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Iran climbs 32 places in World Bank’s LPI global ranking

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran’s Logistics Performance Index (LPI) has jumped 32 places in 2018 to 64th compared to 96th in 2016, according to the World Bank’s “International LPI Global Ranking 2018” report. The country’s LPI score stood at 2.8 in 2018, an increase of 0.2 compared to 2.6 in 2016, the report said. Iran’s LPI had also jumped 18 places in

2016 to 96th compared to 114th in 2014. The LPI is an interactive benchmarking tool created to help countries identify the challenges and opportunities they face in their performance on trade logistics and what they can do to improve their performance. The World Bank conducts the LPI survey every two years. The LPI 2018 allows for comparisons across 160 countries.

Imran Khan says uses any opportunity to cement ties with Iran

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif held talks on Friday with new Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan in Islamabad, conveying the greetings and best wishes of the Iranian people and leadership to him.

According to the APP, Zarif also delivered a message from Iranian President

Hassan Rouhani to Khan, inviting him to the upcoming Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) summit which will be held in Tehran in October 2018.

Prime Minister Khan called Iran cradle of civilization and symbol of progress in the East and said, “We welcome any opportunities for strengthening inclusive relations with Tehran.” **→2**

Syrian troops will ‘go all the way’ in militant-held Idlib: FM

Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Muallem says the country’s government troops will “go all the way” in the militant-held north-western province of Idlib, stressing that Damascus’s main targets are members of the Jabhat Fateh al-Sham Takfiri terrorist group, formerly known as al-Nusra Front. The top Syrian diplomat made the remarks in a joint press conference with

his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov in Moscow on Thursday, following a meeting within the framework of Syrian-Russian intergovernmental commissions.

He added that the Arab country was in the “last step” to resolve the years-long crisis and liberate all its territories from the clutches of terrorists “and that’s why the United States.” **→13**

Chemical operations staging: U.S. repeat scenario at Idlib war

By Ramin Hossein Abadian

TEHRAN — U.S. President Donald Trump’s National Security Adviser John Bolton fired suspicious warnings at Damascus Wednesday, saying that the U.S. would respond “very strongly” if the Syrian government uses chemical weapons in an offensive to retake the Idlib province. There were also reports that terrorist factions in Idlib were literally setting the stage for a false flag chemical “incident.”

It’s not the first time that U.S. without any evidence has accused the Damascus government of planning the use of chemical weapons.

The first time occurred on March 19, 2013, when the Damascus government was charged with using chemical weapons in the village of Khan al-Asal in northern Syria by U.S.

and its Western allies. Although Americans and the West have never been able to prove their claims that Damascus has used weapons of mass destruction, the United Nations refused to hold them accountable.

According to the reports of relevant international bodies, the Syrian government had no chemical weapons, having destroyed them under United States auspices. On June 23, 2014 all of Syria’s chemical weapons had been removed. However, the official announcement by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons on the extensive cooperation of the Damascus government with the organization has not prevented the continued western allegations.

Washington is hopeful that it will be able to obtain permission from the United Nations

Security Council in the future to permit a possible military action against Assad.

The U.S. well aware that any possible military action against the legitimate government of Syria must be made by consensus of the international community. That is precisely why, despite the extensive and unprecedented cooperation of the Damascus government with the Chemical Weapons Convention over the past years, it is again accusing Bashar al-Assad of using chemical weapons without providing any concrete evidence.

The use of the Syrian opposition and their regional and international supporters to stage pre-planned scenario in the use of chemical weapons reflects the sequential defeats of armed opponents of the Assad government. **→7**

Iran remains compliant with 2015 nuclear deal, IAEA reports

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has once again reaffirmed Iran’s full compliance with its commitments under the 2015 nuclear deal in the second such report after the U.S. stopped fulfilling its side of the bargain and left the multilateral agreement in violation of international law.

On Thursday, Reuters cited a confidential report by the UN atomic watchdog to its member states as saying that Iran has stayed within the limits set in the nuclear deal on its enriched uranium level, its stock of enriched uranium and other items.

“Timely and proactive cooperation by Iran in providing such access facilitates implementation

of the Additional Protocol and enhances confidence,” it said. Reuters also cited an unnamed senior diplomat as saying that, “The production rate (of enriched uranium by Iran) is constant. There is no change whatsoever.”

It added that the new quarterly report was similar in language to the one released in May, the same month that U.S. President Donald Trump announced Washington’s withdrawal from the nuclear accord in defiance of its own allies in the deal and the entire international community.

According to the Thursday report, Iran has continued to provide the IAEA with the necessary

access for inspections aimed at verifying Tehran’s commitment to the nuclear deal -- officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Following Washington’s withdrawal, Iran said it would not immediately leave the landmark deal, giving time to the other signatories -- France, the UK, Germany, Russia and China -- to find ways to compensate for the absence of Washington.

Tehran says the Europeans should provide “practical guarantees” that its economic dividends of the deal would stay intact amid U.S. attempts to pile more economic pressure on the Islamic Republic. (Source: Press TV)



ARTICLE

Hanif Ghaffari
Political analyst

Missing dreams of failed Senator

Death of Arizona’s radical senator has been covered by almost all the U.S. media as an important subject. During his political life, McCain had an extended hostility towards the Iranian regime and nation. The report of John McCain’s death, the extremist, hostile and anti-Iran senator of Arizona, was widely reflected in the western news sources.

Most American sources introduced McCain as an activist in the U.S. political arena, and regretted his death. However, they didn’t point out McCain’s dreams which were “gone with the wind dreams”! They mentioned McCain as a person who believed in American values, and a Patriotic Senator, and tried to make a hero of him. Indeed, in the American political atmosphere, which now has people like Mike Pompeo, John Bolton and Trump standing on top of its political equations, McCain could well be considered a hero!

John McCain came forth in the 2008 presidential elections with an anti-Iranian approach. Even in hostile statements, he spoke about bombing Iran (the nuclear sites of our country) in the case, McCain failed in the electoral competitions against Barack Obama and did not have the opportunity to make his conspiracies against our country come true. However, as the Senator of Arizona, he did took lots of measures against our country.

The overthrow of the Islamic Republic of Iran and regime change was McCain’s particular goal and dream; a wish that he had to finally take it to the grave! McCain repeatedly advocated the overthrow of the Islamic Republic of Iran by supporting the terrorist group of “Munafiqeen” and, of course, in return for receiving money from members of the group, he promised them to do his best to make this goal come to reality.

Of course, it should be admitted that McCain, like other Republican and Democratic politicians, did his best in this regard, but was ultimately defeated against Iran’s regime and nation. Without a doubt, McCain is one of the symbols of the United States’ defeat against the Islamic Republic of Iran. During the past four decades, he took any possible action in opposition to Islamic Iran, and eventually died without reaching his hideous goals. **→7**



ARTICLE

Pang Sen
Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Iran

The “Belt and Road Initiative” and Win-Win cooperation

China and Iran enjoys a time-honored friendship. Two thousand years ago, these two ancient civilizations met each other on the Silk Road, leading to a period of glorious economic and cultural prosperity. In recent years, China and Iran have been enriching their long lasting friendship by complementing each other in various aspects such as trade, energy and production capacity cooperation. The successful cooperation between China and Iran arises from our friendly and mutually complementary relations.

Five years ago, Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the “Belt and Road Initiative”. This initiative originated from China, but the opportunities and achievements belong to the whole world. In the past five years, the “Belt and Road” has transformed from an idea to an action, and has become an important platform for building a community with Shared future for mankind. China has signed “Belt and Road” cooperation documents with more than 100 countries and international organizations including Iran.

The “Belt and Road Initiative” focuses on opening up. Over the past 40 years, China has been adhering to the basic national policy of reform and opening-up. China benefits from opening up. At the same time, it has also made significant contribution to the world by providing opportunities to the common development of other countries. Nowadays, the global economy is highly integrated. China believes the multilateral trading system helps to provide opportunities to all countries to participate in economic globalization. On 28th June, the State Council Information Office of China published a white paper entitled “China and the World Trade Organization”, which gives a full account of China’s fulfillment of its commitments to the WTO, illustrates China’s principles, position, policies and proposals regarding the multilateral trading system. It also outlines China’s vision and further action in advancing higher-level of opening-up. The main points are as following: **→7**



Marking 40th year since Imam Musa Sadr disappeared

Friday marked the 40th anniversary of the disappearance of Imam Musa Sadr - an Iranian-Lebanese Shia scholar - while on a tour of Libya in the summer of 1978. When civil war erupted in Lebanon in 1975, Sadr led anti-war protests. As the war escalated, the cleric also intensified his efforts to bring a voice of peace and moderation. His activism took him to Libya where he was due to meet Muammar Gaddafi. He was never seen again. Lebanese President Michael Aoun called Sadr a symbol of unity and coexistence among different sects. In a similar message, Saad Hariri said Sadr sacrificed his life for keeping Lebanon together and creating coexistence among the Lebanese people. Hariri also said, “Disappearance of Imam Musa Sadr is a matter for all the Lebanese.”

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Leader pardons, commutes sentences of 615 inmates

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has pardoned or reduced the prison terms of 615 inmates convicted by various courts.

The Leader granted the clemency on the occasion of Eid al-Adha (the Feast of Sacrifice) and Eid al-Ghadeer upon a request by Judiciary Chief Ayatollah Sadeq Amoli Larijani, Press TV reported on Thursday.

The 10th day of the lunar Islamic month of Dhu al-Hijjah marks the Eid al-Adha, which is celebrated at the end of the annual Hajj pilgrimage.

Article 110 of the constitution grants the Leader the right to pardon or commute the sentences of convicts upon a recommendation from the Judiciary chief.



Iran won't negotiate with Trump's America: cleric

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Tehran Friday prayer leader Ayatollah Ahmad Khatami has ruled out the possibility of holding any talks with the U.S. under President Donald Trump, who unilaterally walked away from the 2015 nuclear agreement, Mehr reported.

“As the Leader of the Islamic Republic has repeatedly said, we will not negotiate with the U.S. at any levels because the current U.S. administration has not remained loyal to any of its commitments,” Khatami said, addressing worshippers in Tehran on Friday.

He also said the Islamic Republic has always pursued a friendly policy towards neighbor, while expecting the neighbors to pursue a similar approach.



‘IRGC will respond to violation of international law in Hormuz Strait’

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces said on Wednesday that the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) is fully prepared to defend the Strait of Hormuz and will respond in kind to any violation of international law governing the strategic waterway.

Speaking at a gathering of IRGC Navy commanders in Mashhad, Major General Mohammad Baqeri said the IRGC serves as a great deterrence against any wrongdoing in the Persian Gulf, Press TV reported.

“The IRGC Navy’s preparedness and capabilities unsettle the aggressors before entering the Strait of Hormuz, and [this is why] they have adhered to international laws over the past year,” Baqeri said.



Zarif denounces Netanyahu as ‘warmonger’

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on Wednesday fired back at Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for threatening Iran with “atomic annihilation”, calling him a “warmonger”.

“Iran, a country without nuclear weapons, is threatened with atomic annihilation by a warmonger standing next to an actual nuclear weapons factory. Beyond shameless in the gall,” Zarif tweeted.

Earlier, Netanyahu warned that Israel has the means to destroy opponents. “Those who threaten to wipe Israel out, put themselves in a similar danger, and in any event will not achieve their goal.”



IRGC forces disband terror cell in Saravan

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — The Quds unit of the IRGC Ground Force on Wednesday announced that its forces had disbanded a terrorist cell in the border region of Saravan, Sistan-Baluchestan Province, earlier in the day.

“In the early hours of today, a terrorist cell affiliated with hegemonic powers was faced with the Quds Base warriors’ vigilance and was disbanded during a clash,” it said in a statement, Mehr reported.

It added members of the terrorist cell were seeking to enter Iran and commit acts of terror, however seven of them were wounded or killed during the clash.



EU working with partners to secure Iran’s interests: Mogherini

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said on Friday that the EU member states and their partners in the world will continue cooperation to make sure that Iranians and Iranian citizens can benefit from the nuclear agreement.

“The IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency] released its 12th report certifying that Iran is still complying with all its nuclear related commitments. This is good news,” Mogherini said, the EU website reported.

The nuclear pact, also called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), was signed in July 2015 between Iran and six world powers, but was unilaterally abandoned by the U.S. in May.

Imran Khan says uses any opportunity to cement ties with Iran

Zarif meets Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan in Islamabad



1 → Recalling his recent phone conversation with Rouhani, Khan said religious and cultural affinities have made Pakistan and Iran inseparable from each other.

The sides also discussed expansion of relations in various areas and highlighted the necessity of close cooperation among Islamic countries. Fight against terrorism and extremism was also discussed.

Iran’s chief diplomat also met with Pakistan’s Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Qamar Javed Bajwa.

Zarif also held separate talks with Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and called for expansion of relations in various spheres.

The Pakistani foreign minister said his country attaches great importance to removal of impediments to expansion of ties.

After the meeting, Pakistan’s Foreign Ministry issued a statement saying, “Welcoming his Iranian counterpart, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi noted the potential for strengthening the already strong bilateral relationship. Pakistan and Iran have stood by each other in difficult moments.”

“It was agreed to host the next rounds of Bilateral Political Consultations and the Joint Economic Commission at early dates. Useful exchange of views on strengthening cooperation in economic, trade and connectivity sectors, cultural and people to people links, took place. While expressing satisfaction over cooperation with regard to the Pakistan-Iran border, it was agreed to

continue close consultations through various forums in this regard,” the statement added.

Elsewhere in the statement, it said Zarif “extended best wishes of the Iranian leadership and the people of Iran on the election

victory led by Prime Minister Imran Khan.” Zarif started his tour of Pakistan on Thursday.

Upon his arrival in Islamabad On Thursday, the Iranian foreign minister met with

National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser.

Zarif also visited in Ankara, Turkey, on Wednesday where held talks with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his counterpart Mevlut Cavuoglu.

Iran will remain stable, powerful, and responsible regional actor: FM

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Iran’s chief diplomat Mohammad Javad Zarif on Friday took to his official Twitter account to respond to earlier remarks by President Donald Trump who claimed that the government in Iran may collapse because of his administration’s policies.

Iran will continue to play a “stable and powerful” role in the region despite U.S. demonization of Iran, Zarif stated.

“Bipolar demonization of Iran as either ‘taking over MidEast’ or ‘fighting for survival’ indicates U.S. cognitive disorder & demagoguery unleashed by collapse of America’s moral compass,” Zarif wrote.

He added, “Iran has been and always will be a stable, powerful & responsible regional actor.”

In an Oval Office interview with Bloomberg News on Thursday, Trump claimed that his administration’s policies,

including leaving the international nuclear agreement with Tehran, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) negotiated by his predecessor, may lead to the collapse of the Iranian government.

“When I came into here, it was a question of when would they take over the Middle East,” Trump said, adding, “Now it’s a question of will they survive. It’s a big difference in one and a half years.”

Zarif to nuclear deal parties: Avoid making ‘extraneous demands’

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — In follow-up to the newest IAEA report about Iran’s adherence to the 2015 nuclear agreement, Iran’s chief diplomat Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Thursday that the nuclear deal signatories must abide by their commitment instead of making “extraneous demands”.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said on Thursday that Tehran should be ready to negotiate on its future nuclear plans, its ballistic missile arsenal and its role

in Syria and Yemen.

The remarks by Le Drian is a repetition of demands made by President Donald Trump who withdrew the U.S. from the 2015 nuclear agreement, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

“If preserving JCPOA is the goal, then there is no escape from mustering the courage

to comply with commitment to normalize Iran’s economic relations instead of making extraneous demands,” Zarif tweeted.

Under the nuclear agreement, Iran is obliged to put caps on its nuclear work in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions.

Iran has threatened that if its economic

interests are not fulfilled it will see no reason to stay in the deal.

Zarif renewed Iran’s warning by saying sticking to the nuclear accord is not the only way forward for Iran.

“Being the party to still honor the deal in deeds & not just words is not Iran’s only option,” Zarif added.

A confidential report by the UN atomic watchdog said on Thursday that Iran has remained within the main restrictions on its nuclear activities.

Zarif says sticking to the nuclear accord is not the only way forward for Iran.

New air defense missile system to be unveiled

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Iran will introduce a domestically-manufactured long-range air defense missile system by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 2019), Commander of the Khatam al-Anbia Air Defense Base announced on Friday.

“Today, Iran’s air defense industry is completely self-sufficient,” General Ali Reza Sabahi-Fard said, speaking before Friday prayer sermons in Tehran, ion.ir reported.

“From once doing reverse engineering and manufacturing components, we have reached the state of designing and producing home-grown air defense systems,” he added.



Pointing to constantly upgrading defensive shield, he explained: “If we were not self-sufficient in the arena of defense equipment manufacturing, make sure that the enemy would invade us, but today, with the advancement of these systems and effective deterrence..., we have been able to counter the enemy’s threats.”

The general stressed that the Islamic Republic will never launch a war, saying if in the military aspect, enemies have illusions to attack Iran, they will receive “hard slaps in the face”.

“And we will not be short of strengthening our defensive power,” he concluded.

Iran to abandon JCPOA if its interests not safeguarded: Leader

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said on Wednesday that Iran will abandon the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, if it does not safeguard the country’s interests.

“The JCPOA is a means and not the goal and naturally we will abandon it if we come to the conclusion that it is not possible to safeguard our national interests by this means,” he said during a meeting with President Hassan Rouhani and his cabinet members.

The Leader also criticized Europe’s inappropriate behavior toward some issues such as the JCPOA and sanctions, saying

that the officials should have “skeptical view” on the Europeans’ promises.

“There is nothing wrong with ties and continuation of talks with Europe, however, while carrying on with this measure, do not pin hopes on them [the Europeans] on issues such as the JCPOA and economy,” he noted.

Ayatollah Khamenei added, “The Europeans should understand from the Iranian officials’ words and actions that their actions will be followed by the Islamic Republic of Iran’s proportionate response and strategies.”

The Leader also said Iran would not negotiate with the current “brazen and irreverent” U.S. officials at any level.

“The result of negotiations with previous U.S. officials who at least saved faces was this. Now what negotiation can we have with the current brazen and irreverent U.S. officials who are openly threatening the Iranians? Therefore, no negotiation at any level will be held with the Americans,” the Leader pointed out, Press TV reported.

The Leader said the Americans seek to boast that they managed to bring Iran to the negotiation table but Tehran will hold no talks with them.

U.S. quitted the JCPOA on May 8 and ordered restoration of sanctions against Iran. The first batch of sanctions took effect on August 6.

The European Union trio – Germany,

France and Britain which are signatory to the nuclear deal - are expected to present their package of proposals to Iran before the second round of U.S. sanctions takes effect in early November.

Commenting on the Tuesday session of parliament in which Rouhani answered the lawmakers’ questions, the Leader said that the move will result in more cooperation and proved the system’s “power and stability”.

“Representatives of the Majlis asked questions from a president who has been elected with more than 23 million votes, and the president responds to the questions calmly and serenely and this means religious democracy,” Ayatollah Khamenei remarked.

Tehran reiterates its missile program is non-negotiable

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — The Foreign Ministry issued a statement on Friday reiterating Tehran’s long held policy that Iran’s missile program is “domestic”, “legitimate”, “defensive” and “non-negotiable”.

The statement came as response to French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian’s remarks that Iran “cannot avoid” talks on its ballistic missile program and regional policies.

The Foreign Ministry said the missile program is “vital” for Iran’s security and is totally non-negotiable.

“The world and also the French statesmen are well aware that Iran’s regional policies are in line with international peace and security and fight against terrorism and extremism,” Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi stated.

Qassemi said the West’s behavior has eroded trust for talks on non-nuclear issues.

He said Le Drian’s remarks were “unwarranted concerns” founded on a misunderstanding or lack of

knowledge about Iran.

Le Drian told a Thursday gathering of EU foreign ministers in Vienna that Iran must respect the fundamentals of the 2015 nuclear deal and should be prepared to negotiate on its future nuclear plans, ballistic missile arsenal and alleged meddling in conflicts across the Middle East.

Iran “cannot avoid discussions, negotiations on three other major subjects that worry us — the future of Iran’s nuclear commitments after 2025, the ballistic question and the fact that there is a sort of ballistic proliferation on the part of Iran... and the role Iran plays to stabilize the whole region,” he said, according to Press TV.

Qassemi said Iran had always proved that it was not afraid of talks and that it strongly believed in dialogue.

The nuclear talks revealed Iran’s good faith and commitment to the principle of negotiation, and could in turn serve as a yardstick against which to measure the West’s

commitment to its pledges, he noted.

However, he added, the West failed to live up to its commitments after Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew the U.S. from the nuclear deal while other parties stood idle and kept mum.

The comprehensive efforts by Iran and other world powers were simply foiled by the “bullying and greedy behaviors” of the U.S. – an ally of France – and the Europeans’ failure to stand against them, Qassemi pointed out.

“Under current circumstances ... there is no reason, need, reliability or trust for holding fresh talks on any topic, let alone non-negotiable issues,” he said.

The ministry spokesman also noted that Le Drian is aware that the Europeans currently have no other way but to fulfill their pledges under the deal.

“Iran and the Iranians also have no other option but to remain distrustful until the pledges are met,” he added.

Yemen: 19 fishermen missing after Saudi airstrike

U.S. still training Saudi pilots after Yemen school bus attack

As many as 19 fishermen have reportedly gone missing after a Saudi Arabian airstrike on fishing boats off Yemen's western coast-line, which has come under an unrelenting Saudi-led offensive.

The attack took place off the port city of Hudaydah, near the island of Uqban, Yemen's al-Masirah television network reported on Friday.

The head of the Yemeni Union of Fishermen said the attack targeted three fishing boats.

There has so far been no report about those still unaccounted for in the aftermath of the attack.

Early this month, at least 55 people were killed after Saudi warplanes hit a hospital and a fishing harbor in Hudaydah.

A separate Saudi aerial attack hit a bus carrying a group of young schoolchildren in Yemen's Sa'ada province, killing over 50 people, including 40 children.

In March, more than 30 Somali migrants, including children, were killed in the Red Sea when a Saudi military helicopter opened fire on their boat.

Since June, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have been waging a massive military campaign to take over Hudaydah through which much of Yemen's imports reach the impoverished country.

The United Nations and other international bodies have issued serious warnings against the continuation of the attacks, saying they could tip Yemen over the edge of famine.

Saudi Arabia invaded the Arab world's poorest nation in 2015 to return a former regime to power. The kingdom has also imposed an all-out blockade on Yemen which according to the UN is now the scene of the world's worst man-made crisis.

On Tuesday, a UN report said the high rate of civilian casualties in aerial assaults by Saudi Arabia and its allies on Yemen "may amount to war crimes."

The report which was released by the Group of International and Regional Eminent Experts on Yemen raised "serious concerns about the targeting process applied by the [Saudi-led] coalition."

