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Rouhani: U.S. constantly sends Iran messages for talks

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said on Saturday that the Trump administration constantly sends messages to Iran to begin negotiations. "From one side, they put pressure against the Iranian people and on the other side they send us messages through various methods that we should come and negotiate together," he said during a speech at the Shahid Rajai National Festival in Tehran.

"Should we believe your messages and flexibility in them or your brutal actions?" Rouhani asked. He added, "If you tell the truth and are the Iranian people's friends, why you are seeking to exert pressure against the people of Iran? If you think the people would come to the streets and raise their hand as sign of surrender to the U.S. and White House, you are very mistaken." →2

Damascus has sovereign right for Idlib operation: Syrian UN envoy

By staff & agencies Syrian army forces have targeted terrorists from the Jabhat Fateh al-Sham (al-Nusra Front/Jabhat al-Nusra) Takfiri terrorist group, in the country's west-central province of Hama as government forces and allied fighters from popular defense group are trying to purge the country of

foreign-backed Takfiri militants. Syria's state-run television reported that army troopers had shelled terrorist strongholds in the town of al-Lataminah, located 39 kilometers northwest of the provincial capital Hama, and other militant-held areas in the northern edge of the province. →13

Iran wins UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — The Literacy Movement Organization of Iran is awarded the 2018 UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy for its program 'Consolidated teaching of literacy and ICDL basic computer skills'. The UNESCO International Literacy Day conference took place on September 7, held a day ahead of the actual International Literacy Day, at Paris Headquarters and

explored the theme of integrated approaches to literacy and skills development with approximately 200 participants from all over the world. Over the conference this year's prizes went to projects advancing literacy and skills development from Iran, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Spain and Uruguay. Each of the five prizewinners received a medal, a diploma and \$20,000. →12



ARTICLE

Hanif Ghaffari
Political analyst

American Democrats and JCPOA

As we come closer to November and the time for the congress elections in the United States, the competitions between Democrats and Republicans get sharper over major and critical issues affecting the domestic and foreign policies of the U.S. In recent days, we have witnessed the American Democrats' collective and coordinated attacks on the White House and the President of the country.

Former Secretary of State John Kerry implicitly stated that he would not rule out running for president in 2020. Kerry was the Democratic nominee for president in 2004 but ultimately lost the election to former U.S. President George W. Bush. He had also emphasized on the critical situation of the United States following the presence of Trump at the White House.

Also Al Gore, the former vice president and Democratic presidential candidate, publicly called for President Donald Trump to resign. Moreover, former U.S. President Barack Obama challenged the existing policies in the United States during John McCain's funeral, without naming Trump. Delivering his eulogy, Obama said: "So much of our politics, our public life, our public discourse can seem small and mean and petty, trafficking in bombast and insult and phony controversies and manufactured outrage."

The main question here is whether the Democrats will have the power to revive the nuclear deal with Iran if they win the congress midterm elections and conquer the House of Representatives and the Senate. In other words, Will the Democrats be able to force Trump to return to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and prevent the reintroduction of secondary sanctions against Iran? Answering this question, we should take two points into consideration:

Firstly, the president of the United States, speaking among his proponents, has warned about the Democrats' victory in the U.S. midterm elections. Trump has explicitly stated that if Democrats win the elections, many of his decisions will be destroyed. Though Trump didn't apparently point to the JCPOA in his speech, some analysts believe that Iran's nuclear deal will be one of the most important issues of controversy between him and Democrats in future. →7

Saudi team leaves UN-backed Yemen talks

A delegation from Yemen's Saudi regime-backed former government has left the United Nations-brokered talks in Geneva as representatives of the popular Ansarullah (Houthi) movement were reportedly prevented from attending the negotiations.

"The government delegation is leaving today," said an official from the Saudi regime-backed team, referring to the Riyadh-allied Yemeni administration, Reuters reported on Saturday.

"There are no expectations the Houthis are coming," a diplomat, meanwhile, said.

■ Ansarullah keen to attend

Meantime, Martin Griffiths, the UN envoy to Yemen told a news conference that the Ansarullah were "keen" to get to Geneva. "They would have liked to get here. We didn't make conditions sufficiently correct to get them here," he added.

He said it was "too early to say when next

round of consultations will take place".

Ansarullah accused the Saudis of planning to strand the delegation in Djibouti, where their plane was to make a stop en route to Geneva.

It has also been reported that the Ansarullah delegation had declined to attend until the United Nations met several demands including providing guarantees it would be able to return to the Yemeni capital Sana'a afterwards.

Senior Ansarullah official, Abdulrahman al-Motawakel, said, "The decision not to send an Omani plane (for the Ansarullah delegation) was made by the United States and it is an American conspiracy with the help of the Saudi regime. The U.S. meant to delay the delegation from leaving, and the UN is helpless, and cannot do anything about it."

Loay al-Shamy, a senior information ministry official, said "Regarding the peace talks, the delegation was formed and their names were

announced and were ready to go, but the UN, under pressure from the United States and Britain could not fulfill what was agreed on, which is to provide an Omani plane for the delegation that will participate in Geneva and offer the assurances required for the return of the delegation." "We saw during the last talks that the delegation was stuck abroad and the UN could not bring them back home," he added.

The two sides last held marathon negotiations — also organized by the UN — in Kuwait, trying to hammer out a "power-sharing" accord. The talks, however, failed to make a breakthrough.

During the last round of negotiations, the Saudi regime-backed side left the venue before the talks could yield any conclusive result.

The former Yemeni government resigned in 2015 as the country was experiencing political turmoil. →13

'Notion of zero imports of Iranian oil to India is economically and politically unrealistic'

By Syed Zafar Mehdi

TEHRAN — India and U.S. held the inaugural 2+2 talks in New Delhi on Thursday, in which the issue of Iranian oil imports figured prominently, according to sources. While the U.S. delegation led by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo urged India to completely halt Iranian oil imports, New Delhi refused to give any clear and categorical response, thereby thwarting the agenda of the visiting delegation.

Kate Sullivan de Estrada is a noted commentator and author with expertise on South Asia. She is currently serving as Director of Contemporary South Asian Studies Program at University of Oxford.

