the gas produced in these fields would be injected into Iran's national network.

He said the company was reconsidering LNG projects, which he said are costly and technology complex, and focusing on cheaper pipelines with neighboring countries.

Ghalebani said that does not mean putting an end to the development of LNG projects, though, because they may be more economical in the long-term.

### **Social Front**

#### **Iranian Doc on Srebrenica Massacre Ready for Screening**

Iranian director Reza Borji has completed making a documentary on the Srebrenica massacre, entitled "Mothers of Srebrenica".

According to Mehr News Agency, the documentary has been produced by Iran's Experimental and Documentary Film Center (EDFC).

Borji had five trips to Bosnia during the past three years and conducted several interviews with mothers of the victims.

The Srebrenica Massacre, also known as the Srebrenica Genocide, refers to the July 1995 killing of more than 8,000 Bosnian men and boys, as well as the ethnic cleansing of another 25,000–30,000 refugees, in and around the town of Srebrenica in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the Bosnian War.

The Association of Citizens Mothers of Srebrenica annually holds a ceremony in commemoration of the martyrs of the massacre.

“In the documentary, I highlight the role of the United Nations in this calamity since it had declared the place a “safe area” under UN protection before the occurrence of the massacre,” Borji previously mentioned in a press release.

Borji previously made “Seashores of Tears and Olives”, a documentary centered upon the 33-day resistance by Lebanon against the Israeli attacks.

Reza Borji has taken many photos from the contemporary wars in Iraq, Bosnia, Afghanistan, Karabakh, and Ghana. He also has a collection of many outstanding photos from the Iraqi imposed war against Iran during the years 1980-1988.

### **Prominent Sunni Cleric Escapes Assassination**

A senior Iranian Sunni Muslim cleric escaped an assassination attempt by the Jundollah terrorist group in the border town of Sarbaz in southeastern Sistan and Balouchestan province.

Jundollah terrorists entered the house of Molavi Mostafa Jangi Zehi, the Friday Prayers Leader of Hajiabad, near the town of Sarbaz, and locked up his wife and children but the Sunni cleric was not at home at the time.

The terrorists, who had previously threatened to kill the cleric, warned Molavi's family members that they would return to kill him in future.

The cleric had supported Tehran's move for executing Jundollah's notorious ringleader, Abdolmalek Rigi.

Iran announced on June 20, 2010 that it has executed the court verdict for the capital punishment of Abdolmalek Rigi.

### **Police Seize over One Ton of Opium**

Police squads could discover and seize a large cargo of illicit drugs during a surprise operation in the country's northeastern province of Khorasan Razavi, a provincial police chief announced.

"The police department initiated all the necessary measures after it received tips about the transit of a cargo of narcotics from the country's southeastern provinces to northern and central provinces," Sabzevar's Police Chief Qanbar Ali Azadvari said.

The commander added that two notorious drug-traffickers were arrested and 1.024kg of opium was also discovered and seized in the surprise operations of the police.

Azadvari said that drug-owners in Afghanistan had stuck fruit and food trademarks and labels on drug packages and boxes in a bid to smuggle the cargo and later distribute the drugs inside Iran.

### **Iran to Join Iraq in Controlling Dust Haze**

The problems caused by the Arabian dust haze in Iran's western region endured so long that they have eventually encouraged Iranian officials to take joint efforts with the Iraqi authorities to control the haze.

Iranian and Iraqi officials plan to initiate a joint program to control the critical situation caused by the Arabian dust haze.

Efforts include combating desertification, providing a database of plant ground cover in the region, and covering the ground soil with mulch - a substance containing heavy hydrocarbons to build a protective covering on the ground and prevent it from blowing away.

Western Iran is often struck by dust storms in the summer, which blow from the deserts of Iraq.

During sandstorms, the dust in the atmosphere and consequent haze become 17 times more than the standard level, interrupting activity in the stricken area.

### **Najjar: Journalists Tasked with Countering Media Imperialism**

Interior Minister Mostafa Mohammad Najjar yesterday called for the adoption of "precise methods in order to counter the prevailing media imperialism".

Delivering a speech to mark Journalist Day, Najjar said: "In the era of information explosion and globalization, the role of the journalists is of critical importance."

ISNA quoted Najjar as saying: "At a time when the issues of high sensitivity are being easily manipulated, it is up to journalists to inform the public." The minister said: "Journalists must on the one hand make the enemy naked and stand against them and on the other must inform the public of the developments in the country."

He said Western media often give a negative image of Iran.