"Coalition airstrikes have caused most direct civilian casualties. The airstrikes have hit residential areas, markets, funerals, weddings, detention facilities, civilian boats and even medical facilities," the report said.

Some 15,000 Yemenis have been killed and thousands more injured since the onset of the Saudi-led aggression.

■ U.S. still training Saudi pilots

Despite attempts by American officials to



distance the U.S. from the Saudi-led carnage against the people of Yemen, new documents have revealed that the Pentagon is planning to resume training programs for Saudi pilots.

The U.S. Air Force has recently put out request for information (RFI) forms, calling on contractors to come forward with pricing and availability details for training no less than 41 Royal Saudi Air Force personnel, the website The Young Turks network reported Thursday.

While there are no details available about the program's starting dates, a submission deadline of September 24 for the RFIs shows that the program is slated to begin in near future.

The Pentagon has posted another document that lays out the required training instructors, noting that the objective would be to train Saudi pilots for operating the F-15 fighter jets.

The records even mention weapons-specific training, including "F-15S Weapons School Instructor Pilot" and "Air Battle Manager/ Weapons School Weapons Director Instructor."

Considered the backbone of Saudi Arabia's

air force, the F-15s have been used to carry out the bulk of the thousands of airstrikes that Riyadh and its allies have carried out on Yemeni cities since the unprovoked war began in March 2015.

More interestingly, the RFI forms went online less than two weeks after a Saudi warplane targeted a Yemeni school bus in Sa'ada, killing 40 children. Ironically, an American-made 500-pound (227 kilogram) laser-guided bomb was used to hit the bus.

The attack caused much uproar, forcing U.S. officials, who first refused to address it, to react.

On Tuesday, U.S. media reported that the Pentagon had reportedly warned Riyadh that it will reduce intelligence and military support for the kingdom unless necessary action is taken to limit civilian casualties.

U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis and General Joseph Votel, who oversees U.S. military operations in the Middle East, are concerned that the U.S. is helping Saudis and their allies, including the United Arab Emirates, with killing civilians, unnamed officials familiar with the Pentagon's view told CNN on Monday.

It is not yet clear whether U.S. President Donald Trump, who has been very supportive of the Saudis after inking a hefty \$110-billion arms deal with the oil-rich kingdom last year, would allow a reduction of support for the Riyadh regime.

■ 'Fresh cholera epidemic'

Separately, the UN cautioned on Thursday that Yemen faced a possible third wave of a cholera epidemic.

Spokesman Stephane Dujarric said current rains were increasing the risk of infection in the war-torn country, which has seen 1.1 million suspected cases since last April, AFP reported.

"Between the beginning of the year and mid-August 2018, nearly 120,000 suspected cases have been reported," he said.

"Although this figure is lower than during the same period in 2017, the increasing rate of infections over recent weeks is raising concerns of a possible third wave of the epidemic," the official added.

The diarrheal disease has already claimed more than 2,000 lives in Yemen, while the invasion has taken the lives of thousands more.

(Source: agencies)

Former Australian PM resigns from parliament, government loses majority

Australia's former prime minister Malcolm Turnbull on Friday resigned from parliament, a source familiar with the matter said, stripping the government of its one-seat parliamentary majority.

Turnbull last week said he would resign from parliament after he was ousted from office in a bitter party-room contest which ushered in the country's sixth leader in the last decade. "The speaker of the house of parliament received a resignation letter from Malcolm Turnbull this afternoon," said a source familiar with the matter. The source declined to be named as she is not authorised to talk to the media.

■ SPONSORED

Until a by-election can be contested, Australia's new Prime Minister Scott Morrison is left relying on the support of independent lawmakers to pass legislation, inhibiting the government's agenda just eight months out from an election.

Besides no longer having a majority in the lower house of parliament, the government does not control the upper house Senate. According to the latest opinion polls

Australia's ruling Liberal-National coalition will struggle to be re-elected in a poll due by May 2019. After a tumultuous Liberal party leadership battle last week, the two-party-preferred vote between the opposition Labor party and the coalition blew out 56-44 in favour of Labor, which would translate into a heavy election defeat.

Parliament is currently in recess, resuming on Sept. 10.

A by-election is unlikely to held until the end of September at the earliest, leaving Morrison without a majority for at least the next two-week sitting of parliament.

Morrison paid tribute to his predecessor while in Jakarta for talks with his Indonesian counterpart on a free trade deal that could be signed later this year.

"I just want to send to my friend Malcolm, and to Lucy (his wife), and to their entire family all my best wishes and all my love," Morrison told reporters.

"You've served our country well, and on behalf of our country as prime minister, I just want to say thanks."

(Source: Reuters)

Record defense budget for Japan amid threats

apan's defense ministry on Friday made its biggest-ever budget request, seeking better missile defence and bolstered air power amid ongoing threats from North Korea and China.

The ministry wants 5.298 trillion yen (\$47 billion) for the next fiscal year from April, the seventh straight annual increase and 2.1 percent more than last year.

Among the items on the defense ministry's shopping list are two sets of US-made Aegis Ashore missile defence systems to defend the country against North Korea's nuclear and missile threats, with a combined price tag of 234.3 billion yen.

It also wants six more F-35 fighter jets and two E-2D Hawkeye radar and maritime aircraft, with plans to expand the air force patrol team by adding 30 servicemen to a current team of 830.

The budget request came hot on the heels of the ministry's annual defense review, which said North Korea still poses a "serious and imminent threat" despite a diplomatic detente earlier this year.

After the historic June 12 summit be-

tween U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un in Singapore, there has been little tangible progress in denuclearizing the Korean peninsula.

In recent weeks, Washington-Pyongyang relations appear to have taken a turn for the worse, with Trump abruptly scrapping a planned visit to the North by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

The defence review also took aim at China's rise as a military power, saying Beijing was sparking "strong security concerns in the region and international community, including Japan."

Tokyo is wary of Beijing, which is seen by several countries in the region as becoming increasingly aggressive over various sovereignty claims, including a long-festering row with Japan over small islands in the East China Sea.

For its part, China announced in March an 8.1-percent defense budget increase to 1.11 trillion yuan (\$175 billion) for 2018, as it bids to modernise the world's largest military.

(Source: AFP)

Situation at "boiling point" at refugee center on Greek island: UN

The United Nations refugee agency urged Greece Friday to speed up transfers of eligible asylum-seekers from Aegean islands to the mainland, saying conditions at an overcrowded Lesbos reception center were "reaching boiling point."

Lesbos, not far from Turkey in the northeastern Aegean Sea, was the preferred entry point into the European Union in 2015 for nearly a million Syrians, Afghans and Iraqis.

Those three groups still comprise more than 70 percent of those arriving in Greece, and typically have high recognition rates for their asylum claims, but the overall flow is far less than in previous years, UNHCR said.

Although 1,350 refugees and asylum seekers were transferred to mainland sites in August, this failed to ease pressure as an average of 114 people arrived daily during the month, it said.

"The situation is reaching boiling point at the Moria reception identification centre on Lesbos, where more than 7,000 asylum seekers and migrants are crammed into shelters built to accommodate just 2,000 people," Charlie Yaxley,



spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), told a Geneva briefing.

Some have been there for over six months and one quarter are children, he said. A reception center on Samos island holds 2,700, nearly four times the number it was designed

for, while centres on Chios and Kos are at close to double their capacity.

"We are particularly concerned about woefully inadequate sanitary facilities, fighting amongst frustrated communities, rising levels of sexual harassment and assaults and the increasing need for medical and psycho-social care," he said.

Yaxley could not confirm aid agency reports of possible suicide attempts among youth at the centers, but said:

"There are an increasing number of children who are presenting with mental health issues. The available response and treatment is woefully inadequate at the moment."

The Greek government has made previous commitments to transfer people to shelters on the mainland, and has received European Union funding for it, Yaxley said.

But other EU countries must help "frontline states" including Greece, Italy and Spain who receive most of the refugees and migrants, he said, adding:

"The people arriving in Europe today is a very manageable situation; it's a question of political will."

(Source: Daily Star)

Saudi official hints at plan to dig canal on Qatar border

A senior Saudi official on Friday appeared to confirm local media reports that the kingdom is considering digging a canal to separate the Qatari peninsula from the mainland and turn it into an island, amid a year-long dispute between the neighbors.

"As a citizen, I am impatiently waiting for the details of the implementation of the East Salwa island project, this great historic project that will change the region's geography," Saud al-Qahtani, a senior adviser to Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, wrote on Twitter.

Qatari authorities did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Qahtani has mentioned the project on Twitter over the past few months, but Friday's tweet was the clearest reference yet to an initiative which critics dismiss as a public relations tactic aimed at intimidating Qatar rather than a serious plan.

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt cut diplomatic, trade and transport ties with Qatar in June 2017, accusing it of supporting terrorism. Doha denies that charge and says the boycott is an attempt to impinge on its sovereignty.

The dispute has eluded mediation efforts by the United States and Kuwait, with both sides trying to secure the support of Western allies through diplomacy, media and business deals.

Reports about the canal first emerged on Sabq, a news website close to the government in April. Unnamed sources described Saudi plans to build a military base and a nuclear waste dump beside a 60 kilometre channel measuring 200 metres wide and 20 metres deep and stretching across the entire border with Qatar.

The cost was estimated at 2.8 billion riyals (\$747 million).

Further reports in the newspaper Makkah in June said Riyadh was moving ahead with the plans, with five unnamed companies invited to bid on the project and a winner to be announced in September.

(Source: Daily Star)

Bahraini attorney general charges 13 anti-regime activists with terrorism



Bahrain's attorney general says officials have charged 13 anti-regime protesters with terrorism offenses as the ruling Al Khalifah regime does not shy away from its heavy clampdown on political dissidents and pro-democracy activists in the tiny Persian Gulf kingdom. "Charges of forming and funding a terrorist cell have been filed against six persons in custody and another seven charged in absentia," attorney general Ahmad al-Hamadi said on Thursday. Hamadi said the convicts had affiliation to the February 14 Youth Coalition — an opposition protest movement named after the date of the beginning of a popular uprising against the Manama regime. Thousands of anti-regime protesters have held demonstrations in Bahrain on an almost daily basis ever since a popular uprising began in the country in mid-February 2011.

They are demanding that the Al Khalifah regime relinquish power and allow a just system representing all Bahrainis to be established. Manama has gone to great lengths to clamp down on any sign of dissent. On March 14, 2011, troops from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates were deployed to assist Bahrain in its crackdown.

Scores of people have lost their lives and hundreds of others sustained injuries or got arrested as a result of the Al Khalifah regime's crackdown. On March 5, 2017, Bahrain's parliament approved the trial of civilians at military tribunals in a measure blasted by human rights campaigners as being tantamount to imposition of an undeclared martial law countrywide.

Bahraini King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifah ratified the constitutional amendment on April 3 last year.

(Source: Press TV)

South Korea denies Israeli president official visit

South Korea has denied an official visit of Israeli President Reuven Rivlin to the country in a move that could trigger a diplomatic dispute between Tel Aviv and Seoul.

Israeli website Ynetnews reported the snub on Thursday, saying the visit had been planned to take place either this year or during the upcoming one. Ynet, however, said the refusal was "undeniable," and that it had left Tel Aviv "surprised."

No explanations were provided for the decision, but the website suggested three potential causes for the snub.

It cited what Israeli officials have already described as South Korea's "growing frustration" over Tel Aviv's continued rejection of important security deals as one of the reasons prompting the put-down. As an instance of this, the news website cited Tel Aviv's failure to let Hyundai build ships designed to guard Israel's offshore natural gas drilling platforms and instead award the contract to Germany's ThyssenKrupp.

It also cited Israeli sources as claiming that South Korea was refusing to streamline a free trade agreement to ease Israeli exporters' operations in South Korea. The sources claim that the deal has already been approved by various forums and has been waiting for Seoul's go-ahead for more than a year.

Thirdly, it pointed to the South Korea's likely resentment at Israel's refusal to congratulate Seoul on the summit between South Korean President Moon Jae-in and North Korean ruler Kim Jong-un in April this year. Ynet further highlighted the fact that South Korea was one of the 128 countries which voted in late 2017 against the United States recognition of the holy occupied city of Jerusalem al-Quds as Israel's "capital" as another potential reason for denying President Rivlin a visit to Seoul.

(Source: Press TV)

STOCK MARKET

| | |
|--------|----------|
| TEDPIX | 137472.4 |
| IFX | 1556.36 |

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

| | |
|-----|--------------|
| USD | 42,000 rials |
| EUR | 48,113 rials |
| GBP | 54,430 rials |
| AED | 11,437 rials |

Source: mehrnews.com

COMMODITIES

| | |
|-------------|---------------|
| WTI | \$69.78/b |
| Brent | \$77.63/b |
| OPEC Basket | \$74.48/b |
| Gold | \$1,206.55/oz |
| Silver | \$14.69/oz |
| Platinum | \$801.45/oz |

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

Pistachio exports from Iran to Europe rises 19% in H1

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran exported €125 million of pistachio to Europe during the first half of 2018, with 19 percent increase compared to the same period of time in the past year, European Union's statistics agency Eurostat has reported.



According to Eurostat, Iran's export of pistachio to Europe during the first half of 2017 stood at €105 million, Tasnim news agency reported on Friday.

TEDPIX gains 562 points in a week

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE)'s main index (TEDPIX) increased 562 points or 0.4 percent during the five dealing days (Saturday-Wednesday) of the past Iranian week ended on Friday, Tasnim news agency reported.

As reported, some 11.648 billion securities worth 34.976 trillion rials (about \$832.7 million) were traded through 750,000 deals in TSE, indicating 24 percent fall in the number and 60 percent rise in the value of securities and 4 percent increase in the number of deals.

The first market's index rose 487 points to 101,291 and second market's index added 766 points to 273,726 showing 0.5 percent and 0.28 percent growth, respectively, in the

mentioned week.

TEDPIX has risen 35.5 percent since the beginning of current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2018), Tasnim reported last week.

The rising trend of TEDPIX began on June 13, which was named 'Golden Wednesday of Stock Market', when TEDPIX gained 2,767 points to stand at 99,146 points.

Then on June 17, players in Iran's capital market witnessed a historical record in growth of TEDPIX which gained 3,306 points to hit 102,452 points, something unprecedented in the 50-year history of the country's stock market.

Rise in stock exchange indexes was anticipated given the issues related to the



political and economic status of the country at the time, but a 2,767-point growth in a single day was beyond the expectations.

The experts of capital market say some

factors such as turbulences in the markets of foreign currency, gold coin, and housing and also entrance of new liquidity were the main reasons for such unprecedented rise.

Over 10.8m tons of goods loaded, unloaded at Iranian ports in a month

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Some 10.818 million tons of goods were loaded and unloaded at the ports of Iran during the past Iranian calendar month Mordad (July 22-August 22), indicating 16.9 percent fall compared to the same month of the past year, Tasnim news agency reported citing the data released by the Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO).

Loading and unloading at the ports of country has increased 15 percent during



the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), according to the PMO Managing Director Mohammad Rastad.

‘India will not completely halt Iranian oil imports’

India will not completely halt Iranian oil imports and will finalize its strategy on crude purchases from Tehran after a meeting with top U.S. officials next week, a senior government official said.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Defense Secretary Jim Mattis will hold high-level talks with India's Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj and Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on September 6, in what is known as a 2+2 dialogue.

“Definitely we are not going to zero” (purchases), said the official, who has direct knowledge of India's oil purchase policy and did not wish to be identified.

When asked if more clarity on India's Iranian oil purchases would emerge after the dialogue, the official said “yes, that is the highest level of meeting we will have with the U.S.”

The United States is pushing all countries to halt oil imports from Iran after President Donald Trump withdrew from a 2015 deal between Iran and six world powers and ordered a re-imposition of sanctions on Tehran.

India, Iran's top oil buyer after China, has so far not decided on the size of any cut to Iranian imports and continues to seek a waiver from the United States.

Trump has threatened that anyone trading with Iran will not do business with America.

U.S. sanctions on Iran's energy sector are set to be re-imposed after a 180-day “wind-down period” ending on November 4.

Several countries that were involved in the 2015 nuclear deal had attempted to lessen the blow of fresh sanctions on Iran, and urged their firms not to pull out.

During the previous round of sanctions, India was one



of the few countries that continued to buy Iranian oil, although it had to reduce imports as shipping, insurance and banking channels were choked off due to the European and U.S. sanctions.

(Source: Reuters)

First Announcement

IN THE NAME OF GOD
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING

INTERNATIONAL TENDER NO. 97-06/168

Tender Holder:
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

Subject of Two-Stage Tender:
Purchasing HD Transmission Equipment for TV1, TV2 and TV3 Channels (Tehran IRIB Center) according to the tender documents

Deadline of Receiving Documents:
As of publishing second announcement of advertisement latest by the business hour dated on **Monday September 10, 2018.**

Place of Receiving Documents:
Secretariat of Tenders' Commission, Technical Purchasing (KALA) Dept., Media Technology and Development Deputy Office, Bldg. No. 2, IRIB, Jam-e Jam St., Vali-e Asr Ave., Tehran

Type and Amount of Guarantee for Participating in Tender:
The amount of **USD 60,000** which should be in the form of extendable bank guarantee

Time and Place of Delivering Priced Bid:
The sealed A, B & C packages/envelopes should be submitted within one main envelope marked with tender number no later than **15 p.m. on Saturday October 13, 2018** and submitted to the Secretariat of Commission of Tenders.

Time and Place of Opening Envelopes
The date of opening envelopes A&B is at **8:30 a.m. on Monday October 15, 2018** in the office of Vice President of IRIB Planning and Financial Resources and opening of envelope C will be after technical evaluation.
It should be noted that bidders should hold license from the authorized bodies.

For more information, please contact the following phone numbers: 0098-21-22166313
It is obvious that cost of publishing two advertisements shall be borne by the winner of tender.
Public Relations Dept. of IRIB

First Announcement

IN THE NAME OF GOD
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING

INTERNATIONAL TENDER NO. 97-06/167

Tender Holder:
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

Subject of Two-Stage Tender:
IRIB Cyberspace Portable Studio Equipment (IRIB Cyberspace) according to the tender documents

Deadline of Receiving Documents:
As of publishing second announcement of advertisement latest by the business hour dated on **Wednesday September 05, 2018.**

Place of Receiving Documents:
Secretariat of Tenders' Commission, Technical Purchasing (KALA) Dept., Media Technology and Development Deputy Office, Bldg. No. 2, IRIB, Jam-e Jam St., Vali-e Asr Ave., Tehran

Type and Amount of Guarantee for Participating in Tender:
The amount of **USD 50,000** which should be in the form of extendable bank guarantee

Time and Place of Delivering Priced Bid:
The sealed A, B & C packages/envelopes should be submitted within one main envelope marked with tender number no later than **15 p.m. on Saturday October 06, 2018** and submitted to the Secretariat of Commission of Tenders.

Time and Place of Opening Envelopes
The date of opening envelopes A&B is at **8:30 a.m. on Monday October 08, 2018** in the office of Vice President of IRIB Planning and Financial Resources and opening of envelope C will be after technical evaluation.
It should be noted that bidders should hold license from the authorized bodies.

For more information, please contact the following phone numbers: **0098-21-22166313**
It is obvious that cost of publishing two advertisements shall be borne by the winner of tender.
Public Relations Dept. of IRIB

OPEC to review monitoring of crude oil output deal in Algiers

OPEC and its allies on Thursday vowed to review the monitoring mechanisms of its output agreement at the Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee meeting in Algiers on September 23 but said it sees the current oil market as largely balanced.

The JMMC, which is responsible for closely monitoring the market and recommending appropriate response measures, said in a statement that in Algiers "it will review the plan for monitoring overall market fundamentals and conformity levels for the remainder of 2018, as well as the framework of cooperation to be established in 2019 and beyond.

The JMMC said it was satisfied that recent market fundamentals showed a "good balance between supply and demand considering seasonal factors.

"Conformity levels of the participating countries was 109 percent in July compared



to 121 percent in June, but still higher than what the alliance had agreed to at its meeting in late June, the statement said.

The six-country committee, which is chaired by Saudi Arabia's energy minister Khalid al-Falih and includes ministers

from Russia, Kuwait, Venezuela, Algeria and Oman, will be present at the Algiers meeting along with Iran's oil minister Bijan Zanganeh.

OPEC and its partners agreed in late June to raise output by 1 million b/d. Given some countries are unable to pump more, a split has emerged on how to proceed.

OPEC's largest oil producer Saudi Arabia argues that the agreement should use a collective production ceiling, with the JMMC responsible for reallocating production quotas.

Iran's oil minister Bijan Zanganeh maintains that the OPEC/non-OPEC production deal does not allow countries to produce more than their individual quotas.

This meeting is scheduled just six weeks before U.S. sanctions that could shut in 1 million b/d or more of Iran's crude sales are scheduled to take effect in November. (Source: Platts)

Venezuela's port woes stall oil exports to Rosneft: source



The closing of a dock at Venezuela's main oil export port could delay as much as 5 million barrels in crude deliveries to Russian company Rosneft, further complicating oil-for-loan agreements between state-run PDVSA and Rosneft, a source said on Wednesday and internal PDVSA documents showed.

A tanker collision at the weekend forced Venezuela's PDVSA [PDVSA.UL] to halt operations at Jose port's South dock, curtailing planned shipments mainly for Rosneft, and for U.S. firms Valero Energy and Chevron Corp until damages can be repaired.

PDVSA and Rosneft did not reply to requests for comment.

PDVSA has fallen behind on its export contracts this year, raising the prospect of temporary cancellation of shipments under force majeure if it cannot recover production and export capacity.

In April, Rosneft and PDVSA signed a refinancing agreement designed to allow the Venezuelan company to catch up on delayed loan payments by delivering more crude to Rosneft, according to the source and the PDVSA documents, which detailed Venezuela's oil exports. The Russian company was using Jose's South dock to pick up the cargoes.

PDVSA was scheduled to deliver 4 million barrels per month (133,000 barrels per day) of heavy crude to Rosneft under the April agreement.

"There's no way to deliver all those barrels this month without the South dock," said the

source, who requested anonymity.

In the first three weeks of August, PDVSA delivered 1.93 million barrels of diluted crude oil (DCO) bound for India to a unit of Rosneft. More than 2 million barrels are pending for August delivery and additional barrels were planned for early September, according to the documents.

On Aug. 29, the Nordic Moon, Wedyan, Leni P and Nordic Thunder, all large vessels, were anchored off Jose port waiting for authorization to load up to 5 million barrels of crude for Rosneft, according to Thomson Reuters vessel tracking data and the PDVSA reports.

Valero and Chevron also were taking Venezuelan upgraded crudes at Jose's South dock before the collision. PDVSA had planned to deliver in August 4.5 million barrels to these and other U.S.-based companies under supply contracts and spot deals, according to the documents that were seen by Reuters.