In an interview with Tehran Times, she said that the idea of halting or markedly decreasing

Iranian oil imports will be seen in India as yielding to U.S. pressure and internationally also India may not wish to be seen as on the same side as the U.S. under its current, unpredictable leadership. She believes the notion of zero imports of Iranian oil to India seems to be both economically and politically unrealistic.

Following are the excerpts:

■ U.S. President Donald Trump earlier this year ordered re-imposition of unilateral sanctions on Iran after withdrawing from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal. Since then the U.S. has been trying to persuade countries to economically isolate Iran. Don't you think Trump's target of zero imports of Iranian oil is plainly unrealistic? A. It depends what you understand by 'un-

realistic'. In practical terms, plans do seem to be underway for the reallocation of Iran's oil production share to other OPEC countries, and at least one news source suggests that India's Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has asked for alternatives to Iranian oil to be explored and for refiners to prepare for a marked drop or cessation of Iranian oil imports. Of course any alternative will be far more costly than India's current import arrangements with Iran.

In domestic political terms, too, there remains a strong political narrative in the country that the country will never let another nation dictate its foreign policy. Halting or markedly decreasing Iranian oil imports will be seen by some as yielding to US pressure. →6



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Hamadan win Iran Trial Championship

Hamadan Team ended as champion in The Iranian Trial Cycling Championship took place at Hamadan. Robat Karim team clinched the second place and Karaj team finished third. Iran Trial Championship is an annual national cycling championship for bicycle racing. This year, 120 cyclists from all over the country competed in Hamadan and Lalejin cities.



ARTICLE

Syed Zafar Mehdi
Journalist
from New Delhi

Why U.S. attempts to woo India would fail

After a lot of dilly-dallying, the inaugural India-U.S. ministerial 2+2 dialogue was held in New Delhi on Thursday. The high-profile U.S. delegation was led by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Defense Secretary James Mattis, who flew to New Delhi from Islamabad where they held deliberations with the newly-elected government led by Imran Khan on Wednesday.

The highlight of the meeting was signing of the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) that will enable India to access advanced technologies from the U.S. and enhance India's defense preparedness. While Pompeo termed the agreement a "milestone" in Indo-U.S. relationship, India's defense minister Nirmala Sitharaman said it will bolster India's defense capability.

What they didn't mention is how detrimental it could be for the regional peace and stability, but that is stating the obvious.

The two sides also pledged to expand their bilateral trade and economic partnership, which is interesting. In recent months, India and the U.S. have been engaged in tariff war, with Trump administration refusing any special treatment to New Delhi and Modi government retaliating with its own tariff on U.S. goods.

The new trade deal is a shrewd move by the U.S. to assure New Delhi that they can still do business with each other but on the terms and conditions dictated by the former.

The task for the visiting delegation was cut out - to appease New Delhi with lucrative defense and trade deals so that it does not go the China way. China and India are two of the fastest growing economies and protagonists of new economic and international policy. The policy wonks in Washington understand the importance of keeping India in good humor at a time when the trade war with China is escalating and relations with European countries are fast deteriorating.

Trump administration has declared a trade war against China, threatening to impose \$200 billion new tariffs, which experts believe can jeopardize the global economic growth. It has also been embroiled in an ugly tariff war with European countries. At this juncture, with the U.S. finding itself increasingly cornered, it has reached out to Narendra Modi led government in New Delhi. →6

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



MP names accomplishments of Tehran summit

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — A member of the Legal and Judicial Committee of the parliament has named three accomplishments of the recent visits by the presidents of Russia and Turkey to Tehran.

In an article published in the Etemaad newspaper on Saturday, Mohammad Kazemi wrote the first accomplishment is to stabilize Syria which its security is closely linked to the security of the region.

The second accomplishment is that Iran, Russia and Turkey proved that they are able to reach consensus on Syria as well as trade and economic transactions, Kazemi remarked.

The third, he added, is that Russia and Turkey can help Iran in the face of U.S. sanctions.



Tehran pursuing attack against fishing boat

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi has said that Tehran is following up on the report of an attack against an Iranian fishing boat by the UAE coastguards.

Responding to a reporter's question on the issue, Qassemi said the related bodies in the Foreign Ministry, Iran's embassy in Abu Dhabi and consulate general in Dubai are pursuing the case, ILNA reported on Saturday.

"We haven't yet received reliable and accurate news concerning the incident to react properly," he added.



Iran condoles Japanese over deadly landslide

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi on Saturday expressed deep sorrow over the recent deadly floods and landslides that have killed 20 and injured many more in Japan.

In a statement, Qassemi offered his condolences to the Japanese people and government as well as the bereaved families of victims of the recent natural disasters, Tasnim reported.

It came after a landslide buried houses and people in the small town of Atsuma on Japan's northern island prefecture of Hokkaido.

The landslide was triggered by a magnitude 6.7 earthquake that shook the island Thursday, killing at least 20 people.



Tehran summit shows resolve in terror fight: envoy

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Iranian Ambassador to Russia Mehdi Sanai said on Saturday that Tehran's trilateral summit on Syria was a manifestation of the resolve by Iran, Turkey and Russia to fight terrorism.

Presidents of Iran, Russia and Turkey met on Friday as part of a peace process for the Syrian crisis. The meeting was held as Syria is preparing for an operation to liberate Idlib Province, the last major militant stronghold.

"One should hope that other major countries of the region would join this solution in the future," Sanai tweeted.

He also said this was Putin's third visit to Iran during the past four years, showing expansion of all-out ties between Tehran and Moscow.



Iran capable of exporting air defense systems

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Commander of the Tehran Air Defense unit has hailed technological progresses in air defense industry, saying Iran is capable of producing and exporting air defense systems to other countries.

In an interview with Mehr published on Saturday, Amir Saedi said the Iranian airspace is the safest in the region due to utilization of up-to-date and efficient air defense systems.

He added, "Western military products were used before the [Islamic] Revolution, but most of air defense systems and missiles are now homegrown, thanks to the revolution."

He also said Iran attaches great importance to its air defense systems because of the threats it is facing.



Iranian ambassador submits credentials to Polish president

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Iran's new Ambassador to Poland Masoud Edrisi Kermanshahi on Friday submitted his credentials to Polish President Andrzej Duda.

During a meeting which took place at the Polish presidential palace in Warsaw, the two sides vowed to ramp up measures to develop bilateral cultural, political and economic relations, Mehr reported.