Valero did not respond to a request for comment. Chevron was unable to immediately comment. It was unclear how much crude these companies received prior to the closure.

This month, the South dock was to receive 3 million barrels (100,000 barrels per day) of imported heavy naphtha, a larger volume than typical purchases of this product that was aimed to offset planned stoppages of crude upgraders in the Orinoco Belt. Naphtha is used in Venezuela to dilute its extra heavy oil for export.

(Source: Seeking Alpha)

Asian LNG prices rise for 3rd week, boosted by North Asian demand



Asian spot liquefied natural gas (LNG) prices this week rose for a third week, buoyed by firm demand from Japan and South Korea and by loading delays from Brunei that have now ended, industry sources said on Friday.

Spot prices for October LNG-AS delivery in Asia rose to \$11.50 per million British thermal units (mmBtu) this week, up 10 cents from the week before, the sources said.

Japanese utilities bought spot cargoes for delivery in October, likely stocking up ahead of peak winter demand, the sources said.

Kyushu Electric bought a cargo for delivery in October at about \$11.50 per mmBtu, an industry source said, though this could not immediately be confirmed. Kansai Electric was also seeking a cargo for delivery in October this week, the source said.

Kyushu's demand came even though it restarted a nuclear reactor at its Sendai station this week, suggesting Japanese companies are likely building up inventory for winter, a second source said.

"This year's summer was quite hot, so they were probably depleting their inventory then, which they are now building up," the second source added.

All sources declined to be identified as they were not authorized to speak with media, while energy companies and utilities do not typically comment on commercial transactions.

Japan's Saibu Gas is seeking one cargo every quarter for delivery over 2019 to early 2022, industry sources said. It is expected

to award that in October, one of them said.

Project partners of the giant Ichthys project in Australia were last week looking for LNG cargoes for delivery in November and December, trade sources said. It was not immediately clear if they had bought the cargoes.

They are likely seeking the cargoes to fulfil term commitments, the sources said. The project has been delayed repeatedly and is now expected to start shipping condensate, LNG and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) in that order from around end-September to end-December.

A South Korean buyer is also in the market looking for cargoes to be delivered over 5 to 10 years, two trade sources said.

Loading delays at the Brunei LNG plant may have resolved, trade sources said. LNG tanker Amani, which had been anchored near Brunei port for a week, loaded from the plant on Thursday and has now left, shipping data on Thomson Reuters Eikon showed.

Delivery of term cargoes to term customers of Russia's Sakhalin-2 LNG project may have been delayed after one of two production lines at the project were halted last week due to a problem, a third industry source said. But the issue is expected to be resolved soon.

Russia's Yamal LNG plant has offered cargoes for delivery in winter to Asian customers, traders said. It was not clear if it had sold any yet.

(Source: Reuters)

Oil seen getting \$4 a barrel boost on tough new ship-fuel rules

New regulations to curb pollution from the world's shipping fleet could lift crude prices by \$4 a barrel when the measures come into effect in 2020, according to a Bloomberg survey of 13 oil industry analysts.

That's because the changes from the International Maritime Organization, a United Nations agency, are likely to stoke refiners' demand for lower-sulfur crude while prompting some plants to run as hard as possible to maximize profits.

"It will be a Wild West leading up to the implementation phase," said Michael Poulsen, an analyst at A/S Global Risk Management Ltd. in Denmark. "The market anticipates that we will see a lot of weird movements and funny pricing around the end of 2019."

In just 16 months, the IMO's rules to cap the sulfur content of ship fuel are set to create a once-in-a-generation upheaval in the oil market, as the regulator seeks to limit emissions of a pollutant that has been linked to asthma and acid rain. The global shipping fleet is reliant on refiners to supply IMO-compliant fuels, and it's not clear there will be enough to go around. Prices for low-sulfur products are already climbing, while those for high-sulfur grades are collapsing.

A similar effect is expected in the crude markets. Banks including Societe Generale SA and Morgan Stanley have said the regulations will likely lift crude benchmarks Brent and West Texas Intermediate, which have a relatively low sulfur content. Brent's premium to higher-sulfur Dubai crude, the Middle East benchmark, has already swelled to more than \$4 a barrel in 2020.

■ \$128 billion

Bloomberg asked analysts to estimate



the likely price effects of the regulatory change. Crude prices are forecast to rise by \$4 a barrel in 2020 due to the IMO rules specifically, according to the median estimate of 13 responses that ranged from a \$2 drop to a \$20 increase per barrel.

"Of our \$90 a barrel Brent price forecast by early 2020, we'd argue that \$5-\$10 a barrel will come from IMO 2020," said Morgan Stanley analyst Martijn Rats. The shift in demand to less-polluting oil products will mean that "without investing in more upgrading units, refiners will simply need to process more crude," he said.

By 2020, global crude oil demand is set to rise by 2 percent to 87.7 million barrels a day, according to a forecast from the Paris-based International Energy Agency in March. If crude prices surge by \$4 a barrel due to the IMO rules, that would

amount to an increase of about \$128 billion in the world's oil bill by 2020, Bloomberg calculations show. Brent crude, the global benchmark, is now trading near \$77.50 a barrel.

■ Ship scrubbers

While the majority of those surveyed agreed the rules will probably have a bullish effect on crude, some were more reticent. That's because ships have the option of installing so-called scrubbers allowing them to keep burning high-sulfur fuels while limiting emissions of the pollutant.

"More and more ships will install scrubbers and therefore reduce the demand for extra barrels," said HSH Nordbank AG analyst Jan Edelmann, who saw no impact on crude prices from the regulations. "We believe that there is sufficient light-sweet crude available from shale to meet extra

demand from IMO 2020."

Companies that make scrubbers, including Wartsila Oyj and Alfa Laval AB, reported bumper orders in their most recent earnings. However, the vast majority of the world's commercial fleet -- some 93,000 vessels -- will not have installed scrubbers, which can cost millions of dollars, by 2020.

The IMO's regulations are likely to ripple through industries that purchase fuel, such as airlines and power producers. Because of this broad reach, some analysts contacted by Bloomberg said they couldn't yet forecast crude prices for 2020 or the effect of the IMO rule change specifically.

■ Gasoil boom

The brunt of the regulatory shift is likely to be felt in refined-product markets, as shippers abandon high-sulfur fuel oil in favor of cleaner alternatives, like gasoil or diesel-like fuel that can be blended into IMO-compliant ship propellant. Benchmark gasoil prices in Europe are set to rise by about \$17 a barrel by 2020, according to the median estimate from nine analysts who provided figures on the fuel.

The strength in oil product prices may help to lift crude, too. Nine of 13 respondents said the IMO regulations will be positive for refining margins. Rising profits would encourage refineries to boost crude purchases, potentially lifting the feedstock's price.

"We believe the extraordinary strength in distillate cracks will cause refiners to run as hard as they can," Societe Generale SA analysts including Mark Keenan wrote in a report earlier this month. "This very strong crude demand will add \$5 to sweet crude prices."

(Source: Bloomberg)

Oil slips as trade war worries outweigh Iran sanctions

Oil prices slipped on Friday as concerns over the impact of a global trade war depressed sentiment, although impending U.S. sanctions on Iran and falling Venezuelan output limited losses.

Benchmark Brent crude oil was down 40 cents a barrel at \$77.37 by 0840 GMT. U.S. light crude was 30 cents lower at \$69.95.

U.S. President Donald Trump threatened in an interview with Bloomberg News on Thursday to withdraw from the World Trade Organization, his latest salvo in a deepening dispute between the United States and its major trading partners.

Such a move would undermine one of the foundations of the global trading system, which the United States was instrumental in creating.

Economists are worried that rising trade barriers between the world's major economies will drag on global growth and, by extension, erode energy demand.

"You have to wonder if it (crude) can sustain these prices in a world where President Trump doubles down on his battle with the EU and China at the same time," said Greg McKenna, chief market strategist at futures brokerage AxiTrader.

Trump is prepared to ramp up a dispute with China and has told aides he is ready to impose tariffs on \$200 billion more Chinese imports as early as next week, Bloomberg reported on Thursday.

However oil markets are tightening with a recent surplus draining, trade figures show.

The volume of unsold crude stored in the Atlantic basin has dwindled from around 30 cargoes to just a handful in recent weeks, a Reuters analysis showed.

Brent is on track for a rise of more than 4 percent in August with U.S. light crude gaining 2 percent.

"The contracts are in a strong up-trend," said Robin Bieber, who watches price charts for brokerage PVM Oil Associates.

Many analysts say the uptrend in crude prices will continue. "Brent prices will exceed \$80 per barrel before the end of the year," U.S. bank Jefferies forecast on Friday.

(Source: Reuters)

Don't expect a price shock in natural gas

A few months from now, the U.S. will enter the winter heating season with natural gas inventories at their lowest level in years, setting the stage for pricing risks, particularly if there is a cold snap. However, the tightness could be temporary as shale gas drillers continue to break production records.

A growing number of analysts are waking up to the fact that natural gas storage levels are "dangerously low." For the week ending on August 17, U.S. gas stocks stood at 2,435 billion cubic feet (Bcf), or 684 Bcf below the same week in 2017 and 599 Bcf below the five-year average.

On its face, a thin margin of supply raises the risk of a price spike this winter when millions of people crank up the heat. Back in the winter of 2014, prices shot up during the "polar vortex" that saw unusually low temperature sweep across much of the country. And earlier this year, prices in New England briefly spiked to \$25 per million Btu (MMBtu) during a bout of cold weather.

The same could happen this winter if the mercury drops too low for an extended period of time, especially because inventory levels are so low.

Moreover, gas demand is rising on a structural basis. Coal plants are shutting down, with natural gas -- in addition to solar and wind -- scaling up to replace them. Tens of billions of dollars poured into downstream petrochemical complexes over the last few years have also resulted in higher levels of gas usage. Finally, new LNG export terminals are diverting U.S. supply overseas.

With inventories low and demand on the rise, the ingredients are in place to finally shake natural gas prices out of their multi-year slumber -- prices have been stuck in a narrow band between \$2.75-\$3/MMBtu for the past few years.

However, while the landscape looks worrying, the market could dodge a bullet and return to another extended period of ample supply. "We anticipate a tight market in 4Q18 before another year of strong production growth drives natural gas prices lower in 2019," Barclays wrote in an August 28 note.

The investment bank acknowledged that low inventories create some bullish pressure, but only revised up its Henry Hub pricing forecast for the fourth quarter of this year to \$2.83/MMBtu, up from a previous estimate of \$2.53/MMBtu. "Lower assumed end-October storage should shrink the cushion for winter demand, while higher LNG demand partially offsets production gains," Barclays wrote in its explanation for raising its pricing forecast.

"We anticipate a fundamentally tight start to the 2018/19 winter and are lowering our end-October

2018 storage forecast to 3.4 Tcf, as the market appears content to bank on further production gains to meet demand this winter," Barclays said, noting that storage levels will enter the winter season at their lowest level in a decade.

However, there is little reason to worry because the tightness will only be temporary. Production is still rising, "setting new records almost daily," Barclays argues, which will help eliminate the inventory deficit by the end of peak winter demand season in March 2019. The Marcellus, Utica and Permian plays have added about 5.5 Bcf/d since last year, the bank said.

The Permian is suffering from pipeline bottlenecks for both oil and gas, but new pipelines are coming online this year and in 2019 in the Marcellus region, allowing for another step up in production. However, a few of these projects have run into regulatory trouble recently, so Barclays concedes that these delays pose a risk to its sanguine pricing forecast.

The tightest period of time will be the fourth quarter of this year when inventories are at their lowest. But even next year, when a wave of new LNG terminals come online (some of which may enter into service ahead of schedule), the gas market should fare just fine because demand may not grow as quickly as it has in the past. Barclays says only 1.4 gigawatts of coal-fired power plant capacity will go offline in 2019, a small sum compared to previous years. That means gas demand "will not enjoy the same kind of tailwinds it has in the past."

Ultimately, shale drilling continues to add more and more supply, covering for rising demand for the foreseeable future. An unusually cold winter could see jumps in prices, but just as in the past, those spikes will likely be confined to regional markets such as the Northeast, and in any event, the price increases should be temporary.

(Source: oilprice.com)

Sustaining Europe’s security trio



BY Volker Perthes

Credible joint initiatives by France, Germany, and the UK will have a greater international impact than a common European position emanating from a debate in the EU’s Political and Security Committee. Fostering deeper collaboration among the EU’s “big three” must therefore remain at the top of the agenda before and after Brexit.

Despite the tensions generated by Brexit, the leaders of France, Germany, and the United Kingdom have stood together in disputes between the European Union and the United States. If their unity can be sustained, Europe’s “big three” (E3) will serve the EU very well in a tumultuous future.

French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, and UK Prime Minister Theresa May seem to have read from the same script regarding U.S. President Donald Trump’s withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal and his rejection of the final communiqué of the G7 summit in June. They all disapprove of Trump’s decisions to move the U.S. embassy in Israel to Jerusalem and to withdraw the U.S. from the United Nations Human Rights Council. And they have all criticized his escalating trade war with China.

This unity is not merely rhetorical. The UK has lately supported EU integration projects concerning foreign and security policy – much more so than before the Brexit referendum. This includes the decision to establish new headquarters for military training missions – which many view as the nucleus for a potential European military – in Africa. Britain had long resisted this initiative.

The catalyst for the UK’s change of course, it seems, is Trump. There is significant evidence suggesting that Trump views the EU and some of its member states as adversaries, rather than allies. While the U.S. will remain the most important ally of the EU and NATO’s European members, it is no longer the most reliable one. This shift has dashed hopes in the UK that post-Brexit Britain would be able to capitalize on its “special relationship” with the U.S., and it has highlighted for the EU the urgency of increasing its own strategic autonomy. While the North Atlantic alliance will remain critical to European security, the EU now seeks to build the capacity to define its own strategic priorities and, if needed, act upon them, whether alone or with partners. Achieving this objective, defined in the EU’s 2016 “Global Strategy,” will be much easier with the UK on board.

The fact is that the EU and the UK have more international clout together than separately. The UK has significant diplomatic experience, international influence, and military and economic resources that can be brought to bear on joint ventures, just as the EU’s backing can provide a major boost to UK policies on the world stage. This applies to démarches regarding major actors like China or Russia, sanctions regimes, international agreements, and strategic programs like Galileo, the European satellite navigation system.

How exactly a post-Brexit UK can be institutionally associated with common EU decisions on foreign policy, security, and defense will have to be determined in the exit agreement. But it is possible to create a format that gives the UK a voice, not a veto. In the meantime, no decisions should be taken that would prevent or undermine the UK’s post-Brexit coordination with EU foreign-policy positions, actions, and instruments. Moreover, steps can and should be taken today to strengthen ties between the EU and the UK.

Here, collaboration among the E3, in particular, is crucial. The E3 has already proved its potential. It initiated negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program as early as 2003, and became the nucleus of the E3-plus-3 (China, Russia, and the U.S.), which – along with the European Union – concluded the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran in 2015.

In the wake of Trump’s decision to withdraw the U.S. from the JCPOA, the E3 – together with the EU’s High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy – will prove integral to saving it, and to developing more wide-ranging solutions for dealing with Iran. But the E3 has an important role to play in other areas, too, including the conflicts in Syria and Yemen, the ongoing Israel-Palestine dispute, instability in North Africa, and maritime security in the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean, and the South China Sea.

Depending on the issue, other relevant EU member states – such as Italy, Poland, or Spain – will have to join the E3 in developing policies or negotiating agreements. E3 initiatives should always be coordinated with the EU’s high representative, in order to take full advantage of the bloc’s legitimacy and resources.

More frequent and visible strategic coordination among the E3 would support the ability of the EU and the UK to reap the benefits of mutual cooperation. It may also serve as a foundation for a pragmatic Brexit agreement that maintains close cooperation between the UK and the EU on foreign and security policy.

Whether the EU likes it or not, a credible joint initiative by France, Germany, and the UK would have a greater impact on the likes of Iran, Russia, China, or even the U.S. than a common EU position emanating from a debate in the EU’s Political and Security Committee. Fostering deeper E3 collaboration, of the kind that has been seen recently, must remain at the top of the EU’s foreign-policy agenda before and after Brexit. The fact that France, Germany, and the UK will all be members of the UN Security Council for the 2019-2020 period – France and the UK as permanent members, and Germany as an elected member – will add heft to cooperative action among them. Moreover, close collaboration within the Security Council could help to structure EU-UK foreign-policy coordination in the immediate post-Brexit transition period.

(Source: Project Syndicate)

What is Trump getting for sucking up to Saudi Arabia?

By Aaron David Miller & Richard Sokolsky

Ever since Franklin Roosevelt’s historic rendezvous in 1945 with Abd Aziz Ibn Saud, the founder of Saudi Arabia, American presidents have been enamored with Saudi kings.

But nothing in the 70 plus-year history of U.S.-Saudi ties comes close to the cosmic groveling that now defines President Donald Trump’s relationship with Saudi Arabia and his slavish obeisance to its dangerous and irresponsible policies.

Since Trump became president, the U.S. has enabled and supported a disastrous Saudi war in Yemen; watched as Riyadh launched a political and economic war against Qatar that’s split the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council; stood by as the Saudis virtually kidnapped the pro-American Lebanese Prime Minister in a bungled attempt to weaken Hezbollah; remained silent while the Saudis under the guise of reform cracked down on journalists, bloggers, businessmen and anyone else who dared criticize the 30-something crown prince; and said nothing as Riyadh battered Canada – a close U.S. ally that dared challenge Saudi human rights abuses.

In our 65-plus years of combined experience working inside and outside the State Department on U.S. Middle East policy, we have never seen anything like the Trump administration’s willingness to prostitute U.S. interests to Saudi Arabia – a country that increasingly pursues policies at home and abroad that undermine American values and interests.

Indeed, amid all its failures, the most successful Saudi foreign policy initiative in recent memory is the successful capturing and bamboozling of Donald Trump.

How to explain the Trump administration’s abnormal and unseemly attachment to Saudi Arabia? Why the suck-up and, more important, exactly what is America getting in return?

Where his presidential predecessors traditionally used their first foreign trip to reassure our neighbors in Canada or Mexico, Trump opted to make his first international appearance in Saudi Arabia. From his perspective, that made a certain amount of sense: Trump is notoriously averse to criticism and enchanted by ostentatious flattery; what better place to visit than a police state where oil-rich leaders brook no criticism from their subjects or attacks on their guests?

With a sovereign wealth fund in the billions, a potential (even if now delayed) trillion-dollar IPO offering of Saudi Aramco, and royals who acquire some of the world’s most expensive yachts, homes and artwork, Saudi Arabia is Trump’s kind of place. Trump loves order, pomp, circumstance and – above all – flattery, and his hosts offered it up in a veritable buffet. Saudi King Salman and his son and heir to the throne, Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman, feted the president with sword dances, lavish receptions and medals. “It was a great day,” Trump exclaimed on his first night in the kingdom after his arrival.

Saudi wealth is both an incentive and a rationalization for Trump to court Riyadh to buy arms – reportedly more than \$100 billion worth – and it’s no coincidence that big-time American CEOs accompanied Trump on his maiden voyage to the kingdom in search of deals. For this president, dealing with friends is a series of transactions: He believes that, as in any protection racket, if you get from the U.S., you need to give. (And he no doubt realizes that being nice to the Saudis might ultimately secure business deals that might be of great interest to the Trump Organization.)

Another reason for a U.S.-Saudi love affair is Trump’s yearning to repair the damage he believes President Barack Obama did to the U.S.-Saudi relationship because of the Iran nuclear deal, and to make Riyadh an Arab partner to play a leading role in realizing his two greatest ambitions in the region: cutting Iran down to size and pursuing the ultimate deal on Arab-Israeli peace. The Saudis share the first goal with the U.S. and Israel, but counting on them to do much about it is magical thinking. The world has witnessed the havoc the Saudis created in Yemen, and it’s clear that the kingdom’s policies toward Yemen and Qatar are enlarging, rather than contracting, Iran’s influence.

As for Israeli-Palestinian peace, Crown Prince Muhammad seems interested in getting involved. But recently, the Saudis sent signals that they won’t endorse any peace deal that doesn’t include Jerusalem as the capital of a Palestinian state – likely a manifestation of King Salman’s worry that his son is too eager to do U.S. bidding. To bring the Saudis along, the Trump administration would need to accommodate the Palestinians in ways they don’t seem prepared to do.

There’s no doubt that maintaining a productive relationship has served U.S. national interests. The oil-for-security contract that long drove the U.S.-Saudi bond is dead: Thanks to the advent of fracking, we don’t need their oil, and they don’t want to rely on a risk-averse America for their security. Yet preserving access to Saudi oil and stability in the Persian Gulf – through



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which 30 percent to 40 percent of the world’s oil flows – is still vital to the health of the global economy. (Indeed, the administration is already counting on the Saudis to ramp up production to offset the potential loss of Iranian oil to the market.) And in the wake of the Arab Spring and the meltdown of four Arab states, Saudi Arabia remains a force for stability and a counterterrorism partner in a dangerous and tumultuous Middle East.

What we do not concede and cannot abide is that the Trump administration’s ties with the Saudis should be exclusive, particularly in view of Crown Prince Muhammad’s reckless policies abroad and his repressive behavior at home. Trump has written the Saudis blank checks for policies that are undermining U.S. values and interests without getting much to shout about in return – and they are cashing them. They’re conducting a devastating war in Yemen that has killed thousands of civilians, created a humanitarian catastrophe, strengthened Al Qaeda and cover for their own misdeeds. They launched a bungled blockade against Qatar that has only enhanced Iran’s influence in Doha and divided the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council. They waged an ill-conceived campaign to cut Hezbollah down to size by kidnapping the Lebanese prime minister – complete with a hostage video that made Riyadh look feckless and heavy-handed at the same time. They cracked down on key female activists who were among the first to champion the right of women to drive cars, and Shia women activists who they accused of undermining the security of the state – and who may now be sentenced to death – effectively erasing whatever goodwill the Saudis created by finally allowing women to drive. They theatrically overreacted to Canada’s criticism of the crackdown by canceling flights, throwing out the Canadian ambassador and pulling Saudi students out of Canadian universities and Saudi patients out of Canadian hospitals.

In the face of all this, what has the Trump administration done to push back? Next to nothing. The U.S. dispatched a three-star general to Saudi Arabia to “investigate” one of the country’s most recent attacks on children in Yemen. And this week, the top U.S. commander in the Middle East called for more transparency in Saudi Arabia’s errant missile targeting. But the Pentagon still hasn’t missed a beat in continuing its unconscionable enabling of possible Saudi war crimes in Yemen. It continues to provide Saudis with intelligence but asserts that it is not giving direct or indirect approval on target selection or execution of bombings.