The Polish president said the economic capacities of the two countries must be fully tapped in order to enhance commercial interactions between the two sides.

He added that his country, like other member states of the European Union, is abiding by the Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the JCPOA.

‘Iran paying the price to protect Europe from terrorists’

Iranians are fighting and dying in Syrian to protect Europe from potential attackers, the head of a parliamentary delegation from Iran has said.

"Every single one of the terrorists in the region is like a time bomb set to explode when they return to their countries. So far, we have witnessed a few of the consequences," said Kazem Jalali, who is also head of the Iranian Parliament Research center, said in an interview with Euronews published on Friday.

"We are the ones who are paying the price for the protection of Europe."

As the Syrian Army is preparing to remove terrorists from the northwestern province of Idlib, Jalali said it was inevitable that such an assault would lead to civilian casualties.

"A plan should be devised to spare civilians during the Idlib offensive and the attack against the terrorists. But it is wrong to think that civilians won't get harmed at all because some of the terrorists hide among people," he stated.

President Hassan Rouhani met his Russian and Turkish counterparts in Tehran



Iran-Iraq integrity under attack

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Following an arson attack on the Iranian consulate in the Iraqi city of Basra on Friday night, the Iranian ambassador to Baghdad says certain elements seek to damage Iran-Iraq ties which have been built after years of efforts.

"Foreign elements close to the U.S., the Zionists and certain Arab countries are trying to undermine the relations [between Iran and Iraq]," Iraj Masjedi told ILNA in an interview published on Saturday.

Mansour Haqiqatpour, an advisor to the Majlis speaker, told the Mehr news agency that what happened to the Iranian consulate was "suspicious".

Pointing the finger at ill-wishers of Iran-Iran relations, Haqiqatpour said the attack on the consulate came a few weeks before the Shia rituals of Muharram and the Arbæen pilgrimage.

The advisor said the attack was in line with media propaganda campaign that over the past weeks tried to create a sense of cynicism among both nations toward each other.

A media campaign recently started to agitate the Iraqi people against Iran by negatively covering electricity shortage in Iran that halted export of electricity to Iraq.

It also tried to create cynicism among Iraqis toward Iranian pilgrims who regularly visit Iraq, trying in particular to question the pilgrims' sexual conduct.



On a parallel plain, the same story was stirred in Iran by media claiming that Iraqi pilgrims who visited Iran's Mashhad were sexually benefiting from Iranian women.

The cynicism campaign also included fake reports that Iraqis are intentionally burning the plantation at the Hour al-Azim wetland in southwestern Iran in order to cause inconvenience to Iranians living in Khuzestan province.

MP Ardashir Nourian said on Saturday that "it is quite clear that the Saudis have a hand in the event of [storming] Iranian consulate in Basra."

One of their strategies to attain this end is to damage relations between Iran and its neighbors, particularly those

with shared borders, the MP noted.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry strongly condemned the attack on the consulate and summoned Ragh Saber Abboud Al-Musawi, the Iraqi ambassador to Tehran.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said on Friday that the Iraqi government is responsible for the security of the Iranian diplomatic mission and also warned about "overt and covert" elements which seek to cause harms to the relations between the two countries.

He called on the Iraqi government to immediately identify, arrest and punish the perpetrators.

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has ordered an investigation into the incident.

He said late on Friday that he had instructed security forces to act decisively against the "acts of vandalism" that accompanied the demonstrations.

The Iraqi Foreign Ministry also said the attack on Iran's consulate is deeply regretted.

"The targeting of diplomatic missions is unacceptable and detrimental to the interests of Iraq," Aljazeera quoted Iraqi Foreign Ministry spokesman Ahmed Mahjoub as saying.

Iraq's Joint Operations Command, which includes the army and police, said in a statement there would be a "severe" response with "exceptional security measures", including banning protests and group travel, AFP reported.

Rouhani: U.S. constantly sends Iran messages for talks



1 → On July 31, Donald Trump offered to meet Iran's leaders with "no preconditions" and "any time they want".

"I'd meet with anybody. I believe in meetings," Trump told reporters at the White House.

In remarks on August 13, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said there will be no war between Iran and the U.S. and nor will be any negotiation between the two countries.

The Leader noted that as Imam Khomeini "banned talks with the U.S. I also ban it". He added that negotiation with the current U.S. administration is impossible. "Even if we were to negotiate with the U.S., we would never hold talks with the current U.S. administration."

On May 8, U.S. President Donald

Trump officially withdrew his country from the international nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and reinstituted sanctions against Iran. He did this despite warnings by other parties to the nuclear agreement and international bodies.

■ **'Govt. on frontline of economic war'**

Rouhani also said that the government is on the frontline of the "economic war".

"Today is the day of war against the enemy and all of us should stand beside each other with integrity and solidarity. Today parliament, government and judiciary are together," he said.

He also said that no political faction become popular through speaking against his government.

Terrorists struggling to breath in Syria, defense chief says



POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Iranian Defense Minister Amir Hatami said on Saturday that the life of terrorists in Syria is coming to an end.

Syria, supported by Iran, Russia and Hezbollah, has succeeded to remove terrorists from almost the entire country. The only remaining swath of land still at the hands of terrorist is Idlib province in northwest Syria. The Syria army is preparing to drive out terrorists from the province.

"The Syrian people, government and armed forces and their friends including Iran, Russia and Hezbollah entered the scene and crushed the terrorists through coordination," he said during a meeting with Chinese Central Military Commission (CMC) Vice Chairman General Zhang Youxia in Beijing.

Hatami also praised China's supports for the Syrian government.

The minister also criticized the U.S. policies in the Middle East region.

The two senior officers also discussed ways to further develop military and defense cooperation between Iran and China.

In a meeting with his Chinese counterpart Wei Fenghe in Beijing on Friday, Hatami said that Iran and China share common interests and also face common threats.

He also called for expansion of Iran-China cooperation.

Upon his arrival in Beijing on Thursday, he told reporters that Iran-China defense ties are "strategic".

"Leaders of the two countries insist on bilateral strategic cooperation which requires consultations," he noted.

Hatami added that the relations have always been good and given the current regional developments, it is essential to expand ties.

‘Europe to create banking system for ties with Iran’

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Chair of the European parliamentary group for relations with the Islamic Republic has said the European Union is looking to establish an independent financial system for banking relations with Iran.

Janusz Lewandowski made the statement with Kazem Jalali, chairman of the Majlis research center, in Brussels on Saturday.

Lewandowski also said the wave of refugees is a huge challenge for Europe. He also said Iran plays a great role in the Middle East region.

Citing changes in European-American relations during Trump presidency, the European official said that Europe needs to learn at an international level how to act without the United States.



Lewandowski stated, "Trump is seeking to create a climate in the international community against the Islamic Republic of Iran."

Jalali, for his part, pointed to the EU's role in the

preservation of the 2015 nuclear deal, saying, "In this matter, we need to see practical and concrete action from Europe, and this should not be limited to slogan."

He criticized the United States for unilaterally leaving the deal, saying, "America is always looking for unilateralism on the global stage, and the countries of the world do not like it, and the world must be managed multilaterally."

Jalali added, "The Iranian people have genuine questions about the economic benefits and achievements of the JCPOA [the official name for the nuclear deal], and Europe must, in a practical and tangible way, in addition to fulfilling its duties, also offset the deficiencies resulting from the unilateral withdrawal of America."

Iraqi officials condemn violent Basra protests, point finger at U.S., ISIL, Ba’athists

Iraqi officials have denounced recent deadly demonstrations in the southern city of Basra, saying they believe the United States, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/ Daesh) terrorists and remnants of former Ba’ath regime are behind the violence.

Protesters have taken to the streets of Basra over the past few days to condemn corruption and lack of basic service and criticize the government for the collapse of regional infrastructure.

But the protests took an ugly turn on Friday as a group of masked assailants ransacked government buildings and offices of political parties and set fire to them in the southern oil-rich city of Basra.

The Iranian consulate was among the premises damaged in the rampage.

Sheikh Qais al-Khazali, secretary general of Iraq’s Asa’ib Ahl al-Haq (League of the Righteous/Khazali Network) group, a main component of the Popular Mobilization Units (PMU/Hashd al-Sha’abi), said that the Basra riots were part of an American project to disintegrate the country.

He also warned that the situation in Basra had reached a boiling point and that Washington sought to designate a U.S.-allied person as the new Iraqi prime minister.

Khazali stressed that Iraqi fighters would



not allow the Basra crisis to turn into a sectarian strife.

Ammar Hakim, Iraqi Shia cleric and head of National Wisdom Movement (Hikma/Tayar al-Hikmah al-Watani), released a statement expressing concern about the Basra incident.

He warned that the country is at a dangerous juncture and needs realistic reflection.

Hakim also condemned attempts meant to turn peaceful protests into deliberate destruction of public property.

The Iraqi Health Ministry said a total of 12 people had been killed and 50 others injured since Tuesday when the Basra violence erupted.

Basra Coordination Committee said the

latest acts of sabotage had been committed by ISIL elements and Ba’athists.

It also announced a halt to protests on Saturday in order to “study mistakes that led to the burning of buildings that has nothing to do with the grievances of the protesters.”

Additionally, Iraq’s Foreign Ministry said the storming of the Iranian consulate had nothing to do with protesters’ demands.

“The targeting of diplomatic missions is unacceptable and detrimental to the interests of Iraq,” said ministry spokesman Ahmed Mahjoub. Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has ordered an investigation into the protest deaths and instructed security forces not to use live ammunition.

Meanwhile, Iraqi lawmakers met Saturday in emergency session to discuss the unrest in Basra. Abadi joined the session with several ministers. Hours before parliament met, four rockets fired by unidentified assailants struck inside the perimeter of Basra airport, security sources said.

Staff at the airport, which is located near the U.S. consulate in Basra, said flights were not affected.

Iraqi officials also imposed a curfew on Basra starting at 4 p.m. local time (1300 GMT) on Saturday, a military statement says.

(Source: Press TV)

Indonesia bus crash leaves at least 21 dead



At least 21 people have died and several others injured when a bus carrying domestic tourists crashed and plunged into a ravine on the Indonesian island of Java, police say.

The crash happened when the bus with 37 people on board was heading to a holiday spot in Sukabumi region, West Java.

The vehicle was seen speeding downhill and lost control before plunging into a 10-meter-deep ravine.

“There were 37 people on the bus, 21 of them died while the rest were injured,” Galih Bayu Raditya, head of the traffic unit at the local police precinct, told AFP.

Victims who were injured had been taken to several local hospitals.

“We believe the accident happened because the brake failed to function,” Raditya said, adding that the vehicle’s road-worthy certificate had expired in 2016.

The bus was part of a four-bus tour from Jakarta heading to a rafting spot in Pelabuhan Ratu, Sukabumi.

Passengers from other buses who arrived safely at the destination told the police they had seen smoke coming from the engine of the bus before it embarked on the journey.

Authorities have issued repeated warnings that the route where the accident occurred was not suitable for buses due to the narrowness of the road and multiple tight corners.

On Friday, another bus carrying 21 people also crashed in the same region, killing one and injuring the rest.

Transport accidents are common in Indonesia, where buses and trains are often old and badly maintained.

In February, at least 27 people died when a bus with 40 domestic tourists on board hit a motorbike and crashed in Subang region, also in West Java.

(Source: AFP)

U.S. hampering key UN climate talks in Bangkok

The United States is reportedly hindering a critical United Nations conference on funding developing nations’ struggle against global warming.

The U.S., which has abandoned the Paris Agreement, has tabled a proposal at the conference in the Thai capital Bangkok with the backing from Japan and Australia, seeking to remove rules on how countries account for their climate action funding, AFP reported Saturday citing “multiple sources close to the negotiations.”

According to the report, the issue of how those funds are made available to impoverished nations has emerged as a major stumbling block at the Bangkok conference, which has made little progress since it opened on Tuesday.

The report further cites a senior climate negotiator as saying that the U.S. delegation in Bangkok was “poisoning” negotiations intended to establish a clear roadmap to implement what nations agreed to in the landmark Paris Accord on climate change.

“The U.S. is no longer playing the game but it’s still setting the rules,” said the negotiator, who spoke on condition of anonymity. Moreover, observers in Bangkok further underlined that the U.S. and some other developed economies “were refusing point blank to discuss the contentious issue



of how rich nations inform other states of their future funding plans,” the report added. The U.S. position, it further emphasized, “is starkly at odds with that of the developing nations, which insist that transparent and predictable finance is needed to effectively plan investment in new technologies and carbon reduction.”