To put it simply, we don’t believe the White House cares enough about the humanitarian crisis in Yemen or what the Saudis are doing with Qatar or Canada to summon the resolve to rock the boat with Riyadh. As for the crown prince’s increasingly authoritarian behavior, the Trump administration has already amply demonstrated its penchant for courting and forgiving strongmen.

We’re witnessing a shameful example of getting used, abused and confused by a so-called friend. And for what?

There are, of course, steps that the administration could take to bring the out-of-control U.S.-Saudi relationship back into some kind of balance that better serves American – and not just Saudi – interests.

First, if the Saudis want to carry on their destructive campaign in Yemen, they can do it without U.S. support. The Houthis and the Iranians play a key role in Yemen’s misery, but the Saudis and Emiratis are the more

coherent and powerful force – and they are wreaking the most death and destruction. They should declare a cease-fire with no deadline and allow the United Nations envoy to work out an equitable and sustainable peace accord. The Trump administration should tell Crown Prince Muhammad that the U.S. expects Saudi Arabia to lift its siege of Hudaydah and to allow unfettered access for humanitarian assistance. If the Saudis stiff us, the U.S. should immediately suspend all U.S. military support for the Saudi-led military operation against Yemen.

Second, once the U.S. suspends support for the Saudi bombing campaign, it should make clear to Crown Prince Muhammad that if they continue their operations that cause civilian deaths and injuries, the Trump administration will publicly hammer the Saudis for civilian casualties and will support a formal UN inquiry, as was done in Syria, into possible Saudi war crimes in Yemen.

Third, the administration needs to send a clear message to Saudi rulers that it will not allow the kingdom to drag the U.S. into a

Fourth, at the planned U.S.- Persian Gulf Cooperation Council summit in the fall, the administration needs to exert as much pressure on Saudi Arabia and Qatar as possible to get the countries to end their dispute – and make it clear that the U.S. will no longer tolerate Saudi intransigence on its preposter-

ous and unacceptable demands even as we push the hardly blameless Qataris to meet reasonable Saudi demands.

Finally, the U.S. should tell the Saudis that it wants to work with them on an Israeli-Palestinian peace plan that has a chance of succeeding – and acknowledge that this will require addressing both Israeli and Palestinian concerns on Jerusalem and statehood. If the U.S. is prepared to stand up and outline a credible path toward a two-state solution with a Palestinian capital in east Jerusalem, it should expect the Saudis to find more dramatic ways to demonstrate their public acceptance of Israel in the region.

To paraphrase James Baker, one of our old bosses, neither of us just rode into Washington on a bale of hay. And the chance that the Trump administration will follow our advice is slim to none.

What kills us more than anything is that we know what to expect from America’s enemies – they will diddle us at every turn –but we don’t expect that behavior from our supposed allies.

If the Trump administration, in defiance of all strategic logic and its own interests, wants to treat Saudi Arabia as America’s best friend with benefits, fine. But Washington should at least stop letting them screw us at every turn.

(Source: Politico)

Second Announcement



N.I.S.O.C

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY

TENDER NO. : **01-31-9780003**

National Iranian South Oilfields Company intends to purchase the following goods

| Description | Quantity. |
|---|-------------------------------|
| P/F " SOLAR" GAS TURBINE MODEL MDG-1200 | 33 Items including 1.647 Nos. |

Vendors who intend to participate in the A/M tender are requested to send their resume & tendency letter via fax/ mail to the following address not later than 14 days after the second announcement. The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide a bid bond of Euro 2,803 / Rls 133,985,634 in favor of NISOC. Iranian vendors shall submit their resume Acc. to forms Nos. 01, 02 and 03 which are available at www.shana.ir and www.nisoc.ir

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPT

Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site)Bldg NO 104, Ahvaz, Iran

Tel.fax No.: **+98-61 -34457437**

Public Relations

www.shana.ir

www.nisoc.ir

<http://iets.mporg.ir>

The “Belt and Road Initiative” and Win-Win cooperation

➔ The multilateral trading system, with the WTO at its core, is the cornerstone of international trade and underpins the sound and orderly development of global trade. China firmly observes and upholds the WTO rules. It supports the multilateral trading system that is open, transparent, inclusive and non-discriminatory. China has participated in all aspects of WTO work, made its voice heard and contributed its own proposals on improving global economic governance. China is an active participant, strong supporter and major contributor of the multilateral trading system.

The “Belt and Road Initiative” aims at joint development. Propelled by a new vision of development, the Chinese economy is transitioning from rapid growth to high-quality development. China stays committed to the strategy of opening-up for win-win results. It is ready to share opportunities and benefits with other countries and their people. While developing itself, China enhances common prosperity worldwide.

The “Belt and Road Initiative” emphasizes rule-based multilateralism. China has faithfully fulfilled its WTO accession commitments. Since China acceded to the World Trade Organization in 2001, it has made continued efforts to improve the socialist market economy and relevant legal system, to fulfill commitments on trade in goods, trade in services, IPR protection and transparency. In the process, Chinese companies were confronted with international competitions and experienced great difficulties. Rising up to these challenges, Chinese industries and companies made great efforts to carry out structural readjustments, to participate in the global value chains and finally significantly increased their international competitiveness.

China firmly supports the multilateral trading system. Since its accession to the WTO, China has participated in all aspects of WTO work and called upon the WTO to focus more on the concerns and interests of developing members, opposed unilateralism and protectionism, upheld the



authority and efficacy of the multilateral trading system, and made concerted efforts together with other members in supporting the WTO to play a greater role in economic globalization.

China makes significant contribution to the world after accession to the WTO. China steadfastly pursues a mutually beneficial opening-up strategy, upholds the WTO's principle of free trade. From its accession to WTO in 2001 to putting forward the Belt and Road Initiative in 2013, China has made a positive contribution to promoting international trade and increasing global well-being. Since 2002 China has contributed almost 30 percent on average

to annual global economic growth and has become a major engine for the recovery and growth of world economy.

China is actively advancing opening-up to a higher level. In the face of the overwhelming trend of economic globalization, China will make continued efforts to promote balanced development of trade, facilitate international trade, substantially widen market access for foreign investment, create a more attractive environment for foreign investment, regulate outward investment, and advance its FTA strategy. China will open up in a more comprehensive, profound and diversified way, with a view to achieving greater mutual benefit and

win-win outcomes.

Looking into the future, China will continue to fulfill its commitments, comply with rules, actively participate in the improvement of the multilateral trading system, and give firm support to the WTO in playing a greater role in global economic governance. China commits itself to opening up wider and deeper to promote economic and social developments across the world, providing other countries including Iran with more opportunities to share the benefits of China's development, promoting the development of the global economy in the direction of equality, justice, cooperation and mutual benefit.

Chemical operations staging: U.S. repeat scenario at Idlib war

➔ It should also be noted that a major military operation close to liberate the city of Idlib is apparently ahead. Idlib is one of the last bases of terrorist groups protected by the United States and the West. Americans know well that the terrorist forces in the city of Idlib are among the last of their kind in Syria.

Abdel Bari Atwan, the famous analyst of the Arab world, wrote: “The U.S. government knows well that the Syrian army's capture of Idlib is close and therefore strongly opposes it.”

The Sputnik news agency released the report saying that the White Helmets were planning a chemical attack with al-Nusra terrorist group against civilians in Idlib in order to provoke western nations into retaliating against Damascus.

The White Helmets allegedly employed eight vans to transport a shipment of barrels of chlorine from Idlib's Atma factory, which is near the Turkish border and specializes in recycling chlorine, all under heavy protection of al-Nusra terrorists.

Atwan added: “The Russian intelligence reports confirmed that U.S. has used The White Helmets for fake allegations



in the region. The Zionists assisted in the protections of the White Helmets in southern Syria. He went on: “The White Helmets are still in Idlib, and if the chemical weapons sce-

nario is repeated again, it is likely that the pretext for air and missile attacks on Syria would be similar to what was claimed last April in the eastern Ghouta.”

It is clear that U.S. and its western allies are overwhelmed by the vast efforts of the Syrian resistance. So, they resort to the repetitive scenario of a false flag chemical attack, trying to delay the launch of this major operation by the Syrian Arab Army and the Russians.

The Russian Defense Ministry announced that the U.S. is preparing to launch a new assault on Syria with Britain and France. Russia's foreign ministry has warned three world powers (U.S., UK, and France) to halt the use of chemical attacks as a means of putting pressure on the government of Damascus and its allies. John Bolton's recent threat of the possibility of an American missile strike against Syria can also be interpreted in this context.

In any case, it is clear that in the event of any foolishness committed by U.S. and the West against Syria, Damascus and its powerful allies, including Iran and Russia, will not stand idly by. Americans themselves know that the axis of resistance has the ability to respond appropriately to any aggression.

Missing dreams of failed Senator



➔ Undoubtedly, McCain's fate awaits other American politicians! From young senators, such as Ted Cruz and Tom Cotton, to those like Donald Trump and John Bolton, all will die in the near future, while “Islamic Iran” will continue to bloom with strength. Undoubtedly, the current U.S. president and previous presidents, as their predecessor, will die waiting to see the collapse of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

McCain is not just a single person today! McCain is a symbol of the failure and ruination of the United States against the Iranian nation. American authorities have become the symbol of this failure, in their own way. Symbols that will soon leave this world, just like John McCain, without reaching their sinister goals in confrontation with Iran.

Another point to be considered here over McCain's death, is about Donald Trump's reaction to this subject. It should not be forgotten that McCain was a symbol of a “discontent Republicans” who challenged the White House' policies. The reason for McCain's opposition to Trump has been the lack of cooperation on the side the U.S. president. This opposition isn't limited to the recent months and was strong even before the 2016 presidential election campaign.

Over the past two years, there have been many political differences between John McCain and Trump. In Jiang, McCain has explicitly criticized Trump's policies. Trump and McCain disagreed on many topics. McCain often criticized the current U.S. president's foreign policy, and Trump fought back by criticizing the Arizona senator for opposing the abolition of a cost-effective health care law.

In 2015, Trump called McCain a war hero because he was captured. Senator McCain was captured during the Vietnam War and tortured for six years. Trump then said in response to widespread criticism that he likes those who were not captured.

As reported by the Washington Post, Trump nixed issuing a statement that praised the heroism and life of Sen. John McCain, telling senior aides he preferred to issue a tweet before posting one Saturday night that did not include any kind words for the Arizona Republican.

Washington Post added; “Press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders, Chief of Staff John F. Kelly and other White House aides advocated for an official statement that gave the decorated Vietnam War POW plaudits for his military and Senate service and called him a “hero,” according to current and former White House aides, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive internal deliberations. The original statement was drafted before McCain died Saturday, and Sanders and others edited a final version this weekend that was ready for the president, the aides said.”

But Trump told aides he wanted to post a brief tweet instead, and the statement praising McCain's life was not released.

“My deepest sympathies and respect go out to the family of Senator John McCain. Our hearts and prayers are with you!” Trump posted Saturday evening shortly after McCain's death was announced.

Some American politicians criticized U.S. President Tweet for the death of Sen. McCain. In any case, Trump is deeply concerned that McCain's death will turn the midterm elections' results against him, and this is what scares the U.S. President and his companions.

Serious impediments to Iran's branding and rebranding

By Mehrdad Pahlavani

TEHRAN — Brand Making is a silent strategy but the results could manipulate intentions and mark something or someone as favorable or as a stain during a short or long process. Mindsets, international society, and social life are obsessed with variety and spectrum of brands. Few commodity brands are sold quickly because of the country where it is made and some brand's demand is huge only because of the brand. By and large, the name of a country and a brand often overlap. The role of branded commodities has been also moved into political affairs as well as the international arena. The procedure over the branding process is fearfully underway in the Middle East in a different way. This includes interference with other's branding, investing in fake brands and also purchasing copied brands. Iran's branding has been influenced by a plethora of factors, including the fake branding revenue funneled into the pockets of rivals.

Politically, from 1979 onward, Iran's rivalries have been heard about more and more. Their media is strongly committed to the principals of their capitals and recently this has been advocated by the new generation of technology and also social apps. Browsing “Iran” via a variety of search engines always shows malicious news and pictures which are far from realities. Some selective news is often corrupted.

From economic prospective, imposed sanctions on Iran were the crucial big obstacles. Even Iranian scientists and businessmen were not allowed to participate

in international conferences. Iranian economic branding has been interlaced with restrictions, while doing business with Iran is threatened through notifications and confidential advisories. Technology reservations along with and in the framework of the sanctions led to a very costly economic development.

Iran's rich history and civilization have been derailed and interpreted wrongly for political purposes.

An apprehension of the current brand of Iran illuminates three major problems:

1- It is hard to conceive the real inherent brand of Iran. Interpreters' deduction of Iran's real brand has baffled many.

2- The real, inherent brand is manipulated in such a way that misguides Iran's audience as to what it is all about.

3- Iran branding has been politicized. Every issue which is related to Iran is portrayed abroad as a political matter. The simple definition of democracy has been warped despite a 73 percent participation of Iranian voters.

Iran branding encounters many problems and is rooted in extraordinary misunderstandings. In this connection, during the negotiation on the JCPOA, Iran chose “re-branding” to remove its tarnished image. Tehran proved that tendentious claims about Iran have been absolutely wrong. Rebranding needs many provisions to succeed and Iran was not very successful.

The U.S. was ambivalent to comply with its commitment on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Iran's economic image remained negative and untouched.

Sanctions were not lifted as the P5+1 promised.

A rebranding requires fast-track policies. While Iran's rebranding lasted a while, the promises of the JCPOA were not met by the signatories, especially the U.S.

Rebranding should be recognized by others, but it was resisted by neighboring countries and others.

Iran's political and security stability is a vital brand in the Middle East even when expenditures have been much higher and growing among other countries in the Middle East. The military spending over the past decade in the Middle East has been increased (at 2015 prices) in the UAE +122 percent, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia +20 percent, Israel +18 percent, Turkey +9.6 percent, but Egypt -5 percent and Iran -7 percent. The missile capacity and military expenditure of Iran's neighbors have been much higher.


In any event, Iran has not yet fully benefited from the JCPOA deal. The issue right now is Iranian missile capability and its willingness to negotiate on reduction of the capability. Does this make sense?

The reduction in Iran's defensive capabilities leads to the creation of a potential “new Saddam” in the region. How will the West respond to that?

A weakened Iran calls for a new order in the Middle East. What are the Western options for the Middle East rebalancing?


If these questions are to be answered fairly, we may come to the conclusion that Iran correctly doubts trusting the other side of the negotiation table. This is exactly the right position for Iran to take.

First Announcement



N.I.O.C
1397.2490

Renewal of Call for Public Tender
Two – Stages Tender



National Iranian Drilling Company

Subject Of Tender: (Provision of 3 cargo vessels made in 1983 or there after to support Drilling projects located in Persian Gulf)

| The Tender Holder | Registration No. Through National Electronic Tendering System (http://iets.nporg.ir) | Tender No. | Estimated Value (Euro) |
|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------|------------------------|
| National Iranian Drilling Company | 3172955 | 96/k-sh/33-06-5136 | AED23,608,200 |

| method |
|---|
| <p>☐ based on Article 12-3 of the Iranian Tenders Law and minimum scoring (minimum quality score is 60) made in award criterion reflected in the tenderers pre-qualification forms as attached to Tender documents .</p> <p>☐ Possibility of providing the required services as mentioned in the Tender Documents, must be provided and stated in the Tenderer Company's statute, therefore the documents of tenderer which its statute has not this terms ,shall not be considered and evaluated .</p> |

Purchasing & submitting of Tender documents

| Distribution of Tender documents by NIDC | Starting date for receiving (The distribution of the documents will be started one day after the publishing of second advertisement) |
|--|--|
| <p>Distribution place</p> <p>Contracts department— part A — first floor — operational building — Koyee Mellat — Alvaz, Iran- 061-34146525</p> <p>Submitting method</p> <p>Submitting one original bank fund receipt in the amount of 990,000 Iranian rials under account number 4001114004020491 in name of “NIDC incomes centralized fund” issued by I.R. of Iran central bank. Submitting formal request by Tenderer for the purpose of receiving of tender documents.</p> | <p>Last time for receiving (ended on the following tenth day thereof)</p> <p>Closing date</p> <p>14 Days after the last time for receiving pre -qualification forms .</p> <p>Delivery address</p> <p>Hall No. 107, 1st floor, Tender committee, operational building, National Iranian drilling company, Koyee Mellat, Alvaz, Iran. Tel : +98-61-34148580 +98-61-34148569</p> |

Tender guarantee

| Value of guarantee | Acceptable |
|---|---|
| Iranian Rials six milliard and eight hundred and ninety nine million (6,899,000,000) or EURO one hundred thirty three thousand and seven hundred thirteen (143,713) or AED six hundred three thousand and two hundred seventy (603,270) | <p>✓ Bank guarantees or guarantees issued by non-bank institutions that obtained activity license from the central bank of the Islamic republic of Iran.</p> <p>✓ Submitting one original bank fund receipt under account number 4001114006376636 in name of “NIDC saving centralized account” by the central bank of Islamic republic of Iran.</p> |
| Type of guarantee | Tender guarantee should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum for one more time in selling of initial validity duration. |
| Duration of credit for quotation | |

(Name of department)

Guarantee and More of this & other tenders are accessible by click on : www.nidc.ir/http://sapp.ir/nidc.pr

تهران تایمز نوبت اول ۹۷/۰۶/۱۰ نوبت دوم ۹۷/۰۶/۱۱

Pars Diplomatic Real Estate

Apartment

Apt in a Garden Tower in Zafaranieh
6th floor, 189 sq.m, furn
3 Bdrs., parking spot, spj
good light, lobby man, CCTV
camera servant
\$4500

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completely renovated
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\$3500

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Apt in South Dibaji
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Ms.Diba: 09128103206

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1th floor 116 sq.m, 2 Bdrs. fully
furn, lobby, pkg
\$2500

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Apt in Jordan
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parking spot
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good access to highway
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Ms.Diba: 09128103206

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100 sq.m, storage, parking spots
Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

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lobby, parking spot
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Residency & foreign Company

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Price negotiable

Suitable for Embassies

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fully furn, parking spot
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Ms.Diba: 09128103206

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diplomatic building
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Ms.Diba: 09128103206

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light & view, spj
parking spot, 24/7 security
lobby man, **\$2500**

Ms.Diba: 09128103206

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quite & cozy, parking spot, spj **\$2700**

Ms.Diba: 09128103206

Apt in Jordan
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furn, balcony, storage
parking spot, **\$1000**

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

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Elahieh Apt (\$3000)
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A new vaccine could wipe out acne

Almost everyone will deal with acne during their teenage years, and many of us still fight this skin problem into adulthood. Acne can cause much psychological distress, but there are few quick and effective therapies to address it. Will a new vaccine step in to eradicate this issue?

Acne vulgaris, or simply acne, is a skin condition that affects most, if not all, adolescents.

It can sometimes persist into adulthood. Also, scarring from acne can last for a long time.

Research has shown that persistent acne not only causes discomfort, but also psychological distress; people become self-aware about their appearance and worry how this may affect their social relationships.

Some of the most common treatments for acne include antibiotics and retinoids, which are a type of chemical compound that help maintain skin health and appearance.

However, researchers explain that these traditional treatments are not always effective, and they can cause further undesirable effects — the least severe of which include dry skin and irritation.

“Current treatment options are often not effective or tolerable for many of the 85 percent of adolescents and more than 40 million adults in the United States who suffer from this multi-factorial cutaneous inflammatory condition,” explains researcher Chun-Ming Huang, at the University of California, San Diego.

“New, safe, and efficient therapies are sorely needed,” he adds. This is exactly what he and his team have recently been working toward.

■ A vaccine to target acne toxins?

In a new study — whose findings now feature in the Journal of Investigative Dermatology — Huang and colleagues explain their process in developing an effective and safe vaccine to treat acne.

The researchers were able to establish — for the first time ever — that they could fight the toxin secreted by the bacteria involved in acneiform eruptions with a dedicated antibody. This method, they add, also helped reduce acne-related inflammation.

As they note in their paper, a bacterium called *Propionibacterium acnes* (commonly referred to as *Cutibacterium acnes*) produces a toxin called the Christie-Atkins-Munch-Peterson (CAMP) factor. The CAMP factor, they show, is largely responsible for inflammation in acne lesions.

Working both with a mouse model and skin cells collected from humans, the researchers tested the effectiveness of a set of monoclonal antibodies — a type of immune cell — against the CAMP factor.

So far, the researchers’ efforts have shown promising



Whether or not CAMP factor-targeted vaccines will impact multiple *P. acnes* subtypes and other commensals has to be determined, but acne immunotherapy presents an interesting avenue to explore nonetheless.

results, and the antibodies proved effective against the inflammation-inducing properties of the toxin.

“Once validated by a large-scale clinical trial,” Huang explains, “the potential impact of our findings is huge for the hundreds of millions of individuals suffering from acne vulgaris.”

■ 'An interesting avenue to explore'

In an editorial published alongside the study paper, Emmanuel Contassot — from the University of Zürich in Switzerland — explains how vaccines for acne could be safer and more effective than existing treatments.

Such vaccines, he writes, would “[address] an unmet medical need.” At the same time, he cautions that “acne immunother-

apies that target *P. acnes*-derived factors have to be cautiously designed to avoid unwanted disturbance of the microbiome that guarantees skin homeostasis [self-regulation].”

In other words, the vaccines would have to ensure that bacterial equilibrium on the skin is not affected, since some bacterial strands actually help protect the skin’s overall health. Still, he encourages further efforts to create better, more targeted treatments for acne.

“Whether or not CAMP factor-targeted vaccines will impact multiple *P. acnes* subtypes and other commensals has to be determined, but acne immunotherapy presents an interesting avenue to explore nonetheless.”

(Source: Medical News Today)

Intensive care nurse discovers new colleague was premature baby she cared for 28 years ago

A neonatal nurse has revealed how she discovered her new colleague was a baby she looked after in intensive care three decades earlier.

Vilma Wong, 54, is an NICU nurse at Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital in Palo Alto, California, where she has worked for 32 years.

Dr Brandon Seminatore, 28, is currently completing his residency at the same hospital - where he was born at 29 weeks in April 1990.

For a month after being born, Dr Seminatore was looked after by Wong in the NICU because he was born so prematurely.

Now, however, the pair have reunited.

Wong, from Fremont, California, recognized her former patient’s name as soon as she saw it - but she couldn’t remember why it rang a bell.

It wasn’t until Seminatore, from San Jose, California, revealed he’d been a patient in the unit 28 years earlier that the nurse put two and two together.

Seminatore, who is specializing in child neurology, even found a picture of himself as a baby being held by Wong.

“A few weeks ago Brandon joined my team and was taking care of one of my patients,” explains Wong. “I asked who he was and his name and last name sounded very familiar.”

“I kept asking where he was from and he told me that he was from San Jose, California, and that, as a matter of fact, he was a premature baby born at our hospital.

“I then got very suspicious because I remember being the primary nurse to a baby with the same last name. I asked him if his dad was a police officer and there was a big silence and then he asked me if I was Vilma.

“I said yes.”

Seminatore’s mother has asked him to look out for a nurse called Vilma in the NICU, but the young doctor had presumed she would have already retired.

The fact that the pair did meet was “surreal,” according to Seminatore.

“I never expected to meet a provider who took care of me when I was a baby,” he says.

“When Vilma recognized my name, I remembered the photos my parents had shown me and it truly sunk in that I was one of these babies. I’ve come full-circle and I’m taking care of babies with the nurse that took care of me.”

Seminatore texted his parents as soon as he and Wong had made the discovery, and they replied straight away with the picture from 28 years earlier.

And Wong was equally overwhelmed by the discovery, saying, “I was in shock initially but overjoyed to know that I took care of him almost 30 years ago and now he’s as a paediatric resident to the same population he was part of when he was born.”

(Source: The Independent)

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sq.m,spj,\$8000

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garden,500 sq.m built up

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Darous

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Other areas:

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Aghdasiyeh

Shahrak Gharb

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Valiasre

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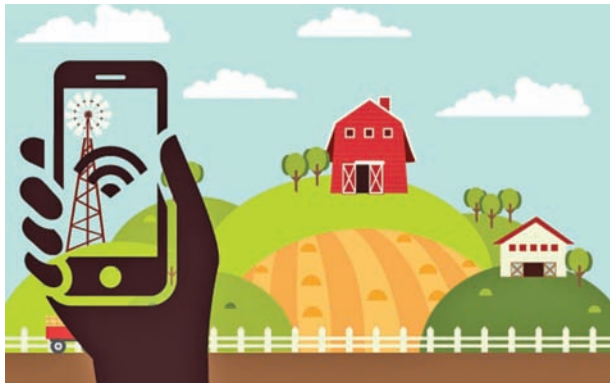
Arjantin

Zafar...

nice cases ready to move in.

Qazvin to host startup event for rural innovation

TECHNOLOGY d e s k **TEHRAN** — A startup event focusing on rural innovation will open today in the city of Qazvin and will end on September 4, the vice president for rural development and underprivileged areas announced, Fars reported on Thursday.



Seyyed Abolfazl Razavi said that the events aim to create sustainable development and develop job creation according to regional capacity with the support of telecommunication and information technology, he said.

About 200 entrepreneurs from Ardebil, Zanjan, Gilan and Mazandaran provinces will attend the event, he announced.

The startups based in rural area or startups in cities which deal with rural challenges and entrepreneurship in villages can benefit from low-interest loan for rural job creation, he added.

There are five other startup events, which will be held in five other regions of the country in the near future, he announced.

SOCIALLY SAFE

Be safe on social media

Social media platforms have become an integral part of online lives. Social networks are a great way to stay connected with others, but you should be wary about how much personal information you post.

Have your family, friends and community follow these tips to safely enjoy social media.

- Privacy and security settings exist for a reason: Learn about and use the privacy and security settings on social networks. They are there to help you control who sees what you post and manage your online experience in a positive way.



- Once posted, always posted: Protect your reputation on social networks. What you post online stays online. Think twice before posting pictures you wouldn't want your parents or future employers to see. Recent research found that 70 percent of job recruiters rejected candidates based on information they found online.

- Your online reputation can be a good thing: Recent research also found that recruiters respond to a strong, positive personal brand online. So show your smarts, thoughtfulness and mastery of the environment.

- Keep personal info personal: Be cautious about how much personal information you provide on social networking sites. The more information you post, the easier it may be for a hacker or someone else to use that information to steal your identity, access your data or commit other crimes such as stalking.

- Know and manage your friends: Social networks can be used for a variety of purposes. Some of the fun is creating a large pool of friends from many aspects of your life. That doesn't mean all friends are created equal. Use tools to manage the information you share with friends in different groups or even have multiple online pages. If you're trying to create a public persona as a blogger or expert, create an open profile or a "fan" page that encourages broad participation and limits personal information. Use your personal profile to keep your real friends (the ones you know and trust) up to date with your daily life.

- Be honest if you're uncomfortable: If a friend posts something about you that makes you uncomfortable or seems inappropriate, let them know. Likewise, stay open minded if a friend approaches you because something you've posted makes him or her uncomfortable. People have different tolerances for how much the world knows about them respect those differences.

- Know what action to take: If someone is harassing or threatening you, remove them from your friends list, block them and report them to the site administrator.

- **Protect yourself with these tips:**

- Keep security software current: Having the latest security software, web browser and operating system is the best defense against viruses, malware and other online threats.

- Own your online presence: When applicable, set the privacy and security settings on websites to your comfort level for information sharing. It's OK to limit how and with whom you share information.

- Make your password a sentence: A strong password is a sentence that is at least 12 characters long. Focus on positive sentences or phrases that you like to think about and are easy to remember (for example, "I love country music."). On many sites, you can even use spaces!

- Unique account, unique password: Having separate passwords for every account helps to thwart cybercriminals. At a minimum, separate your work and personal accounts and make sure that your critical accounts have the strongest passwords.

- When in doubt, throw it out: Links in email, tweets, posts and online advertising are often how cybercriminals try to steal your personal information. Even if you know the source, if something looks suspicious, delete it.

- Post only about others as you have them post about you. The Golden Rule applies online as well.

(Source: staysafeonline.org)

IASP 2018 World Conference to highlight innovation ecosystem

TECHNOLOGY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Fostering innovation ecosystems will be in the limelight at the 35th World Conference on Science Parks and Areas of Innovation, which is organized by the International Association of Science Parks and Areas of Innovation (IASP).

With the theme of "Towards Sustainable Cities and Communities: Fostering Innovation Ecosystems", the event will be held from September 2 to 5 at the Isfahan Science and Technology Park.

The IASP 2018 World Conference will explore the role of Software Technology Parks and Area of Innovations in the formation of the innovation ecosystem and the sustainable development of cities.

The German professor of spatial planning Klaus R. Kunzmann will be the keynote speaker at the event.

In 2010 he was one of the co-organizers of the 3rd Knowledge Cities World Summit in Melbourne, Australia and he is known for his ongoing research interests are innovative urban policy and European spatial planning.

The South Korean professor and vice president of strategy and planning Jong-in Choi and the Turkish angel investor and best-selling author Baybars Altuntas are the invited speakers at the event.

The IASP Seminar on the fundamentals of Science and Technology Parks (STPs) and Areas of Innovation (AOIs) will take place on September 2.

The IASP Pre-conference Seminar is organized directly by the IASP Headquarters and is designed to meet the needs of professionals who are appointed to set up a new science



park, as well as for those who are new to industry.

In 2015, the UN adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to guide global action and investment for sustainable development over the next 15 years, one of which focuses on Sustainable Cities and Communities, according to IASP website.

IASP is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organization in Special Consultative Status with the Economic

and Social Council of the United Nations.

It aims to coordinate a very active network of professionals that manage areas of innovation and science and technology parks, enhance new business opportunities for companies and research organizations located in these areas, assist the development and growth of new parks and other areas of innovation and increase the international visibility of members and sponsors.

300 expat experts are faculty members of Iranian universities: VP



TECHNOLOGY d e s k **TEHRAN** — During the past three years, 300 talented Iranian experts, who have returned their homeland, became faculty members in universities nationwide, vice president for science and technology announced, Nasimonline reported on Friday.

Sourena Sattari said that 70 companies were established by 1,020 talented Iranians who returned the country during past three years.

Most of them returned from U.S., Britain and Canada and were graduated in engineering, basic sciences, and human

sciences, he announced.

Some Iranian talented experts travel their homeland to hold workshops and seminars, he said. As Sattari announced in late May 2018, with the support of the National Elites Foundation and Science and Technology Vice Presidency, a total of 67 universities, knowledge enterprises, technology parks and incubators performed 'Cooperation with Iranian expat entrepreneurs and elite' plan.

The plan aims to attract Iranians abroad to share knowledge in different forms including postdoctoral research, research opportunity and visiting fellow.

What is mezzanine financing for startups?

Too many startups fail to successfully get off the ground because of decisions that result in inadequate financing. As a founder of a startup, you can have a completely viable idea and still fail due to financing mistakes. For this reason, it is important to understand the different types of financing appropriate at different stages of your business. Financing can be complicated and it is always helpful to consult with a skilled business attorney who can evaluate your financing needs and provide valuable advice.

One type of financing used by startups is called "mezzanine financing." The name is appropriate because this type of financing is in the middle between equity and traditional bank debt. Your business is less leveraged because there is no hard collateral to mezzanine investors, though many charge more interest than a bank loan. On the other hand, you will give up less control of your company than you will if you pursue additional equity funding.



During the very first stages of your business, pursuing mezzanine financing may not be right for you, though you should discuss all options with your attorney based on your individual circumstances. However, once your company is up and running, you may feel the need to pursue substantial growth. If you do not want to or are unable to use cash flow to fund such a growth stage, mezzanine financing may be the right option for you.

(Source: sanjosebusinesslawyersblog.com)

Day 1-30: The startup checklist

Wouldn't it be great if there was a startup cheat sheet for budding business owners? Well, now there is!

With the help of some of the country's top start-up businesses, we've compiled an essential checklist of the key tasks and activities that need to be considered in the first 100 days of starting any business.

As most people aren't familiar with the steps to start a business, this checklist covers everything you need to know pre-launch and post-launch; from market research to domain names and business banking. If you've got a business idea, then this checklist will help ensure your start-up hits the ground running...

- **Look for small business grants and/or consider raising investment**

As referenced in our first point, you might

not need – or want – to raise finance as you may have a salaried income or savings to tide you over. However, if you're looking to grow quickly then often the easiest way to do this is through small businesses grants and/or external finance such as equity investment and crowdfunding.

VentureFounders advises you to "figure out your finances, consider how much money you think you'll need and double it". If you do secure investors then Flubit co-founder Bertie Stephens says you should consider your investors as your "number one customer". Stephens elaborates: "If something goes wrong [...] these are the guys and girls who will be deciding if they'll pump more cash into your business. Update them constantly, talk openly to them, show them the vision."

(Source: startups.co.uk)

'Knowledge-based products make \$8m revenue'



TECHNOLOGY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Selling knowledge-based products has so far brought in 34 trillion rials (about \$8 million) revenue in the current Iranian calendar year, starting March 21, said the deputy science minister for research and technology.

Masoud Boroumand added that the number of incubator centers has increased to 193 in the previous Iranian calendar year 1396 compared to 174 centers in the year earlier.

As many as 41 science and technology parks were operational as the main centers


for development of knowledge-based companies until the end of the previous Iranian calendar year, he added.

Up to now, 377 knowledge-based brands have been registered in the country, Boroumand said.

Over 42 thousand Iranians are now working in the knowledge-based companies, he added.

Last week, the vice president for science and technology Sourena Sattari said that Iran has exported \$400 million worth of knowledge-based products during the past Iranian calendar year.

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| SPRING, P/N: 01-44242-00 | 20 |
| MILLING SHOE 4 1/8 IN OD, P/N: 48395 | 15 |
| UPPER BODY, P/N: 01-44804-00 | 10 |
| LOWER BODY, P/N: 01-44807-00 | 10 |
| BOTTOM SUB, P/N: 01-44811-00 | 10 |
| MANDREL, P/N: 01-89623-00 | 10 |
| SAFETY SUB, P/N: 01-44810-00 | 10 |
| CYLINDER, P/N: 01-44803-00 | 10 |

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Solar eruptions may not have slinky-like shapes after all, team claims

As the saying goes, everything old is new again. While the common phrase often refers to fashion, design, or technology, scientists at the University of New Hampshire have found there is some truth to this mantra even when it comes to research.

Revisiting some older data, the researchers discovered new information about the shape of coronal mass ejections (CMEs) - large-scale eruptions of plasma and magnetic field from the sun - that could one day help protect satellites in space as well as the electrical grid on Earth.

"Since the late 1970s, coronal mass ejections have been assumed to resemble a large Slinky - one of those spring toys - with both ends anchored at the sun, even when they reach Earth about one to three days after they erupt," said Noe Lugaz, research associate professor in the UNH Space Science Center. "But our research suggests their shapes are possibly different."

Knowing the shape and size of CMEs is important because it can help better forecast when and how they will impact Earth. While they are one of the main sources for creating beautiful and intense auroras, like the Northern and Southern Lights, they can also damage satellites, disrupt radio communications and wreak havoc on the electrical transmission system causing massive



and long-lasting power outages.

■ Measurements are helpful

Right now, only single point measurements

exist for CMEs making it hard for scientists to judge their shapes. But these measurements have been helpful to space forecasters,

The goal of measurement is to lengthen that notice time to hours - ideally 24 hours - to make more informed decisions on whether to power down satellites or the grid.

allowing them a 30 to 60 minute warning before impact. The goal is to lengthen that notice time to hours - ideally 24 hours - to make more informed decisions on whether to power down satellites or the grid.

In their study the researchers took a closer look at data from two NASA spacecraft, Wind and ACE, typically orbiting upstream of Earth. They analyzed the data of 21 CMEs over a two-year period between 2000 and 2002 when Wind had separated from ACE.

Wind had only separated one percent of one astronomical unit (AU), which is the distance from the sun to the Earth (93,000,000 miles). So, instead of now being in front of Earth, with ACE, Wind was now perpendicular to the Sun-Earth line, or on the side.

"Because they are usually so close to one another, very few people compare the data from both Wind and ACE," said Lugaz. "But 15 years ago, they were apart and in the right place for us to go back and notice the difference in measurements, and the differences became larger with increasing separations, making us question the Slinky shape."

While the researchers say more studies are needed, Lugaz says this information could be important for future space weather forecasting.

(Source: eurekalert.org)

Researchers suggest how the common fruit fly uses the sun to navigate



What do ancient seafaring explorers and fruit flies have in common? Caltech researchers have discovered that, similar to nautical navigators of old, fruit flies use celestial cues like the sun to navigate in straight lines.

The research is described in a paper appearing online on August 30 in the journal Current Biology. The work was done in the laboratory of Michael Dickinson, Esther M. and Abe M. Zarem Professor of Bioengineering and Aeronautics. Dickinson is an affiliated faculty member of the Tianqiao and Chrissy Chen Institute for Neuroscience at Caltech.

Imagine you're wandering alone through a vast desert — the landscape is barren and the sun is blazing. There are no landmarks to guide you, but accidentally going in circles could mean death. Whatever direction you choose, you need to be able to head straight.

■ Nine miles in one night

This is the conundrum of *Drosophila*, the common fruit fly, in the desert. Almost 40 years ago, a study found that fruit flies can fly up to nine miles in one night in search of food and water. How are these tiny insects able to navigate such long distances?

"For flies crossing inhospitable territory, flying around in circles would be really dangerous — they're less likely to find any food or water," says postdoctoral scholar Ysabel Giraldo, the study's first author. "Surprisingly, fruit flies are seasonally found in environments like the Mojave Desert. They must get there

from somewhere, and once there, they must figure out how to get around."

Giraldo and her collaborators found that fruit flies navigate using the sun as a landmark. The researchers placed flies in a "flight simulator" — a kind of virtual reality where they are held in place but can still move their wings in response to visual stimuli.

The researchers found that a fly will fix a small, bright spot (the simulated sun) in one position within its field of vision and fly straight with respect to that position. When the team removed this landmark and reintroduced it a few hours later, the same fly could remember and adopt its former orientation, or heading.

■ Dispersing in many directions

Each fly they tested selected a different heading, suggesting that under natural conditions, flies in a group would disperse in many directions.

"It was a bit surprising to find that the same pesky little flies that flit around fruit bowls and wine glasses have the capacity to navigate for many miles using the sun," says Dickinson.

The research also shows that these flies have so-called compass neurons in their brains that seem to be associated with this navigational behavior. Genetically silencing these neurons (rendering them unable to function) removed a fly's ability to create a heading based on the sun. Instead, the fly adopted

a simpler, reflexive behavior of flying straight towards the light.

(Source: phys.org)

Scientists show how biodiversity reacted to past climate change



In the past, plants and animals reacted to environmental changes by adapting, migrating or going extinct. These findings point to radical changes in biodiversity due to climate change in the future. The paper is published in the scientific journal Trends in Ecology and Evolution by an international group of scientists led by the Center for Macroecology, Evolution and Climate, University of Copenhagen.

Nature is reacting to climate change. We see altered behavior and movement among plants and animals; flowers change flowering period and owls get darker body color, due to warmer winters. So, how does the future for biodiversity look like? Will plants and animals be able to adjust quickly enough to survive the changing temperatures, precipitation and seasons? Lead-author of a new study Professor David Bravo-Nogues from Center for Macroecology, Evolution and Climate, University of Copenhagen, explains,

"We compiled an enormous amount of studies of events, which we know influenced biodiversity during the past million years. It turns out species have been able to survive new conditions in their habitat by changing either their behavior or body shape. However, the current magnitude and unseen speed of change in nature may push species beyond their ability to adapt."

Until now, scientists thought species' main reaction to climatic changes was to move. However, the new study shows that local adaptation to new conditions seems to have played a key role in the way species survived.

■ A long period of times

Species adapt when the whole population change, e.g. when all owls get darker body color. This happens slowly over a long period of time. Coauthor Stephen Jackson, director of the U.S. Geological Survey's Southwest Climate Adaptation Science Center, elaborates,

"From fossils and other biological 'archives' we have access to a nearly limitless number of case studies throughout Earth's history. This provides us with valuable knowledge of how climate changes of various rates, magnitudes, and types can affect biodiversity."

The new study might give us the answer to decode how biodiversity changes under climate change. This knowledge can inform policy-makers in order to implement effective conservation schemes in the future. Some species, when failed to adapt or move fast enough, like the orange-spotted filefish, have already gone extinct due to climate change. Co-author Francisco Rodriguez-Sanchez from the Spanish Research Council (CSIC), says,

"We know animals and plants have prevented extinction by adapt or migrate in the past. However, the models we use today to predict future climate change, foresee magnitudes and rates of change, which have been exceptionally rare in the last million years. Thus, we need to expand our knowledge and improve our prediction models. Also, we must recognize the limitations of the models, because they are used to inform politicians and decision-makers about effects of climate change on biodiversity."

(Source: Science Daily)

Anomalies in the LHC's data still stubbornly pointing to new physics

Past experiments using CERN's super-sized particle-smasher, the Large Hadron Collider (LHC), hinted at something unexpected. A particle called a beauty meson was breaking down in ways that just weren't line up with predictions.

That means one of two things — our predictions are wrong, or the numbers are out. And a new approach makes it less likely that the observations are a mere coincidence, making it's nearly enough for scientists to start getting excited.

A small group of physicists took the collider's data on beauty meson (or b meson for short) disintegration, and investigated what might happen if they swapped one assumption regarding its decay for another that assumed interactions were still occurring after they transformed.

The results were more than a little surprising. The alternative approach doubles down on the take that something strange really is going on.

In physics, anomalies are usually viewed as good things. Fantastic things. Unexpected numbers could be the window to a whole new way of seeing physics.

Physicists are quite a conservative bunch. You have to be when the fundamental laws of the Universe are at stake.

So when experimental results don't quite match up with the theory, it's first presumed to be a random blip in the statistical chaos of a complicated test. If a follow-up experiment shows the same thing, it's still presumed to be 'one of those things'.

But after enough experiments, sufficient data can be collected to compare the chances of errors with the likelihood that something truly interesting is going on.

If an unexpected result differs from the predicted outcome by at least three standard deviations it's called a 3 sigma, and physicists are allowed to look at the results while nodding enthusiastically with their eyebrows raised. It becomes an observation.

(Source: sciencealert.com)

Bees may be getting addicted to pesticides, researchers say

Researchers from Imperial College London and Queen Mary University of London found that bumblebees begin to enjoy the taste of food laced with pesticides the more they are exposed to it. The study showed that over time, bees in the colony increasingly eat the food with pesticides in it, potentially showing addictive behavior from the bees.

A 2012 study published in Science found that when bumblebees are exposed to neonicotinoids, they experience a significantly reduced growth rate and an 85 percent reduction in production of new queens when compared with colonies not exposed to the pesticide. The pesticide is almost completely banned in the European Union, but some disagree that the pesticide is the cause of dwindling bee populations.

"Whilst neonicotinoids are controversial, if the effects of replacements on nontarget insects are not understood, then I believe it is sensible that we take advantage of current knowledge and further studies to provide guidance for using neonicotinoids more responsibly, rather than necessarily an outright ban," Richard Gill, lead researcher on the study and a lecturer at Imperial College London, said.

To understand more about how the pesticides are affecting bees, the team tracked 10 bumblebee colonies over 10 days. Every colony had access to an area that contained feeders with neonicotinoids and feeders without it.



"Interestingly, neonicotinoids target nerve receptors in insects that are similar to receptors targeted by nicotine in mammals," Gill explained. "Our findings that bumblebees acquire a taste for neonicotinoids ticks certain symptoms of addictive behavior, which is intriguing given the addictive properties of nicotine on humans, although more research is needed to determine this in bees."

(Source: Newsweek)

Tiny tunnels previously unknown to scientists found between the skull and brain

It's not every day that scientists find a completely new aspect of human anatomy, but a study published this week in Nature Neuroscience is providing exactly that, describing a previously unknown network of tunnels located between the skull and the brain.

In mice, the newly discovered tunnels, or vascular channels, allow for the quick transport of immune cells to brain injuries brought on by stroke or other brain disorders. The tunnels were discovered by Matthias Nahrendorf, a professor at Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, and his colleagues as they were studying the way bone marrow produces and distributes immune cells throughout the body.

Importantly, the same anatomical features were also found to exist in humans. It's quite likely that these vascular channels facilitate the same healing function in humans as they do in mice, but future research will be needed to prove it.

Red blood cells and other immune cells are produced within our bone marrow, a spongy tissue located within our bones. These immune cells help us to fend off infections and heal injuries, whether these injuries happen in our legs, hands, torso, or even the brain. In fact, immune cells produced within our arms and legs can travel via the bloodstream to damaged tissue in the brain. That said, scientists have wondered if these immune cells are produced and disseminated throughout the bone marrow of the entire body, or in select areas. The new study was an effort to answer this very question.

To learn more about this physiological process, Nahrendorf's team used cell-specific dyes in mice, allowing them to visually track the movement of immune cells through the body.

(Source: gizmodo.com)

Sale of 785 BMI's Subsidiary Firms in 4 Yrs.

Chief Executive of Bank Melli Iran (BMI) Dr. Mohammad-Reza Hosseinzadeh said that a number of 785 subsidiary companies of Bank Melli Iran (BMI) were sold in four years, the Public Relations Dept. of the bank reported.

He placed special emphasis on leveling the track of transfer of BMI's subsidiary companies in the bank and added, "selling rental and ownership-based properties is of the

first priorities of Bank Melli Iran in line with implementation of law to reduce economic-activities of the bank.