“The role of the U.S. negotiators at the talks is actively hindering progress at this critical stage,” said Harjeet Singh, policy manager of International Climate ActionAid as quoted in the report.

Singh further alleged that other developed nations negotiating blocs, including the European Union, were also “standing on the sidewalk” by failing to take a stand for developing countries. The Paris deal, struck between 190 countries in December 2015, intended to limit global temperature rises to “well below” two degrees Celsius by 2100, aiming for no more than a 1.5-degree Celsius increase if at all possible. Under the agreement, richer nations were supposed to help developing nations deal with the consequences of climate change, but deep concerns still remain over a lack of transparency and accountability in the process.

The report also points out that poor countries already coping with floods, heatwaves and super storms -- made worse by climate change -- are expected to be hit the hardest by the effects of the heating planet. Activists further censured Washington, accusing the Trump administration of endangering hard-earned gains on a global initiative to halt runaway planet warming. This is while the U.S. remains committed to the Paris roadmap until 2020.

(Source: agencies)

Egypt sentences 75 to death, hundreds to jail over 2013 sit-in

An Egyptian court on Saturday issued death sentences for 75 people, including prominent Islamist leaders, and jailed more than 600 others over a 2013 sit-in which ended with the killing of hundreds of protesters by security forces. The sentencing concluded the mass trial of some 700 people accused of offences including murder and inciting violence during the pro-Muslim Brotherhood protest at Rabaa Adawiya square in Cairo.

The government says many protesters were armed and that eight members of the security forces were killed. It initially said more than 40 police had died.

Rights groups say more than 800 protesters died in the single most deadly incident during the unrest that followed Egypt’s 2011 popular uprising. Amnesty International condemned Saturday’s decision, calling the trial “disgraceful”.

In Saturday’s hearing at the vast Tora prison complex south of Cairo, a criminal court sentenced to death by hanging several prominent Islamists including senior Brotherhood leaders Essam al-Erian and Mohamed Beltagi and preacher Safwat Higazi.

Muslim Brotherhood spiritual leader Mohamed Badie and dozens more were given life sentences, judicial sources said. Others received jail sentences ranging from five to



15 years.

Cases were dropped against five people who had died while in prison, judicial sources said, without giving further details.

Following weeks of protests in 2013 against the ouster of Islamist President Mohamed Morsi by the military -- led at the time by Egypt’s current president, Abdel Fattah al-Sisi -- security forces violently broke up

the demonstrators at Rabaa square.

They arrested hundreds of people who were charged with inciting violence, murder and organizing illegal protests.

Rights groups have criticized the trial for including many peaceful protesters and journalists.

An award-winning photographer who covered the protests, Mahmoud Abu Zeid,

was sentenced to five years in jail, but would soon be released because his five years in detention during the trial are counted toward the sentence, judicial sources said.

Abu Zeid, also known as Shawkan, was awarded a United Nations press freedom prize this year. He was charged with belonging to a banned group and possessing firearms.

“We condemn today’s verdict in the strongest terms,” Amnesty International said in a statement. “The fact that not a single police officer has been brought to account ... shows what a mockery of justice this trial was.”

Since Sisi was elected president in 2014, authorities have justified a crackdown on dissent and freedoms as being directed at militants and saboteurs trying to undermine the state. Death sentences have been handed down to hundreds of his political opponents on charges such as belonging to an illegal organization or planning to carry out an attack. Supporters say a security crackdown is needed to stabilize Egypt, which still faces an Islamist insurgency in the Sinai Peninsula and is reeling financially from years of unrest.

Critics say the erosion of freedoms and silencing of political opponents is the worst Egypt has seen in its modern history.

(Source: Reuters)

U.S. officer fatally shoots black man after entering ‘wrong’ house



A Texas police officer shot a black man to death after walking into an apartment she apparently thought was her own, officials said.

Authorities were seeking to charge the officer, who has not been identified, with manslaughter, Dallas Police U. Renee Hall told a news conference on Friday.

“At the very early stages of this investigation, initial indications were that they were what we consider circumstances of an officer-involved shooting,” Hall told reporters.

“However, as we continued this investigation it became clear that we were dealing with what appears to be a much different and very unique situation,” he added.

The incident took place on Thursday after the officer returned home from her shift. The officer called dispatch to report that she had mistakenly walked into an apartment and fatally shot a man inside.

The victim has been identified as 26-year-old Botham Shem Jean.

Jean was a 2016 graduate of Harding University in Arkansas, where he “frequently led worship for chapel and for campus events,” according to a statement from the school.

It is not clear yet how the officer entered Jean’s home, or whether the door was open or unlocked.

The apartment complex is just a few blocks from Dallas’s police headquarters.

At a Friday morning press briefing, Sgt. Warren Mitchell acknowledged there remained many unanswered questions about what had happened in the apartment.

“We still have a lot to do in this investigation. So there’s a lot of information I understand you guys want but this is all we can give you at this time,” Mitchell said.

When asked if there was a witness, he replied: “We have not spoken to anyone else at this time.”

The United States police departments have been under heightened scrutiny in recent years for the disproportionate number of police killings of African Americans.

Numerous demonstrations have been held across the country following police-involved killings of unarmed African-American men, including Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri; Tamir Rice in Cleveland, Ohio; Eric Garner in Staten Island, New York; and Walter Scott in North Charleston, South Carolina.

Firearms are responsible for an estimated 33,000 deaths in the U.S. every year.

(Source: agencies)

Saudi regime, Spain row puts warship deal at risk of cancellation

A multibillion-dollar deal to sell Spanish warships to Saudi Arabia is on the brink of being cancelled amid a row between the two countries over Madrid’s decision to block shipment of bombs to the kingdom.

The tiff started earlier this week after Spain’s Defense Ministry cancelled a 2015 agreement to sell 400 laser-guided bombs to Saudi Arabia, which is waging a deadly war on Yemen.

The decision enraged the House of Saud regime which is already under international pressure over rising civilian deaths in its brutal bombing campaign on Yemen.

Now, the Spanish daily El Independiente is reporting that Saudi Arabia plans to scrap a \$2.2 billion contract to purchase five Corvette warships from state-owned military shipbuilder Navantia.

The report has raised serious concerns in Spain as the cancellation of the deal could endanger thousands of jobs.

Spanish government spokeswoman Isabel Celaa told reporters on Friday that Madrid was working to preserve the warship contract.

“The government is working to maintain good relations with Saudi Arabia and to defend the contracts for the construction of five Corvettes in Navantia’s shipyards,” she said.

Celaa tried to play down “a diplomatic crisis with Saudi Arabia,” but acknowledged that “there may be an exchange of opinions and divergence which I think will be resolved.”

Asked whether the government was considering reversing



its decision to block the sale of the bombs, the spokeswoman was unforthcoming, only saying that it was “maintaining the government’s international commitments.”

Spain’s Defense Ministry has said it would pay back the \$10.6 million it had already received from Riyadh as part of the arms deal to sell 400 bombs to Riyadh.

Spanish defense ministry has cancelled a €9.2-million deal to sell Saudis 400 precision bombs for fear that they could be used against Yemenis.

Spain’s Deputy Trade Minister Xiana Mendez told the parliament’s defense commission that the government was “aware of the importance of this ... splendid [warship] contract with close to 6,000 jobs” involved.

She further stressed that the accord “is still in force” and that “the government will not endanger” the sale of the warships.

The Madrid government has faced criticism for selling weapons to Riyadh. Campaign groups such as Amnesty International, Spain’s FundiPau, Greenpeace and Oxfam have called on Spain to stop supplying military equipment to the Saudis, accusing them of abusing human rights.

Alberto Estevez of Spain’s Arms Control Coalition welcomed the cancellation of bombs sale to Saudi Arabia.

“These kind of weapons have been used in alleged war crimes in, in attacks to markets, hospitals, schools and the likes, which are clear violations of international humanitarian laws and the laws of war.”

The Saudi regime aggression, which began in March 2015, initially consisted of a bombing campaign, but was later coupled with a naval blockade and the deployment of ground forces into Yemen.

Several Western countries have been supplying the Saudi regime with advanced weapons and military equipment. Spain is said to be one of the biggest arms exporters to the Saudi regime.

Last week, United Nations human rights experts raised the alarm at the high rate of civilian casualties in Saudi Arabia strikes on Yemen, saying the air raids “may amount to war crimes.”

(Source: Press TV)

STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	139628.7
IFX	1615.06

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	48,570 rials
GBP	54,270 rials
AED	11,430 rials

Source: isna.ir

COMMODITIES

WTI	\$67.75/b
Brent	\$76.83/b
OPEC Basket	\$75.51/b
Gold	\$1,97.00/oz
Silver	\$14.22/oz
Platinum	\$787.10/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

NEWS IN BRIEF



Iran to set up pavilion in Oman Health Exhibition in late Sept.

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran will set up a pavilion in the 8th Oman Health Exhibition which will take place in New Oman Convention & Exhibition Center in Muscat from September 24 to 26, Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) of Iran announced.

The event targets all aspects of the health and wellness industry, opening doors for trade and investment. It was launched in 2009 and is now on its eight edition.



Pakistan determined to boost Iranian economic ties

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue, and Economic Affairs of Pakistan Asad Umar announced his country's firm decision to develop economic ties with Iran, IRNA reported on Saturday.

In his meeting with Iran's Ambassador to Islamabad Mehdi Honardoost, the Pakistani minister called for removal of existing trade and commerce barriers and reinforcing mutual transactions and trade meetings as well.

Honardoost, for his part, underlined the necessity of tackling banking and customs barriers besides easing trade ties. As reported earlier, Iran exported some \$377 million worth of goods to Pakistan in the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 22), a 66 percent rise from \$277 million for the last year's same period.

Pakistan was one of the 10 major export destinations for Iranian-made goods in the mentioned period, next to the countries such as Iraq, China, the United Arab Emirates, India, Afghanistan and South Korea.

Germany calls for time on EU digital tax, France brokers compromise

Germany called for more time to agree a European Union tax overhaul to raise levies on large digital firms, although its Finance Minister Olaf Scholz said a solution was needed soon.

Under a proposal from the European Commission in March, EU states would charge a 3 percent levy on digital revenues of large firms like Google and Facebook that are accused of routing their profits to the bloc's low-tax states.

The plan is opposed by smaller states like Ireland, and by Nordic governments who fear the tax could stifle innovation and trigger retaliation from the United States, which is home to most of the firms who could be hit by the proposed tax.

"It is necessary to take some time for debate, but we are absolutely willing to find a solution very soon," Scholz told reporters at a Vienna meeting of EU finance ministers.

After having pushed for the tax, Berlin took a more cautious approach after Scholz took office in March and his latest remark will be closely scrutinized by European Union governments who oppose the new tax, as it may be perceived as showing Germany's little appetite to the project.

EU officials said Germany wants to make sure the tax does not damage its carmakers, who could face retaliatory measures from international partners, or fall within the scope of the new taxation if their digital revenues increased.

French finance minister Bruno Le Maire, one of the main supporters of the new levy, tried to facilitate a compromise by offering to add "a sunset clause" to the European Union tax.

Under his proposal, the new tax would end once a deal is reached at global level on the taxation of digital companies.

"We should be able to take a decision at the European level on the internet taxation by the end of this year," he told reporters before the meeting of finance ministers.

An overhaul of digital taxation has been for long under discussion at global level, but no deal is in sight as large differences remain among rich nations.

The EU plan already foresees that the 3 percent levy would be only a temporary solution until a global deal is reached. Le Maire's proposal would make clearer that it has an expiry date.

EU tax reforms require the backing of all its 28 member states to be adopted. Austria, who is holding the EU's rotating presidency is working to find a compromise by the end of the year.

(Source: Reuters)

Iran an influential member of IMO: secretary general

ECONOMY **TEHRAN**— Iran is one of the most influential members of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and is always supporting this organization's activities, IMO Secretary General Kitack Lim said on Saturday.

Making the remarks in a ceremony held in IRIB Conference Center in Tehran to mark the 70th anniversary of the establishment of IMO, Kitack Lim also appreciated Iranian maritime sector's contribution to the IMO's measures and called on the country to have always a strong part in supporting the laws and regulations to promote maritime industry, the news portal of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) announced.

IMO is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for regulating shipping. Headquartered in London, the organization currently has 174 member states and three associate members.