CEO of Bank Melli Iran went on to say that transferring additional properties and companies of the bank has been made in line with special emphasis of the president and notification of law to reduce economic activities of the bank as much as 33 percent, the issue of which has been put atop agenda of the bank.

Statistics show that 124 additional properties of the bank, valued at 817,445 billion rials, have been sold in 65 tenders, he maintained.

He pointed to the accelerated money turnover in society and payment of more facilities to customers as the other objectives behind selling surplus properties of the bank and said, "a number of 661 properties have been sold through 512 tenders in 2015, 2016



and 2017, the Public Relations Dept. of the bank concluded.

Subscribers of SHATEL Co. Gets Free Mobile Internet and SMS Services on Sept. 2

On the occasion of 1st foundation anniversary of this nationwide mobile phone operator in the country, SHATEL Company gives 7-gigabyte mobile internet (G3 and G4) and unlimited SMS services as free of charge to its subscribers, the Public Relations Dept. of the company reported.

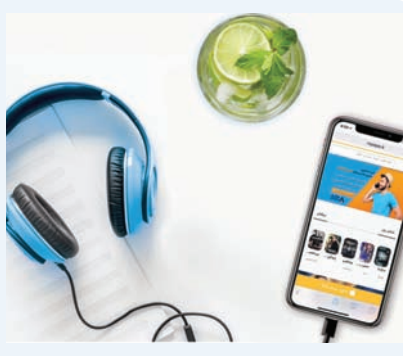
In this comprehensive plan, SHATEL

Company's old and new subscribers, who have received their SMI card earlier the date and call the first contact, can get free seven gigabytes mobile internet, 1,000 minutes of free conversation and also 1,000 SMS services.

With due observance to the said issue, using high-speed internet

services (G3 and G4) and SMS services on SIM cards of this operator will be free of charge for all subscribers of SHATEL Company, the report added.

It should be noted that SHATEL Mobile Company will also present 14-gigabyte free internet (G3 and G4) during two-day holidays on the occasion of this festivity.



Normal precipitation projected for autumn

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Iran’s meteorological organization has predicted that precipitation will meet normal levels in most of the provinces nationwide in autumn.

Precipitations in provinces in western half of Iran including Kordestan, Kermanshah, Zanjan, Hamedan, Lorestan, West Azarbaijan, and Ilam will surpass normal levels, Masoud Haqiqat, an official with the organization said, IRNA reported on Friday.

However, projection models, show that precipitations will be lower than normal in the Caspian Sea littoral cities and also southern Iran, he explained.

Commenting on temperature conditions in autumn Haqiqat said that temperature will not exceed normal averages in western half of Iran, but it will rise by 0.5 to 1 degrees on the Celsius scale in eastern half of the country.

Earth quickly heading for ‘point of no return’ unless we take immediate action

The Earth is quickly heading for the “point of no return” unless we act immediately, climate scientists have warned.

If governments don’t act decisively on global warming before 2035, it will be very unlikely that we will be able to limit global warming to under two degrees, according to a major new study. If warming reaches over that point, it is likely to trigger climate catastrophe that could make much of the world unlivable.

The researchers also say that the deadline to stop global warming reaching 1.5C has already passed, unless we commit to radical action now. They hope that the strict deadline can become an important moment to commit to action on the climate.

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Without that action, Earth will fall past the point of no return and it will be impossible to stop global warming, they warn. And even those dramatic projects might be overly optimistic, they note.

“In our study we show that there are strict deadlines for taking climate action,” says Henk Dijkstra, a professor at Utrecht University in the Netherlands and one of the study authors. “We conclude that very little time is left before the Paris targets [to limit global warming to 1.5°C or 2°C] become infeasible even given drastic emission reduction strategies.”

(Source: The Independent)

LEARN ENGLISH

First Paycheck

Emily: Hey, Susan. Have you got a sec? I have some questions about my paycheck.

Susan: You bet, Emily. Pull up a chair.

Emily: Well, this is my first paycheck here in the States and there are a few things I don’t understand. First off, what is this FICA, and SUI Y tax, and why are there **deductions** both for Medicare and for my health insurance plan?

Susan: OK, let’s start from the top of your pay **stub**. This number here represents your **gross** pay.

Emily: Yes, that’s easy enough to understand.

Susan: Then here we have a series of deductions. First off are the federal ones, FICA stands for Federal Insurance Contribution Act, or something like that. It’s your **federal income** tax. And then there’s Social Security and Medicare, which are both federal programs to help you out after you retire or if you were unable to work.

Emily: All right, I see. So the Medicare isn’t actually a health insurance I can use now.

Susan: That’s right. Below the federal deductions are the state deductions. There’s the state income tax, and then this SUI SD-Itax you were asking about is paying into an unemployment and disability **fund** that our state has set up, but you can see it’s a pretty small quantity that they take.

Emily: Yeah, I don’t mind giving them a dollar fifty for that. So there are two separate income taxes – one at a state level and one at federal level?

Susan: That’s right. Not all states have an income tax. Some use higher property taxes or sales taxes instead.

Emily: I see. All right, well I think everything else I can figure out on my own. The deductions for health insurance and my 401(K) are pretty **self-explanatory**. Thanks for your help, Susan.

Susan: No problem! All those deductions do add up, and nobody’s net pay is as high as they’d like. I can understand why you’d want some explanation.

Emily: Yeah, I guess it’s the same in the UK, I just never paid much attention. See you later!

■ Key vocabulary

deduction: the process of taking away an amount from a total, or the amount that is taken away

stub: a piece of a cheque left in a cheque book as a record after the main part has been torn out

gross: a gross sum of money is the total amount before any tax or costs have been taken away

federal: of or relating to a form of government or a country in which power is divided between one central and several regional governments

income: amount of money that you receive

fund: a sum of money or other resources whose principal or interest is set aside for a specific objective

self-explanatory: needing no explanation, obvious

■ Supplementary vocabulary

basic: elementary or simple

jargon: language peculiar to a particular trade, profession, or group

welfare: financial or other assistance to an individual or family from a city, state, or national government

deposit: to place for safekeeping or in trust

tax: a sum of money demanded by a government for its support or for specific facilities or services

(Source: irlanguage.com)

‘We have trespassed cheetah’s habitat, so we have to ensure their safety’

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — “We have trespassed cheetah’s habitat and the least we could do is to ensure their safety,” Majid Kharrazian-Moqaddam, director of aquatic wildlife and biodiversity office at the Department of Environment has said.

Kharrazian-Moqaddam made the remarks on the occasion of National Cheetah Day, August 31.

Over the past 16 years some 42 Asiatic cheetah have been killed in the country, he regretted, adding that 28 of the cheetahs died in road crashes and 14 other were either killed in conflicts with guard dogs or due to other unknown reasons.

Kharrazian-Moqaddam explained road kill constitute 70 percent of cheetahs’ fatalities and that’s why guard dogs and being struck and killed by motor vehicles are the main threats to this precious species population, IRNA news agency reported on Friday.

For one Abbasabad-Mayami road, linking north-central Semnan province to Mashhad, northeastern province of Khorasan Razavi, in one of the deadliest roads for Asiatic cheetahs as 8 cheetahs have been killed in this area over the past 10 years, he lamented.

Department of Environment has allocated some 20 billion rials (nearly \$480,000) since last year (March 2017 to March 2018) to install wildlife fences to ensure animals straying onto a highway will not sustain loss.

Installing fences for 5 kilometers on each side of the road do not guarantee that cheetahs would not cross the road and other responsible bodies such as Ministry of Transport and Urban Development should also collaborate to increase road safety for the cheetahs, he noted.

“It is clear that cheetah condition is Iran is not favorable and that’s why in addition to conservation plans we need to have other plans such as captive breeding to save them,” he suggested.

■ The exact population of cheetahs unknown

Kharrazian-Moqaddam also said that there are no exact figures on the number of Asiatic cheetahs in Iran and whoever claims to know the real number is wrong.

Cheetahs’ habitats in Iran are stretching over 12 million hectares of land area and over the past 16 years only experts collaborating with Conservation of Asiatic Cheetah Project (CACP) have actually strived to count the species using trap cameras and other technical methods, he noted.

He went on to say that they have counted 48 cheetahs, but the number is not exact



and has certainly changed given that some must have died and some have reproduced over the past years.

■ Iran the last habitat of Asiatic cheetahs; fastest beauties in the world

Asiatic cheetah, the fastest land animal in the world, are now only inhabiting eastern and east central Iran, Iman Memarian, the chief veterinarian of Pardisan Rehabilitation Center has said.

“There are no other Asiatic cheetahs in other parts of the world and that’s why the species are also called Iranian cheetahs,” YJC quoted Memarian as saying on Thursday.

And accordingly the only Asiatic cheetahs living in captivity are in Pardisan Rehabilitation Center, northwestern Tehran, he added.

The cheetah has been listed as critically endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List since 1996. It once occurred from the Arabian Peninsula and the Near East to the Kyzylkum Desert, Caspian region, Pakistan and India, but has been extirpated there during the 20th century.

Currently the Asiatic cheetah mainly inhabits the desert areas around Dasht-e Kavir in the eastern and central east of Iran, including parts of the Kerman, Khorasan, Semnan, Yazd, Tehran, and

Markazi provinces. Most live in five protected areas, Kavir National Park, Touran National Park, Bafq Protected Area, Dar-e Anjir Wildlife Refuge, and Naybandan Wildlife Reserve.

Memarian explained that the Asiatic cheetah that was saved from an animal-trafficking gang in Tehran on December 26, 2017 and is being kept in captivity is not old enough to mate with Kushki, the male cheetah also living in captivity in Pardisan Rehabilitation Center.

The cheetah cub, which is also known as Iran, is a new hope for reviving the population of cheetahs and breeding cheetah in captivity, he highlighted.

He further explained that roads fragmenting cheetahs’ habitats are the main threats for the species, while guard dogs and stray dogs, drought spells, decreasing population of the prey species to support the cheetahs, and habitat loss are also other factors endangering the sparse population of the cheetahs in the country.

■ National Cheetah Day background

24 years ago, on August 31, 1994, on a hot summer day a female cheetah and its three cubs came to a palm-grove in Bafq, Yazd province, to drink water and was attacked by the local people.

The female cheetah, being hit by wooden sticks and rocks, fled the area inevitably leaving its three cubs behind. One of the locals witnessing the event inform the regional department of environment.

Unfortunately once the rangers attend the scene one of the cheetah cub was already dead and the other two were seriously injured. Of the two cubs one also died on the way to Yazd department of environment and only one of the cubs survived.

Eyewitnesses at Bafq department of environment reported that for a week the female cheetah had come to the area searching for its cubs, and then disappeared.

The cheetah cub which survived the attack was named Marita, and remained in captivity in Pardisan Rehabilitation Center for nine years.

Since there were no male Asiatic cheetah in captivity at the time the Marita couldn’t help in conducting studies for captive breeding.

Four years after Marita’s death, in 2007 Iranian Cheetah Society (ICS) a non-governmental organization which aims to save the biodiversity with the Asiatic cheetah, designated August 31 as National Cheetah Day in an attempt to increase public awareness about this flagship species which is left only in Iran.

Water solicitation for drought-ridden Sistan-Baluchestan to ease water stress

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — With Hamoun wetland drained of water and the rainless sky in southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan many are in dire need of drinking water.

The long standing 20-year-old drought in the region is forcing many to have to provide their water from tank trucks delivering water to the areas.

Nasrollah Chari, an official with the provincial water and wastewater company, has said that Sistan-Baluchestan is short of rainfalls by 75 percent over the past eleven months (September 23, 2017 to August 21, 2018) compared to long-term averages and now some 40 villages in Hirmand county are suffering from water stress.

For many years water was delivered to 1,257 villages by 120 tank trucks only during the daytime, ISNA news agency quoted Chari as saying on Friday.

But now, as Hirmand governor Mohammad Ali Piri explained, [due to low precipitation amounts] some of the other villages which would normally access water using shallow wells, rivers and water pipes are now suffering water shortages and water should be delivered to these areas as well.

And that’s why the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) launched a campaign called Nazr-e Ab (literally meaning water donation) on August 5 in Sistan-Baluchestan province aiming at soliciting water donations for the regions suffer-



ing severe water scarcity and people can participate with donating bottled water, water tanks or cash, nationwide.

Rasoul Rasheki, head of Sistan-Baluchestan Red Crescent Society, has said that within the framework of the aforesaid campaign some water tanks will be installed in 502 villages struggling with water shortages and Water and Wastewater Company is tasked with filling these tanks with water so that villagers can access clean drinking water day and night.

So some 1,260 tanks will be installed in 502 villages which will speed up water transfer to these areas and also help store water, Rasheki highlighted.



He went on to say that so far some 1,053 water tanks are delivered to rural water and wastewater companies and 1,002 of them are already installed.

Doing so has saved many of the dwellers from taking long walks to bring water back to the village.

Meanwhile, Mahmoud Mohammadi Nasab, Sistan-Baluchestan Red Crescent Society’s secretary general, noted that so far IRCS has spent 50 billion rials (about \$1.2 million) and some additional 300 billion rials (nearly \$7 million) is needed to complete the project and that’s the reason behind launching the campaign.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

⏪ ⏩ ↺

\$47m allocated for law on rights of persons with disabilities

The Iranian government has allocated a total budget of 2 trillion rials (nearly \$47 million) for implementing the law on rights of persons with disabilities, head of Iran’s Welfare Organization has said.

Soon after the bill was approved, President Rouhani obligated all responsible organizations to implement the law, ISNA quoted Anoushirvan Mohseni-Bandpey as saying on Wednesday.

PREFIX/SUFFIX

“-ness”

■ **Meaning:** quality or condition

■ **For example:** Now take a big breath and find your center to achieve some inner **calmness** and peace.

PHRASAL VERB

Key something in

■ **Meaning:** to put information into a computer or other machine, using buttons

■ **For example:** Key in your password and press ‘Return’.

IDIOM

Catch as catch can

■ **Explanation:** to try to get something in any way possible

■ **For example:** It’s difficult to get miuoch sleep with the new baby - it’s catch-as-catch-can these days!

اختصاص اعتبار ۲۰۰ میلیاردی برای تامین زیرساخت‌های اجرایی قانون حمایت از معلولان

رئیس سازمان بهزیستی کشور از اختصاص ۲۰۰ میلیارد تومان بودجه برای فراهم کردن زیرساخت‌های اجرایی قانون حمایت از حقوق معلولان در بودجه ۹۷ خبر داد.

به گزارش ایسنا، انوشیروان محسنی بندپی با بیان اینکه در هشتم اردیبهشت ماه امسال این قانون پس از تایید شورای نگهبان جهت اجرا ، ابلاغ شده است، افزود: رئیس جمهور دستگاه‌های اجرایی را موظف به اجرای قانون حمایت از حقوق افراد دارای معلولیت کرد.

Syrian troops will ‘go all the way’ in militant-held Idlib: FM

➔ Britain and France want to attack Idlib with the aim of obstructing the political settlement process and helping al-Nusra group.”

Russia, a close ally of Syria, became involved in anti-terror operations in the militancy-infested country in September 2015 upon a formal request from Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

“As we were partners in the fight against terrorism, we want to be partners in the reconstruction process,” Muallem said. “Our people highly appreciate the role of the Russian Federation and President Vladimir Putin in combating terrorism in Syria.”

He further said that Syria would not use chemical weapons in any operation and that it did not have such weapons, adding that Damascus would try its best to “avoid possible civilian casualties and generally avoid bloodshed” in an upcoming full-scale offensive against terrorists in Idlib.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the Syrian minister said that the so-called White Helmets aid group had kidnapped 44 children in Idlib to use them in a staged chemical attack.

“Behind the creation of the pseudo-organization the White Helmets are the British special services. They sponsor them, they lead them. They were behind the organization of those fabricated scenarios for the use of chemical weapons and now they are preparing such a development of the situation with the use of chemical weapons in Idlib,”



Muallem said.

Syria surrendered its stockpile of chemical weapons in 2014 to a joint mission led by the United States and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which oversaw the destruction of the weaponry. It has also consistently denied using chemical weapons over the course of the foreign-backed militancy, which broke out in the country in 2011.

Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov has already said the Tahrir al-Sham

Takfiri terrorist group “is close to committing a very serious provocation in Idlib using chemical weapons.”

At the weekend, Russia repeatedly warned that Syrian-based terrorists were planning the attack in the militant-held province, which is home to nearly three million people.

Lavrov, for his part, denounced as “unacceptable” the use of the de-escalation zone in Idlib by Nusra Front terrorists to attack Syrian and Russian forces.

“It is unacceptable that the terrorists, who

are entrenched there, primarily from the Nusra Front, are trying to use this de-escalation zone to prepare attacks on the positions of the Syrian army and even for attempts to attack the Russian military base in Hmeimim air base using aerial drones,” he said.

He also touched on the issue of a purported U.S. plan to “obstruct” the upcoming operation by the Syrian army in Idlib, calling the move “another provocation by the West.”

Regarding the reconstructing of the war-torn Arab country and the return of refugees, Lavrov said that his country was “ready to increase its contribution to these tasks.”

The United States has warned it would respond to a chemical weapons attack by Syrian government forces with retaliatory strikes, stressing that the attacks would be stronger than those conducted by American, British and French forces back in April.

On April 14, the U.S., Britain and France carried out a string of airstrikes against Syria over a suspected chemical weapons attack against the city of Douma, located about 10 kilometers northeast of the capital Damascus. The strike came one week after an alleged gas attack on the city.

Western governments and their allies have never stopped pointing the finger at Damascus whenever an apparent chemical attack takes place.

(Source: Press TV)

Trump threatens to pull U.S. out of World Trade Organization

Donald Trump has threatened to withdraw the U.S. from the World Trade Organization (WTO), claiming it treats his country unfairly.

“If they don’t shape up, I would withdraw from the WTO,” Trump said in an interview with Bloomberg News.

The WTO was established to provide rules for global trade and resolve disputes between countries.

Trump says the body too often rules against the U.S., although he concedes it has won some recent judgments.

He claimed on Fox News earlier this year that the WTO was set up “to benefit everybody but us”, adding: “We lose the lawsuits, almost all of the lawsuits in the WTO.”

However, some analysis shows the US wins about 90% when it is the complainant and loses about the same percentage when it is complained against.

Trump’s warning about a possible US pull-out from the WTO highlights the conflict between his protectionist trade policies and the open trade system that the WTO oversees.

Washington has recently blocked the appointment of new judges to the WTO’s Geneva-based dispute settlement body, which could potentially paralyse its ability to issue judgments.

U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer has also accused the WTO of interfering with US sovereignty.

It comes as President Trump set a Friday deadline for Canada to sign a new agreement with the U.S. and Mexico. He has threatened to tax the country’s automotive sector or cut it out entirely.

■ What’s Trump’s issue with the WTO?

The U.S. president has been sounding off about unfair

trade since even before he became president.

Trump said on Thursday that the 1994 agreement to establish the WTO “was the single worst trade deal ever made”.

The U.S. has been embroiled in a tit-for-tat trade battle on several fronts in recent months.

The one creating the most interest is with China, as the world’s two largest economies wrangle for global influence.

Trump has introduced tariffs on a number of goods imported into the U.S.

A third round of tariffs on \$200bn (£154bn) of Chinese goods could come as soon as a public-comment period concludes next week, according to a Bloomberg report citing various sources.

Asked to confirm this during the Bloomberg interview, President Trump said that it was “not totally wrong”.

China has responded to U.S. tariffs by imposing retaliatory taxes on the same value of U.S. products and has filed complaints against the tariffs at the WTO.

China’s commerce ministry has said it “clearly suspects” the US of violating WTO rules.

An initial complaint at the WTO was filed by China in July after Trump imposed his first round of tariffs.

The WTO is at the heart of the system of rules for international trade. It is the forum for sorting disputes between countries about breaches of global trade rules and for negotiating new trade liberalisation.

The EU, meanwhile, is trying to steer the U.S. towards reforming the WTO rather than abandoning it.

Bernd Lange, chair of the European Parliament’s trade committee, told Politico magazine that it would submit

plans to overhaul the organisation in September. He said it would test whether the U.S. was really interested in reform.

“This is certainly about calling [America’s] bluff,” he said.

■ What about other trade deals?

Trump has not been a fan of multilateral trade agreements. In a 2016 presidential debate with Democratic rival Hillary Clinton, Mr Trump described the North American Free Trade Agreement (Nafta) with Mexico and Canada as “the worst trade deal maybe ever signed anywhere” and a “killer” of U.S. jobs.

Once in office he said he wanted to renegotiate - not scrap - the accord, triggering a year of talks.

On Monday, Trump announced that the U.S. and Mexico had agreed to revamp Nafta, calling it a “really good deal” that was “much more fair” for both countries.

Canada is yet to agree to the new terms. On Thursday, Lighthizer held talks in Washington with Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland aimed at reaching a new deal.

Following four separate meetings, which continued late into the night, Freeland told reporters that a deal could not be reached, adding that talks would resume on Friday.

Also during his election campaign Trump railed against the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a 12-nation trade deal that was a linchpin of former President Barack Obama’s Asia policy.

Trump said the deal was a “potential disaster for our country”.

One of his first acts as president was to withdraw the U.S. from the TPP, although he has since said he might consider rejoining if the terms were “substantially better”.

(Source: BBC)

18 people killed in military helicopter crash in Ethiopia

A military helicopter crashed in Ethiopia’s Oromiya region and all 18 people aboard, including 15 soldiers, were killed, the state-affiliated news agency Fana said.

The other three dead were civilians, Fana said. There was no immediate word on exactly where the helicopter came down and whether there were any casualties or damage on the ground.

Addisu Arega, a Oromiya regional cab-

inet minister, confirmed the Fana report and tweeted: “All passengers on board died. The cause is under investigation. Our condolences to the families.”

The helicopter was flying from the eastern Ethiopian town of Dire Dawa and headed to Bishoftu around 60 kilometers south of the capital Addis Ababa, Addisu said.

(Source: Reuters)

S. Korea says sending special envoy to N. Korea to prepare for summit

South Korea said Friday it will dispatch a special envoy to the North Korean capital on Sept. 5 to discuss the timing of a summit between the two countries’ leaders expected to take place later in the month.

The special envoy will also discuss “establishing peace,” “advancing inter-Korean ties,” and the “denuclearization of the Korean peninsula,” said a spokesman for South Korea’s presidential Blue House.

The first meeting between South Korean President Moon Jae-in and

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Panmunjom in April was the high point of a remarkable thaw in ties after more than a year of rising tension and fears of war over the North’s development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. At that meeting, they agreed that Moon would visit the North’s capital in the autumn, though the pair met again in May in an unannounced meeting, also in Panmunjom.