Iran among world's top 20 countries
Addressing the same ceremony, PMO Head Mohammad Rastad said that enjoying some long coastlines, many commercial ports, and a large shipping fleet Iran is among



International Maritime Organization (IMO) Secretary General Kitack Lim speaking in a ceremony held in Tehran on Saturday to mark the 70th anniversary of IMO establishment official highlighted.

He further appreciated Kitack Lim attending in the ceremony and said: "IMO's secretary general's presence here is a valu-

"We have also good performance in terms of preserving the marine environment", the

Japan chamber of commerce prepared to expand trade ties with Iran

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) is ready to develop economic and trade ties with Iran, according to its chairman, Akio Mimura.

He made the remarks in a meeting with Iranian Ambassador to Japan Morteza Rahmani-Movahed, IRNA reported on Saturday.

"We are well informed of Iran's capaci-

ties and capabilities as well as its smart and hard-working people and its old history and are willing for the expansion of ties with the country", Mimura further noted.

Referring to the old population of Japan and the country's current status of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), he mentioned cooperation with foreign sides as one of the strategies to flourish them.

Rahmani-Movahed, for his part, gave greetings to Mimura on the behalf of Gholam-Reza Shafe'i, the chairman of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIIMA), and underscored the role of the two sides' chambers of commerce in preserving and supporting the current relations and also for the progress of trade between Iran and Japan.



Iranian Ambassador to Japan Morteza Rahmani-Movahed (L) shaking hand with Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) Chairman Akio Mimura

Iran joins hand with Russia, Turkey to dump dollar in trade

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran has discussed trade in national currencies with Russia and Turkey in order to reduce the impact of U.S. dollar on the three countries' trade and economies, ILNA reported on Saturday quoting Central bank of Iran (CBI) Governor Abdolnaser Hemmati

"During the trilateral meeting with Russia and Turkey, I and the Oil Minister Mr. Zanganeh also had some useful meetings with the economic representatives of the two countries in which we discussed various subjects," ILNA cited the official's personal webpage.

According to Hemmati, selling oil, purchasing basic goods, expansion of banking relations, exchanging national currencies with the aim of eliminating dollar, and development of trade and economic relations, were among the subjects which were discussed



with the two neighboring countries.

"We decided to follow up on the agreements in a meeting with the governor of Russia's central bank in Moscow," Hemmati wrote in his page.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan along with two high ranking delegations visited Tehran on Friday for a trilateral summit on Syria and also to discuss expansion of ties.

China's record trade surplus with U.S. adds fuel to trade war fire

China's trade surplus with the United States widened to a record in August even as the country's export growth slowed slightly, an outcome that could push President Donald Trump to turn up the heat on Beijing in their cantankerous trade dispute.

The politically sensitive surplus hit \$31.05 billion in August, up from \$28.09 billion in July, customs data showed on Saturday, surpassing the previous record set in June.

Over the first eight months of the year, China's surplus with its largest export market has risen nearly 15 percent, adding to tensions in the trade relationship between the world's two largest economies.

China's annual export growth in August moderated slightly to 9.8 percent, the data showed, the weakest rate since March but only slightly below recent trends.

The number missed analysts' forecasts that shipments from the world's largest exporter would rise 10.1 percent, slowing only slightly from 12.2 percent in July.

Even with U.S. tariffs targeting \$50 billion of Chinese exports in effect for their first full month in August, China's exports to the United States still accelerated, growing 13.2 percent from a year earlier from 11.2 percent in July.

"There is still an impact from front-loading of exports, but the main reason (for still-solid export growth) is strong growth in the U.S. economy," said Zhang Yi, an economist at Zhonghai Shengrong Capital Management.

Zhang said the impact from U.S. tariffs on China's exports would likely be limited over the next few months.

China's imports from the United States grew only 2.7 percent in August, a slowdown from 11.1 percent in July.

The world's largest trading nation got off to a strong start this year, but its economic outlook is being clouded by the rapidly escalating U.S. trade dispute and cooling domestic demand.

Italy's economy would struggle with 'even a minor recession,' former IMF director says

Italy's economy is in such a fragile state that even a minor recession could be very dangerous, according to a former director at the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Italy's coalition government is poised to present its 2019 budget next month, setting out its economic and financial plans for the coming year.

The event is likely to be closely monitored by investors, with many concerned Italy's

euroskeptical leaders will stick to contentious spending plans — and exacerbate the country's growing budget deficit and massive debt pile.

"The problem with Italy is that I don't think it can even stand a minor recession," Italy's former prime minister designate, Carlo Cottarelli, told CNBC's Steve Sedgwick at the Ambrosetti Forum in Italy on Saturday.

For a few days in June, Cottarelli — director of the IMF's fiscal affairs department from

2008 to 2013 and nicknamed "Mr. Scissors" for his pro-austerity views — appeared to be on the brink of becoming Italy's interim prime minister.

However, a political compromise between the right-wing Lega party and left-leaning Five Star Movement saw these two groups form a coalition government instead.

When asked whether he believed a global recession in the second-half of the year would

able and important opportunity for us."

As a country which was one of the members of IMO since the beginning of the organization's activities, Iran is always committed to follow IMO rules and regulations, the official noted.

"Our efforts are for the more growth of our country's presence in the global transportation and given our capacities it can be expected that Iran can take more share of the global market in this due", Rastad also asserted.

21st place in world in terms of cargo transport via sea

Iranian Transport Minister Abbas Akhoundi was the other official speaking in the ceremony. He said through transporting 19 million tons of cargo via sea Iran was ranked the 21st in the world in 2017, IRIB reported.

He also said that having a 6.5-million-ton capacity, Iran stands at the 31st place in the world in terms of maritime transportation capacity and National Iranian Tanker Company has the largest fleet of oil tankers in the Middle East.

U.S.-Iran trade sextuples in July

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — While the U.S. imposed a new round of sanctions on Iran's trade in precious metals, transactions in U.S. dollar, as well as Iran's auto sector in August and oil exports sanctions are to arrive in the early November, the American Statistical Association (ASA) reported that in July 2018, Iran-U.S. trade reached \$60.7 million increasing six times more than the figure, \$10.2 million, in the same period in 2017.

According to the report, Iran's imports of the U.S. in July reached \$35.7 million growing five times more than the same time span in the preceding year, i.e. \$6.9 million.