(Source: AP)

Turkey to acquire Russia’s S-400s ‘in shortest time’ despite U.S. warnings

Turkey’s President Recep Tayyip Erdogan says his country will procure Russia’s S-400 air defense missile system “in the shortest time,” paying no heed to warnings issued by the U.S., a NATO partner.

“Turkey needs S-400s and its deal has been done,” Erdogan said at a graduation ceremony for military officers in the western city of Balikesir on Friday.

“God willing, we will buy them in the shortest time,” he stressed.

On April 3, Erdogan and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin said in the Turkish capital Ankara that they had agreed to expedite the delivery of S-400 missile systems. The delivery had previously been scheduled for late 2019 and early 2020.

(Source: TRT)

Chief U.S. spy catcher says China using LinkedIn to recruit Americans

The United States’ top spy catcher said Chinese espionage agencies are using fake LinkedIn accounts to try to recruit Americans with access to government and commercial secrets, and the company should shut them down.

William Evanina, the U.S. counter-intelligence chief, told Reuters in an interview that intelligence and law enforcement officials have told LinkedIn, owned by Microsoft Corp., about China’s “super aggressive” efforts on the site.

He said the Chinese campaign includes contacting thousands of LinkedIn members at a time, but he declined to say how many fake accounts U.S. intelligence had discovered, how many Americans may have been contacted and how much success China has had in the recruitment drive.

German and British authorities have previously warned their citizens that Beijing is using LinkedIn to try to recruit them as spies. But this is the first time a U.S. official has publicly discussed the challenge in the United States and indicated it is a bigger problem than previously known.

Evanina said LinkedIn should look at copying the response of Twitter, Google and Facebook, which have all purged fake accounts allegedly linked to Iranian and Russian intelligence agencies.

“I recently saw that Twitter is cancelling. I don’t know, millions of fake accounts, and our request would be maybe LinkedIn could go ahead and be part of that,” said Evanina, who heads the U.S. National Counter-Intelligence and Security Center.

It is highly unusual for a senior U.S. intelligence official to single out an American-owned company by name and publicly recommend it take action. LinkedIn boasts 562 million users in more than 200 counties and territories, including 149 million U.S. members.

Evanina did not, however, say whether he was frustrated by LinkedIn’s response or whether he believes it has done enough.

LinkedIn’s head of trust and safety, Paul Rockwell, confirmed the company had been talking to U.S. law enforcement agencies about Chinese espionage efforts. Earlier this month, LinkedIn said it had taken down “less than 40” fake accounts whose users were attempting to contact LinkedIn members associated with unidentified political organizations. Rockwell did not say whether those were Chinese accounts.

“We are doing everything we can to identify and stop this activity,” Rockwell told Reuters. “We’ve never waited for requests to act and actively identify bad actors and remove bad accounts using information we uncover and intelligence from a variety of sources including government agencies.”

Rockwell declined to provide numbers of fake accounts associated with Chinese intelligence agencies. He said the company takes “very prompt action to restrict accounts and mitigate and stop any essential damage that can happen” but gave no details.

LinkedIn “is a victim here,” Evanina said. “I think the cautionary tale... is, ‘You are going to be like Facebook. Do you want to be where Facebook was this past spring with congressional testimony, right?’” he said, referring to lawmakers’ questioning of Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg on Russia’s use of Facebook to meddle in the 2016 U.S. elections.

China’s foreign ministry disputed Evanina’s allegations.

“We do not know what evidence the relevant U.S. officials you cite have to reach this conclusion. What they say is complete nonsense and has ulterior motives,” the ministry said in a statement.

■ Ex-CIA officer ensnared

Evanina said he was speaking out in part because of the case of Kevin Mallory, a retired CIA officer convicted in June of conspiring to commit espionage for China.

A fluent Mandarin speaker, Mallory was struggling financially when he was contacted via a LinkedIn message in February 2017 by a Chinese national posing as a headhunter, according to court records and trial evidence.

The individual, using the name Richard Yang, arranged a telephone call between Mallory and a man claiming to work at a Shanghai think tank.

During two subsequent trips to Shanghai, Mallory agreed to sell U.S. defence secrets - sent over a special cellular device he was given - even though he assessed his Chinese contacts to be intelligence officers, according to the U.S. government’s case against him. He is due to be sentenced in September and could face life in prison.

While Russia, Iran, North Korea and other nations also use LinkedIn and other platforms to identify recruitment targets, the U.S. intelligence officials said China is the most prolific and poses the biggest threat.

U.S. officials said China’s Ministry of State Security has “co-optees” - individuals who are not employed by intelligence agencies but work with them - set up fake accounts to approach potential recruits.

They said the targets include experts in fields such as super-computing, nuclear energy, nanotechnology, semi-conductors, stealth technology, health care, hybrid grains, seeds and green energy.

Chinese intelligence uses bribery or phony business propositions in its recruitment efforts. Academics and scientists, for example, are offered payment for scholarly or professional papers and, in some cases, are later asked or pressured to pass on U.S. government or commercial secrets.

Some of those who set up fake accounts have been linked to IP addresses associated with Chinese intelligence agencies, while others have been set up by bogus companies, including some that purport to be in the executive recruiting business, said a senior U.S. intelligence official, who requested anonymity in order to discuss the matter.

The official said “some correlation” has been found between Americans targeted through LinkedIn and data hacked from the Office of Personnel Management, a U.S. government agency, in attacks in 2014 and 2015.

The hackers stole sensitive private information, such as addresses, financial and medical records, employment history and fingerprints, of more than 22 million Americans who had undergone background checks for security clearances.

The United States identified China as the leading suspect in the massive hacking, an assertion China’s foreign ministry at the time dismissed as “absurd logic.”

■ Unparalleled spying effort

About 70 percent of China’s overall espionage is aimed at the U.S. private sector, rather than the government, said Joshua Skule, the head of the FBI’s intelligence division, which is charged with countering foreign espionage in the United States.

“They are conducting economic espionage at a rate that is unparalleled in our history,” he said.

Evanina said five current and former U.S. officials - including Mallory - have been charged with or convicted of spying for China in the past two and a half years.

(Source: Reuters)

First Announcement



Permit No. 1397.2556

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO. : **31-32-95304-44-001**

National Iranian South Oilfields Company(NISOC)intends to purchase the following goods

| Items | Material Description | Quantity. |
|-------|--|-----------|
| 01 | COMPLETELY NEW “RUSTON” GAS TURBINE TYPE: TB 5000 INCLUDING SPARE PARTS, PACKING, LOADING, TRANSPORTATION AND INSTALLATION ON THE PROJECT SITE PRESONNEL TRAINING AND SITE VISIT ARE REQUIRED | 2 |

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their Intention to participate letter via fax to the following number not later than 14 days after the second announcement. The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of Euro 83,471 or Rls 4,300,000,000 in favor of NISOC Kindly note that NISOC will not make any advance payment to the winner of the tender.

Iranian vendors shall submit their resume according to Quality Assessment Forms available at www.nisoc.ir

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
Bldg NO 104, Material procurement Management Complex
Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site) Ahvaz, Iran

Tel. No.: **+98-61 -34123455** fax NO.: **+98-61 -34457437**

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www.shana.ir

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<http://iets.mporg.ir>



By Masoud Hossein

TEHRAN — Iranian athletes Elyas Aliakbari and Ehsan Hadadi claimed two more gold medals in the 2018 Asian Games on Wednesday.

Aliakbari won a gold medal in the kurash -81 kg after defeating Tajikistan's Khojzoda Behrouzi 10-0.

Bronze medal was won by Iran's Omid Tiztak and Sarvar Shomurodov from Uzbekistan.

Hadadi also claimed Iran's second gold in discus throw.

The London Olympics silver medal winner finished first with a throw of 65.71 meters.

Dagher Al Saamah Mustafa Kadhim from Iraq won the silver with 60.09 and bronze medal went to Kuwait's Eissa Zankawi who threw 59.44.

Iranian athletes had previously won 18 gold medals in the Games.

Freestyle wrestlers Hassan Yazdani (86kg), Alireza Karimi (97kg) and Parviz Hadi (125kg) had also snatched three gold medals.

Greco-Roman wrestlers Mohammadali Geraei and Hossein Nouri won two gold medals in the 77kg and 87kg.

Taekwondo practitioner Saeid Rajabi

also claimed a gold medal in the 80kg.

Mirhashem Hosseini also won a gold medal in the 63kg.

Erfan Ahangari bagged a gold medal in wushu after defeating Wang Xuetao from China 2-1 in the final match of the Men's Sanda -60kg.

Another wushu practitioner Mohsen Mohammadseifi claimed his third successive gold medal in the Asian Games after beating his Chinese rival Shi Zhanwei 2-0.

Climber Reza Alipour also gained Iran's third gold medal on Day 5.

Women's and men's kabaddi teams won two gold medals in the Games.

Weightlifter Sohrab Moradi won gold in the men's 94kg class.

Karate practitioner Sajad Ganjzadeh and Bahman Asgari claimed two gold medals in the men's +84kg and -75kg respectively.

Weightlifter Behdad Salimi won the gold medal with a total of 461kg in the men's 105kg.

Hossein Keyhani claimed a gold medal in 3000m steeplechase.

The 18th Asian Games stage 465 events out of 40 sports, among which 330 events from 32 sports will feature in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

The Games, attracting more than 10,000 athletes, will run through Sept. 2.

Iran's gold medal count at rises to 19



Iran basketball advance to Asian Games Finals to face China

The Asian Games Basketball Gold Medal games are locked in with China facing Iran on the Men's side and Unified Korea facing China on the Women's side.

Unified Korea continue their inspiring run, making it all the way to the Women's Basketball finals by beating Chinese-Taipei in a one-sided 89-66 win. This game was a debut for Park Ji-Su who was released from the Las Vegas Aces, her club in the WNBA. She had an impressive line of 10 points, 11 rebounds, and 3 blocked shots. Ro Suk Yong, Lim Yunghui, and Park Hyejin all had 17 points apiece to lead their teams.

China also led from start to finish against Japan, finishing with an 86-74 win. The great defense of China formed a massive wall over the basket of Japan, holding the losing side to only 27% shooting from inside the arc. Shao Ting had a spectacular game for China with 16 points, 6 rebounds, 6 assists, and missed only 3 of her 11 attempts the whole game.

China will make their 6th straight Asian Games Women's Basketball Gold Medal game appearance, in search of their 4th Gold Medal since the turn of the millennium. It was South Korea who took down China for the Gold Medal back in 2014 and Unified Korea will get a chance to replicate that success this time.

Iran exacted their revenge from 2014 Men's Gold Medal



game loss in a run away win against defending champions South Korea, 80-68. The size of the Iranians was a big problem as the victors dominated on the boards, 47-27. Korea struggled to get their usual long range shooting going and

finished with only 4 three-pointers from 14 attempts. Ricardo Ratliffe has a gargantuan 37 points and 12 rebounds, but Korea struggled to get any consistent contribution from the rest of the line up. Iran's Hamed Ehadadi has a high-light performance of 23 points, 8 rebounds, 7 assists, and 4 blocked shots, but the team also got a much needed boost from Mohammad Hassanzadeh who had 18 points and 11 boards himself.

Chinese-Taipei kept it close against China, closing the gap top only 31-30 with less than three minutes in the first half. China countered with a 15-0 run than spanned over to the third quarter that lead them all the way to an 86-63 win. Liu Cheng had a great game of 24 points and 5 rebounds, but it was just not enough to keep China's star trio at bay. Zhou Qi, Wang Zhelin, and Ding Yanyuhang combined for 54 points to lead China to the finals.

Iran makes a return to the Asian Games Gold Medal round after a heartbreaking loss in 2014, their only appearance in the final stage prior to this year. China missed the Gold Medal game in 2014 – the first time ever since 1974 – and their return here marks how serious they are to get that gold back on their necks at the end of the Asian Games here in Jakarta.

(Source: FIBA)

Yao in wings as China's NBA stars seeking Asian Games gold

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — He may no longer be playing but ex-Houston Rockets star Yao Ming remains a talismanic figure in Chinese basketball as he inspires a generation of Chinese NBA stars toward a gold medal at the Asian Games.

A China team featuring Rockets center Zhou Qi and Dallas Mavericks guard Ding Yanyuhang looms as a heavy favorite to win men's final against Iran on Saturday.

The men's basketball tournament has been somewhat overshadowed in Jakarta by the success of the combined Koreas women's team, which is also playing for gold.

Yao even took time out to watch the joint Korean women's team, but his focus is clearly on one thing.

Now president of the Chinese Basketball Association after an eight-year NBA career with the Rockets, Yao is still very much the driving force behind basketball in his homeland and is credited with China's resurgence at this Asian Games after the men failed to make the medal rounds at the previous edition in 2014.

"I think the most important thing is he introduced the two national teams system," Zhou Qi said of Yao's decision to bring more players through the national programs in order to broaden the talent pool. "It gives the young players a lot of chances to play more matches to gain experiences. We get better by playing these competitive matches."

Ding credited Yao's experience at the highest level as the main benefit for lifting the current Chinese team.

Yao "has spent all these weeks with us. He is there to give us the feeling of security, which is very important," Ding said. "He shares his experiences with us, gives us a lot of tactical advice. He helps the team a lot."

China was pushed all the way by a Philippines team led by Cleveland Cavaliers guard Jordan Clarkson in the group stages, but recovered to breeze through the quarterfinals and semifinals against Indonesia and Taiwan.

For Zhou, the final presents the chance to cap off a successful two weeks. "The Asian Games is not over for us,"

said Zhou, who scored 22 points and had 16 rebounds in the 86-63 win over Taiwan. "We will do everything we can to win in the last match here. We need to fight for this gold medal."

For Iran, Saturday's final presents an opportunity to go one step further than it did at the 2014 Asian Games in South Korea, where it was beaten 79-77 by the hosts in the gold medal match.

"Iran is an opponent which is quite similar to a European team," Ding said. "They are not like Taiwan or South Korea who focus on the techniques. So we must face the strong physical challenge. We will prepare everything we can to face this difficult opponent."

Iran volleyball to meet S. Korea in final: Asian Games

Fired-up Korea entirely smashed Chinese Taipei's sweet dreams of advancing to the final for the first time in history after an epic 3-2 comeback win to test their mettle against reigning champions Iran in the final showdown of the 18th Asian Games volleyball competition at the GBK Tennis Indoor Stadium on Thursday.

The magnificent come-from-behind 20-25 20-25 16-20-25 15-12 victory over the spirited Chinese Taipei put Korea in their 10th final showdown at the Asian Games. Among the past nine finals, the Koreans had captured the Games gold medal for three times in 1978 in Thailand, 2002 on home soil in Busan and 2006 in Doha, Qatar. In 2002 in particular, the Koreans brushed off Iran in straight sets to celebrate their second Asian Games title at home.

Korea, consecutive two-time Asian Games bronze medalists, fielded nine players including powerful Seo Jaeduck and Jeon Kwangin who competed in the previous Games on home soil Incheon four years ago and star spiker Moon Sungmin, while Chinese Taipei sent in a formidable roster which powered past Saudi Arabia in the quarter-final classification to, according to the fast-track drawing of lots, advance to the semi-finals.

Iran, which had four players including Milad Ebadipour and Saeid Marou who competed in the previous Games



in Incheon, dominated the whole match. Seyedmohammad Mousavieraghi and Amir Ghafour were defending brilliantly at the net, blocking almost everything the rivals could throw at them. Ghafour uncorked a barrage of fierce attacks to help the Iranians take the close first set 25-23, but managed to keep Qatar at arm's length in the second and third sets, which they won comfortably 25-19 25-18. Qatar, which played a tough five-set match against Japan in the quarter-finals, failed to really get out of the second gear.

Amir Ghafour scored a match-high 18 points for Iran including 16 kills from 31 attempts. Seyedmohammad Mousavieraghi added 10 points including a team-leading 3 blocks. Mubarak Hammad led Qatar with 13 points.

On Saturday, Thailand will fight it out with Pakistan in the 7th-8th place playoff. Pakistan, whose players led by ace spiker Aimal Khan competed under the WAPDA's banner finished a well-earned third place at the recent Asian Men's Club Championship in Myanmar, caused a sensation after a fantastic 3-2 comeback (17-25 28-26 28-30 25-19 18-16) triumph over China in a tense battle.

In the 13th-16th Classification, Sri Lanka recovered to beat Nepal in four-setter 23-25 25-16 26-24 25-21, while Vietnam fought hard against in-form Kyrgyzstan to overpower the crack opponents in hard-fought three sets 25-16 26-24 29-27.

The 17th-18th place playoff between Kazakstan and Mongolia earlier saw the latter, for whatever reason, unable to meet the basic standards for playing the match at the scheduled competition time at the GOR Bulungan Gymnasium. As a result, the scores were 25-0 25-0 25-0 in favour of Kazakhstan, which eventually were placed 17th in Jakarta. Mongolia finished 18th position.

(Source: asianvolleyball)

Iran's Saeid Ezatolahi joins Reading

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Iran international midfielder d e s k Saeid Ezatolahi has joined Championship side

Reading in a season-long loan deal from Russian outfit FC Rostov.

Ezatolahi is unlikely to be ready to play this weekend against Sheffield Wednesday, but could feature after the international break.

Ezatolahi is the club's ninth signing overall of the summer.

The 22-year-old player, who has also been on the books of Atletico Madrid, played for his country at the World Cup earlier this summer and started matches against Spain and Portugal.

"I'm very happy we have been able to sign Saeid on loan within 24 hours of this transfer window closing. Saeid is a strong, powerful central midfielder player with good technical ability, Reading coach Paul Clement said.

"He has experience playing at the highest level with both the Iranian national team and domestically with his current side FC Rostov and in time spent in Spain with Atlético Madrid. Now, I'm really looking forward to getting to work with him on the training pitch," he added.

Ezatolahi's career began in his native Iran as a member of Shahrdari Bandar Anzali FC's youth set-up, before moving to Malavan. There, he impressed at such a young age that he made his first team debut in October 2012, aged only 16 years and 25 days, in a Iranian Pro League game against Rah Ahan - becoming the Iranian top tier's youngest ever player in the process.

He was awarded the Young Player of the Year accolade in Iran that same season and a year after making his professional debut, Ezatolahi represented his country in the FIFA U-17 World Cup.

In August 2014, the highly-rated midfielder left his homeland to sign for Atlético Madrid and he made a UEFA Youth League debut in March 2015 when Atlético took on Chelsea in the quarter-final.

Carlos Queiroz ready for new Iran deal

Carlos Queiroz is ready to sign a new contract with Iran until the end of the 2019 Asian Cup, providing he receives an assurance of full support from the country's soccer federation.

The former Real Madrid head coach took control of Iran in 2011 but since just missing out on the second round of the 2018 World Cup, a first successive appearance at the tournament in the country's history, the two parties have been unable to agree a new deal.

"During this period, I have had a number of opportunities from around the world but I never closed the door on Iran," Queiroz, who was linked to various national team jobs including South Korea, Algeria and Mexico, told Associated Press. "I need to be sure that the federation will fully support preparation for the 2019 Asian Cup."

Iran is Asia's number one ranked team according to FIFA but has not been continental champion since 1976. With the tournament taking place in United Arab Emirates in January, Iran is regarded as a front-runner and has been drawn with Iraq, Vietnam and Yemen in Group D.

"I am going to Tehran on Friday according to previous conversations which said that the conditions will be in place for the Asian Cup," Queiroz added. "If I didn't believe all would be ready then I would not travel but I trust I can sign a new contract."

"My specific conditions are guaranteed financial support and total commitment to Asian Cup preparations. We can't make the mistakes as in the past."

During his seven-year tenure in Tehran, Queiroz has repeatedly voiced his dissatisfaction over a lack of training camps and friendly games.

The Portuguese tactician believes that had preparations for the 2018 World Cup had been better then Iran would have collected more than four points against Morocco, Spain and Portugal, thereby progressing to the second round.

"Everyone has a clear image on our strong performances in Russia," said the 65 year-old. "Few however know the difficulties we faced, the games that were canceled and that we started our preparation camp with no players. I can't pretend this didn't happen."

"We were a small step from the second round, and I can feel in my stomach that the difference between where we finished and the second round was exactly that camp and the three friendly games that did not happen."

Any deal would likely be only until the end of the 24-team competition on Feb.1. "The future is not what concerns me. I could have signed four year contracts with others teams," the former Portugal boss added. "I want to win the Asian Cup but it will not be easy. It will be a big challenge and we all need to work together."

(Source: AP)

Iran, uzbekistan friendly confirmed

TASNIM — The Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) confirmed a friendly fixture between Iran and Uzbekistan early next month.

The match is scheduled for September 6, 2018 at the Bunyodkor Stadium in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Iran are going to prepare for the 2019 AFC Asian Cup.

Team Melli have been drawn with Iraq, Yemen and Vietnam in Group D.

The competition will be held in the UAE from January 5 to February 1.

Al Sadd's Bounedjah's goal picked as ACL Goal of the Week

Al Sadd's Baghdad Bounedjah is the winner of this week's Goal of the Week in the first leg of the 2018 AFC Champions League quarter-final.

The Algerian attacker scored his team's second goal in Tehran's Azadi Stadium, where Al Sadd beat Esteghlal 3-1.

Bounedjah collected 83 percent of vote.

Kashima Antlers' Serginho (9 percent) and Leo Silva (four percent) as well as Suwon Samsung Bluewings striker Dejan Damjanovic (3 percent) were nominees to win the Goal of the Week.

(Source: the-afc)

VAR set for Champions League introduction from next season

UEFA plans to use video assistant referees (VARs) in the Champions League from next season but is unlikely to use the technology this term, even in the final, its president Aleksander Ceferin said on Friday.

European soccer's governing body has so far resisted implementation of the VAR system, which allows key incidents to be reviewed with the use of video replays and was used at the World Cup in Russia this year.

Ceferin said the intention was that VAR would be introduced next season from the final qualifying round onwards and also in the annual Supercup match between the Champions League and Europa League winners.

It would then be used in all group stage and knockout stage matches. "The plan for now is to use it from next season... with the first match of next season which is the Supercup," he told reporters. "VAR is not completely clear for now... but we also know there is no way back any more.

"It is much more problematic than it looks. We really have a huge territory. The plan is to do it for next season but let's see what happens. I don't want to predict anything 100 percent."

On this season's final, he said: "I'm not ruling it out but for now, it doesn't look like it will happen."

(Source: Reuters)

Kaepernick's NFL case can go to trial

Colin Kaepernick's 'collusion' case against NFL team owners can go to trial after a request by the league to dismiss the complaint was rejected. The ex-San Francisco 49ers quarterback believes owners are conspiring not to hire him because of his protests against racial injustice in the USA.

Kaepernick started protests by kneeling during the USA national anthem. The 30-year-old has been without a team since opting out of his 49ers contract in March 2017.

Kaepernick's lawyer Mark Geragos has posted a statement from system arbitrator Stephen B Burbank denying the league's request to dismiss the case.

The ruling means there is sufficient evidence to allow the case to go to trial. Kaepernick first protested by sitting during the national anthem in August 2016, before opting to kneel instead.

Other players followed suit, leading to criticism from President Donald Trump.

Players who refused to stand during The Star-Spangled Banner have said the protests were against police brutality of African Americans and racial inequality.

Earlier in August, several NFL players who protested during the anthem before pre-season games were criticized by Trump.

The NFL says plans to fine players for anthem protests have been put on hold, while it holds discussions with the NFL Players Association.

(Source: BBC)

Chelsea avoid big guns, Arsenal to face Sporting CP



Chelsea have avoided any of the big guns in the 2018/19 Europa League group stage draw with Arsenal to face Sporting CP.

The Blues will face PAOK, BATE Borisov and debutants Vidi FC in Group L.

There will be a couple of familiar faces with former Arsenal players Chuba Akpom and Alex Hleb playing for PAOK and BATE respectively.

The Gunners will face Sporting, FK Qarabag and another debutant FC Vorskla in Group E.

Celtic have been handed a tough draw in Group B with both FC Salzburg and RB Leipzig as well as Nicklas Bendtner's Rosenborg. It's a tricky draw as well for Steven Gerrard and Rangers as they face Villarreal, Rapid Vienna and Spartak Moscow in Group G.

GROUP A

- Bayer Leverkusen
- Ludogorets
- FC Zurich
- AEK Larnaca

GROUP B

- FC Salzburg
- Celtic
- RB Leipzig
- Rosenborg

GROUP C

- Zenit St Petersburg
- FC Copenhagen
- Bordeaux

GROUP D

- Anderlecht
- Fenerbahce
- Dinamo Zagreb
- Spartak Trnava

GROUP E

- Arsenal
- Sporting Club
- FK Qarabag
- FC Vorskla

GROUP F

- Olympiacos
- AC Milan
- Real Betis
- F91 Dudelange

GROUP G

- Villarreal
- SK Rapid Wien
- Spartak Moscow
- Rangers

GROUP H

- Lazio
- Marseille
- Eintracht Frankfurt
- Apollon Limassol

GROUP I

- Besiktas
- Genk
- Malmo

GROUP J

- Sevilla
- FC Krasnodar
- Standard Liege
- Akhissarpor

GROUP K

- Dynamo Kyiv
- FC Astana
- Stade Rennais
- FK Jablonec

GROUP L

- Chelsea
- PAOK
- BATE Borisov
- Vidi FC

US Open umpire under fire after pep talk kicks off Kyrgios comeback

Australia's Nick Kyrgios was losing big to France's Pierre-Hugues Herbert at the US Open on Thursday, and barely even trying. He didn't move while so-so serves flew by for aces. Casually put groundstrokes into the net. Double-faulted without caring. The crowd began booing. The chair umpire, Mohamed Lahyani, decided to intervene. In an unusual sight for Grand Slam tennis, Lahyani clambered down out of his seat during a break between games, stood with hands on knees, and spoke with the 30th-seeded Kyrgios, saying, among other things, "I want to help you."

It all seemed like an impromptu intervention for the mercurial Kyrgios, right out there on Court 17 at Flushing Meadows, and it raised questions about whether Lahyani overstepped his duties as someone who's primarily there to keep score and keep order. Kyrgios went from trailing by a set and a break at the time to wresting control of the match setting up a third-round showdown against Roger Federer by coming back to beat Herbert 4-6, 7-6 (6), 6-3, 6-0.

"This was not his job," Herbert said, adding that he thinks Lahyani should be sanctioned in some way. "I don't think he's a coach, he's an umpire, and he should stay on his chair for that."

The US Open's referee and chief umpire were reviewing what happened, as was the Grand Slam Board. Chair umpires are never made available to the media, but tournament referee Brian Earley said Lahyani explained that he left his perch "to make sure he could communicate effectively" with Kyrgios in a noisy arena. According to Earley, the official said he wanted to check whether Kyrgios needed medical attention and to warn the player that Lahyani "would need to take action" if the "seeming lack of interest in the match continued."

During an occasionally confrontational and sarcastic exchange with reporters, Kyrgios laughed at the suggestion that he had received coaching or a pep talk from Lahyani.

"I mean, like, I don't have a coach. I haven't had a coach for, like, years. Of course he wasn't coaching me. Like, what are you talking about?" Kyrgios said.

"He said he liked me. I'm not sure if that was encouragement. He just said that it's not a good look," Kyrgios said about his chat with Lahyani. "Look. I wasn't feeling good. I know what I was doing out there wasn't good. I wasn't



really listening to him, but I knew it wasn't a good look."

Kyrgios, 23, has run into trouble in the past for not giving his all during matches, even drawing a fine and suspension from the ATP men's tour in 2016.

As Herbert put it: "Just sometimes he's mentally not here."

What has never been in doubt, however, is Kyrgios' talent and ability to entertain when he puts his mind to it. He burst onto the scene by stunning Rafael Nadal as a teenager at Wimbledon in 2014, and he also holds a victory over 20-time major champion Federer.

After reaching the third round by defeating France's Benoît Paire 7-5, 6-4, 6-4, Federer criticized Lahyani for going to talk to Kyrgios for as long as he did, and from as close as he did.

Normally, a chair umpire leans over from his or her post

to speak to a seated player during a changeover.

"I don't know what he said. I don't care what he said. It was not just about, 'How are you feeling?' 'Oh, I'm not feeling so well.' Go back up to the chair. He was there for too long. It's a conversation. Conversations can change your mindset. It can be a physio, a doctor, an umpire, for that matter," Federer said. "That's why it won't happen again. I think everybody knows that."

For his part, former world number one Novak Djokovic said that he believed there was nothing sinister in Lahyani's motives.

"Everybody who knows Mohamed knows he's quite different from others. He's always very positive, smiles, tries to bring that energy to the court," said Djokovic.

(Source: France 24)

Champions League draw: Manchester United to face Juventus



Juventus will face Manchester United in the Champions League group stage this season, giving Cristiano Ronaldo a chance to play against his former team.

Ronaldo, who joined Juve from Real Madrid earlier this summer, has only faced United in three games since leaving Old Trafford in 2009 -- a two-legged round-of-16 Champions League tie in 2013, and the 2017 UEFA Super Cup.

Ronaldo scored in each leg of the 2013 clash as Real Madrid advanced 3-2 on aggregate. Last summer, he came on as a late substitute as Real beat United 2-1 in Macedonia. There will also be a return to Spain for Ronaldo as Group H is filled out with La Liga club Valencia, as well as Swiss champions Young Boys.

The United-Juventus matchup will also give Paul Pogba a first chance to face off against the Bianconeri after playing in Turin from 2012-16 -- and often being linked with a move back to Juventus.

The teams will not meet until matchday three, when Juve visit Old Trafford on Oct. 23, before the return trip to Turin on the following matchday on Nov. 7.

Liverpool received one of the more difficult draws as UEFA conducted the draw on Thursday in Monaco. Jurgen Klopp's side, the top-ranked team in Pot 3 based on UEFA's coefficients, will face Paris Saint-Germain and Napoli as well as

a trip to 1991 European Cup champions Red Star Belgrade.

"For sure, when you have already a group with Paris Saint-Germain and Napoli -- two absolutely top teams -- then you don't want to have Liverpool as the third team," Klopp said. "It is how it is' is the best way to describe it; don't think too much about it. If you think about the group, you are already out. If you think it is too difficult, you are already out."

The group stage begins on Sept. 18, with two clubs from each group advancing to the knockout stage. Atletico Madrid's Metropolitano stadium will host the final on June 1.

Group A: Atletico Madrid, Borussia Dortmund, Monaco, Club Brugge

Group B: Barcelona, Tottenham Hotspur, PSV Eindhoven, Inter Milan

Group C: Paris Saint-Germain, Napoli, Liverpool, Red Star Belgrade

Group D: Lokomotiv Moscow, Porto, Schalke, Galatasaray

Group E: Bayern Munich, Benfica, Ajax, AEK Athens

Group F: Manchester City, Shakhtar Donetsk, Lyon, Hoffenheim

Group G: Real Madrid, Roma, CSKA Moscow, Viktoria Plzen

Group H: Juventus, Manchester United, Valencia, Young Boys

(Source: ESPN)

World Cup sparkle helps land Modric UEFA prize as Player of the Year



Real Madrid midfielder Luka Modric, who captained Croatia to runners-up slot at the World Cup, has been hailed as European federation UEFA's Player of the Year.

The Croatian international collected a total of 313 points, with former Real Madrid club-mate Cristiano Ronaldo (223 points) and Liverpool and Egypt forward Mohamed Salah (134) occupying second and third place respectively. Pernille Harder was named UEFA Women's Player of the Year at the ceremonies during the Champions League group stage draw in Monaco. Modric, 32, said: "It's an incredible moment for me and I feel excited and proud to have won this great award. I would like to thank everyone who voted for me to receive the award, my club, Real Madrid, my coaches and my teammates who support me through the highs and lows. This award belongs to them as well."

The jury for the awards was comprised of the coaches from the 32 clubs, which participated in the group stage of the 2017-18 UEFA Champions League, together with 55 journalists selected by the ESM group. The final result was based on the total number of points from the votes cast by the coaches and journalists. Keylor Navas (Costa Rica, Real Madrid) was crowned Best Goalkeeper of the UEFA Champions League season, amassing a total of 222 points and finishing ahead of Alisson Becker (Brazil, Roma, now at Liverpool) with 197 points, and

Gianluigi Buffon (Italy, Juventus, now at Paris Saint-Germain) with 92 points.

Sergio Ramos (Spain, Real Madrid) was named Best Defender of the season for a second successive year with a total of 184 points. Raphaël Varane (France, Real Madrid) with 167 points and Marcelo (Brazil, Real Madrid) with 145 points occupied second and third place respectively.

Modric retained his title as the Best Midfielder with 347 points, while Kevin De Bruyne (Belgium, Manchester City) with 114 points and Toni Kroos (Germany, Real Madrid) with 69 points finished in second and third place respectively.

Ronaldo (Portugal, Real Madrid now at Juventus) was named Best Forward for the second year running claiming a total of 287 points. Mohamed Salah (Egypt, Liverpool FC) came second with 218 points, and Lionel Messi (Argentina, FC Barcelona) was third with 43 points.

Former England captain David Beckham was presented with the President's award by Aleksander Ceferin for his outstanding career and services to football at both national and club level. Also, the Georgian national team player Guram Kashia received an inaugural award aimed at recognizing a player who has acted as a role model in promoting diversity, inclusion and accessibility in European football.

(Source: Goal)

Is Qatar failing to deliver on its World Cup promises?

■ Blatant violations

Nicholas McGeehan, an expert on migrant workers' rights in the gulf who has researched workers' deaths for Human Rights Watch, was astonished at DW's findings. He sees the violation at a FIFA-linked stadium to be even more serious because FIFA projects are governed by the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy, which promises higher standards of welfare for workers. "This incident suggests contractors are not even abiding by the very basic laws," he told DW. Activists have tried to highlight these health issues to the World Cup organizers. Despite those efforts, lapses continue and activists such as McGeehan question whether Qatar is serious about changing its attitude toward the workforce.

"Construction is a conspicuous business -- it is visible and loud -- so it is hard to believe they felt they could evade detection," he said. "The more plausible explanation is that they felt they would escape sanction, and if this is the case it calls into question not only the committee's ability to protect workers but its commitment to that endeavor."

DW shared the video evidence with the committee. Members acknowledged that during these hours work is indeed prohibited and have promised an investigation. "We are concerned to see the evidence you have presented of work that appears to contravene Qatar's summer working hours directive underway at the Education City Stadium. Our workers' welfare department and health & safety teams, working with the relevant government bodies, are now conducting a thorough investigation. We will take corrective and punitive action in the event of any breach of our standards or the law."

The Administrative Development, Labor and Social Affairs Ministry responded to DW's query: "Over 400 labor inspectors form an important part of our strategy to ensure that Qatar protects its guest workers and continues to be a leader in the region with regards to labor reform."

During DW's visit, we were not given permission to go inside any of the World Cup-related infrastructure because of the "short notice," of our request, officials said.

(Source: DW)

INTERNATIONAL DAILY
www.tehrantimes.com

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» Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603
» www.eshterak.ir Distributor: Padideh Novin Co.
Tel: 88911433
» Webmaster: webmaster@tehrantimes.com
» Printed at: Rooztab - ISSN: 1017-94

No. 18, Bimeh Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran
P.O. Box: 14155-4843
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Iran's Farabi Cinema Foundation, Serbia Film Center ink MOU

A R T TEHRAN — Iran's Farabi Cinema Foundation and the Serbia Film Center has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU).

The MOU was inked by Farabi International Department director Raed Faridzadeh and Serbia Film Center director Miroljub Vuckovic last week, the foundation announced in a press release published on Friday.



Farabi International Department Director Raed Faridzadeh (2nd L), Serbia Film Center director Miroljub Vuckovic (C) and a number of their colleagues attend a meeting at the Farabi Cinema Foundation in Tehran.

Vuckovic visited Iran to attend the Serbian Film Week that opened August 23 in Tehran, Shiraz and Tabriz, during which a number of Serbian movies were screened.

Based on the MOU, several meetings are scheduled to be held between Iranian and Serbian film producers. A number of European investors collaborating with the center will be invited to attend the meetings.

Iran's Art and Experience Cinema was the organizer of the Serbian Film Week in Iran.

The Serbia Film Center is a government institution working under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and Information. The center directs the strategic development of the Serbian film industry.

WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES

Sculpture/installation

■ Sets of installation and a collection of sculptures by Mohammad Rasulinejad are on display in an exhibition at Saleess Gallery.

The exhibit entitled "On a Thirsty Summer Dusk" will run until September 5 at the gallery located at 148 Karim Khan Ave.

Photo

■ Melal Gallery will be playing host to an exhibition of photos by Amir Jalilvand from September 2 to 5.

The gallery can be found at the Melal Cultural Center in the Qeitarieh neighborhood.

■ Photos by Puya Shah-Heidari, Zahra Shahcheraghi, Zahra Razi, Farhad Manteq and Soroush Naeimzaker are currently on display in an exhibition at Hepta Gallery.

The exhibition runs until September 2 at the gallery located at 3 Nikushahr Dead End, Iranshahr St., Karim Khan Ave.

Painting

■ An exhibition of paintings by a large group of artists, including Navid Nedai, Sanaz Dabiri, Hadis Rezaei, Sara Salimi and Fatemeh Sajedi, is currently underway at Idea Gallery.

The exhibit will continue until September 2 at the gallery located at 26, 18th St. off Sanai St., Karim Khan Ave.

Woody Allen's latest film release in doubt

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) — The release of Woody Allen's latest film was cast into doubt on Thursday after distributor Amazon Studios said it had not decided on a release date.

The 82-year-old Oscar-winning director of comedies like "Annie Hall" and "Midnight in Paris" has traditionally released a new movie every year.

But Amazon Studios said on Thursday it had not set a date for "A Rainy Day in New York", starring Timothee Chalamet, Rebecca Hall and Jude Law, although filming finished in 2017. Amazon Studios declined to elaborate. But New York Post columnist Richard Johnson wrote on Thursday that the movie had been shelved "and may never be released."

Ebrahim Hatamikia promotes "Damascus Time" in Syria

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian director Ebrahim Hatamikia watched "Damascus Time", his latest drama on the atrocities of the Daesh war in Syria, at the Al Kindi Cinema in Damascus on Wednesday, a public relations team announced on Friday.

After a screening of the movie, Hatamikia said that he is glad to watch the film along with the Syrian people and added, "This film depicts the oppression against the Syrian people, yet other countries in the region show no willingness to screen it."

"Damascus Time" is about an Iranian pilot and his copilot son who are captured by Daesh forces in Syria while they are in the country to deliver a cargo of humanitarian relief supplies to people in a war-torn region.

"The film depicts a small part of the war and it will lose its impact in the region and on world public opinion as time passes," he noted.

"Over 1.8 million people watched "Damascus Time" in Iran while no one in the other countries that fought against the Daesh terrorists has watched the movie yet," he lamented.

The film will also go on screen in the Syrian cities of Aleppo, Deir al Zour, Homs and Latakia for one week.

"Damascus Time" brought Hatamikia a Crystal Simorgh for best director at the 36th Fajr Film Festival after premiering at the event in Tehran in February.



Iranian director Ebrahim Hatamikia (3rd L) attend a meeting with a number of Syrian filmgoers after watching his latest movie "Damascus Time" at the Al Kindi Cinema in Damascus on August 29, 2018.

"Foruzan" wins special jury prize at Kosovo festival

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian director Mir Abbas Khosravinejad's short film "Foruzan" won the special jury prize for short film at the 11th edition of the Goddess on the Throne Film Festival in Kosovo, the organizers announced last Monday.

"Foruzan" tells the story of a widow with two children living in a village in central Iran. She tries to protect her herd from robbery in the night.

The festival was founded in 2002 by actor and TV producer Besim Ajeti as the first film festival in Kosovo. The festival is annually held at the Fushë Kosovo Railway Station.

Short films are shown on the train trips from one city to another, and feature films are shown on the premises of the railway station.

"My Short Words" directed by Bekir Bulbul from Turkey won the best feature-film award at the festival this year.



A scene from "Foruzan" by Mir Abbas Khosravinejad

Veteran photographer Hadi Shafaieh dies at 95

A R T TEHRAN — Veteran photographer Hadi Shafaieh who was considered as the alchemist of photographers in Iran died in his home in the U.S. city of Columbus in the state of Ohio on Wednesday. He was 95.

Shafaieh was born in Tabriz in 1923. He received his early education in Tabriz and later in Tehran where he established the Hadi Studio in 1955.

The studio gradually became the center of attention for creating skillful portraits of literary figures, including Nima Yushij, the father of Persian blank verse.

In 1971, Shafaieh was invited to teach photography at the University of Tehran, which established



Hadi Shafaieh in an undated photo

photography as a field in 1982 and asked Shafaieh to teach the related courses.

In 1989, Shafaieh moved to Ohio in order to be closer to his children.

"First Man" shows Armstrong's view after Moon landing, sitting in 'tin can'

VENICE, Italy (Reuters) — Everyone knows what Neil Armstrong said as he stepped onto the Moon, and when Ryan Gosling delivers the line in "First Man", which opened the Venice Film Festival on Wednesday, it sounds like dialogue as familiar as "To be or not to be".

But Oscar-winning "La La Land" director Damien Chazelle takes the viewer deeper than that epic moment when Armstrong took "one small step for (a) man, one giant leap for mankind," to show what it must have felt like to leave the world behind, with a high chance of never coming back.

"This was a story that needed to hinge between the Moon and the kitchen sink," Chazelle said of the film that begins in 1961 as the United States trails the Soviet Union in the space race, through to the 1969 Moon landing - with many personal and professional crises on the way.

At the kitchen sink is Armstrong's wife Janet, played by "The Crown" actress Claire Foy, who tells a friend she married the aeronautical engineer "because I wanted a normal life", but finds herself bringing up a family in extraordinary circumstances.

The mundanity of real life in "First Man" contrasts with the enormity of the mission.



Director Damien Chazelle attends the photocall for the opening movie "First Man" competing in the Venezia 75 section of the 75th Venice International Film Festival, Venice, Italy, August 29, 2018. (Reuters/Tony Gentile)

Armstrong is told he has been selected to head the Apollo 11 mission in the unglamorous setting of his work's toilet. When he tells his son he is going to the Moon, the boy replies by asking if he can play in the garden.

"Their dad wasn't an astronaut, he was their dad," said Foy, who, like the rest of the

Sadabad to host exhibition by Nasser Ovissi

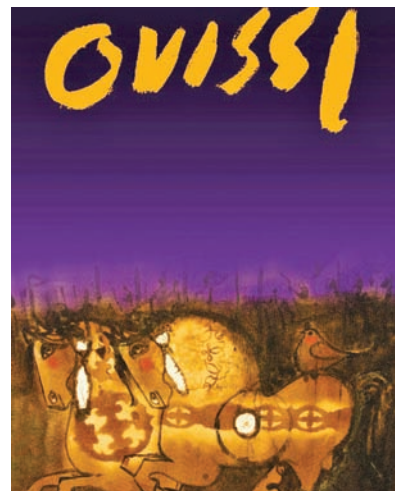
A R T TEHRAN — A collection of paintings by Nasser Ovissi, a pioneer of the Saqqakhaneh School, a neo-traditional style of art that derives inspiration from Iranian folk art and culture, is on display in an exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts in the Sadabad Cultural-Historical Complex.

A number of Iranian art elites attended the opening ceremony of the exhibit held on Friday.

The exhibition, which will run until September 22, has been organized in collaboration with Ovissi Gallery in Tehran.

Ovissi, 84, who currently lives in the U.S., blends Iranian tradition with modernism in his works, which mostly feature Iranian women and powerful horses with bright colors.

His works are on display at museums in Iran and Italy, France, England, Greece, Switzerland, Germany, Turkey, India,



A painting by Nasser Ovissi

Sweden, Canada, Spain and the United States.

Mohammad Motamedi performs open-air concerts in Tehran

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian vocalist Mohammad Motamedi performed two open-air concerts in Tehran's Ab-o-Atash Park on Wednesday and Thursday.

Thousands of Iranian music aficionados came together in the park located in northern Tehran hours before the concerts started, the Persian service of Honaronline reported on Friday.

Motamedi performed a collection of his hits with the Orchestra of National Instruments, which was conducted Ali-Akbar Qorbani.

The performances were the first part of a series of free outdoor concerts, which have been organized by some popular musicians to boost the spirits of Iranians during the current adverse economic conditions confronting the country.



Vocalist Mohammad Motamedi (L) performs with the Orchestra of National Instruments in Tehran's Ab-o-Atash Park on August 29, 2018 during an open-air concert conducted Ali-Akbar Qorbani (R). (Honaronline/Ramona Mirian)

the viewer into a cramped capsule from which Armstrong gets occasional glimpses of the Moon as he steers towards touchdown - scenes Chazelle made deliberately claustrophobic and disorientating.

"Space is obviously mostly this kind of black void, and you're traveling searching for objects, or searching for landing areas, in this expanse that is mostly completely nebular, and then on top of that you are in these kind of flying tin cans," he told reporters.

"So everything about it felt terrifying to me and made me all the more the amazed that it even halfway worked out - so I wanted to capture that."

Co-produced by Steven Spielberg, "First Man" is based on a 2005 biography by historian James Hansen which hints at a remarkable gesture Armstrong may have made while standing on the Moon.

In the movie's version of that scene, Armstrong lifts the reflective outer visor on his helmet, revealing his suppressed anguish as he remembers a tragedy in his life, many years ago and a world away, before composing himself for the journey home.

"First Man" is one of 21 movies in competition for the Golden Lion which will be awarded on Sept 8.