The U.S. imports from Iran in the named month experienced a 7.5-times more rise and reached \$25 million from



the preceding \$3.3 million in July 2017.

During the first seven months of 2018, Iran-U.S. trade stood at \$155.6 million, increasing 80 percent from the same time in the previous year.

The U.S. exports to Iran in these seven months boosted 101 percent hitting \$95.4 million and its imports from Iran increased 54 percent and stood at \$60.2 million, the same report confirmed.

Exports holding up

While no one predicted a sudden, sharp blow from U.S. tariffs, China's official export data has been surprisingly resilient so far, with growth exceeding analysts' expectations for five months in a row.

Chinese officials acknowledged Chinese exporters have been rushing out shipments to beat new U.S. tariffs, buoying the headline growth readings, while some companies such as steel mills are diversifying and selling more products to other countries.

Economists have noted that disruptions in supply chains are likely to be more company specific, and will take time to be reflected in broad economic data and corporate earnings reports.

However, anecdotal evidence of mounting trade damage on both sides of the Pacific is on the rise.

Official and private manufacturing surveys for China show global demand for Chinese goods is clearly on the wane, with export orders shrinking for months in a row.

"Risks have increased due to the negative impacts of China-U.S. trade friction. The impact on exports may gradually start to show up, with future export growth possible declining," said Liu Xuezhong, an analyst with Bank of Communications.

Policymakers have shifted their focus in recent months to improving credit conditions and shoring up business confidence.

Beijing is ramping up spending on infrastructure projects to spur domestic demand and the central bank is tamping down borrowing costs and leaning on commercial banks to continue lending to struggling firms hit by trade troubles.

But such steps will take time to arrest the economy's slide, and analysts expect the government to unveil more stimulus measures if business conditions continue to deteriorate.

(Source: Reuters)

represent a clear and present danger to Italy, Cottarelli replied: "That is my view."

"The problem is that we have not started a decline in the debt-to-GDP ratio at a sufficient speed," he said, before adding: "If the debt is declining and then there is a shock, maybe the debt will stop declining but will not start rising. (But) we are not in that situation yet and that is why we are vulnerable."

(Source: CNBC)

OPEC, non-OPEC panel to discuss sharing oil-output boost

An OPEC and non-OPEC technical committee will later this month discuss proposals for sharing out an oil-output increase, sources familiar with the matter said, a tense topic for the producer group after it decided in June to ease supply curbs.

A panel called the Joint Technical Committee will on Sept. 17 consider proposals on distributing the agreed output increase of 1 million barrels per day, the sources said. The discussion had earlier been planned for next Tuesday.

"The talks will look at various mechanisms" to reach the required production level, a source said.

If resolved, the talks could lead to an easing of tensions within the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries. Iran had been against the June decision, which came amid pressure from U.S. President Donald Trump to reduce oil prices.

There are four proposals on how to distribute the increase, presented by Iran, Algeria, Russia and Venezuela, one of the



sources said, suggesting agreement will not be straightforward.

One idea, to share it pro-rata among participating countries, is unlikely to be

approved by Russia and Saudi Arabia since it would give them less than the supply boosts of 300,000 and 400,000 bpd that they respectively want, the source said.

OPEC, Russia and other non-members agreed in June to return to 100 percent compliance with oil output cuts that began in January 2017. Months of underproduction in Venezuela and elsewhere had pushed adherence above 160 percent.

The June meeting concluded with a deep disagreement between Saudi Arabia and Iran, longtime rivals in OPEC.

Saudi Arabia said the decision implied a reallocation of extra production from countries unable to produce more to those, such as Riyadh, that can. Iran, facing a forced cut in its oil exports because of U.S. sanctions, disagreed.

The proposals will next be presented to ministers attending a monitoring meeting in Algeria on Sept. 23, sources said.

(Source: Reuters)

India proposes 15% cut in maximum solar power tariff bid



India is planning to implement a major change in the way project developers would participate in future solar power tenders. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has proposed to reduce the maximum allowed tariff bid in at least the national-level solar power tenders.

According to media reports, the Ministry has issued a letter to Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) with a direction to reduce the maximum allowed tariff bid from Rs 2.93/kWh (¢4.08/kWh) to Rs 2.50/kWh (¢3.48/kWh). The proposed limit shall be exclusive of the financial impact of safeguard duty recently imposed on imported solar cells. With the inclusion of the safeguard duty, the maximum tariff bid allowed would be Rs 2.68/kWh (¢3.73/kWh).

The directive comes weeks after SECI cancelled allocation of 2.4 gigawatts of solar power capacity to several project developers in India's largest-ever solar power tender. The lowest bid submitted in that tender was by Acme Solar at Rs 2.44/kWh (¢3.39/kWh) for 600 megawatts of capacity. The second-lowest bid was placed by Azure Power and Adani Green Energy at Rs 2.64/kWh (¢3.67/kWh), a hike of over 8 percent, while the highest bid was placed by SB Energy at Rs 2.71/kWh (¢3.77/kWh) for 1.1 gigawatt of capacity.

Only Acme Solar was awarded the right to develop projects while all other bids were rejected despite being well below the maximum threshold of Rs 2.93/kWh (¢4.08/kWh).

The most recent national-level solar power auction conducted by NTPC Limited saw tariffs in-line with the rec-

ommendations of the Ministry. NTPC allocated 1.2 gigawatts in the bid range of Rs 2.59-2.60/kWh (¢3.60-3.62/kWh). These bids were inclusive of safeguard duty impact.

According to Mercom India, which claims to have reviewed this letter, SECI has been advised to come out with tenders of 1.2 gigawatts in capacity. Project developers would be allowed to bid for the entire capacity of 1.2 gigawatts, while the lowest bid volume would be 50 megawatts. SECI had announced a third national-level solar power tender with capacity of 3 gigawatts. The fate of the cancelled capacity of the second tender, and that of the third tender, remain unknown.

While evidence exists that project developers may be willing to match the proposed tariff bid limits at the national-level tenders, the same called by for state-level tenders. Tenders issued by SECI and other central government companies like NTPC Limited attract large numbers of companies willing to quote competitive tariffs due to a greater sense of surety over payments. The converse is true for state-level tenders. While some developers do not participate in state tender at all, others quote substantially higher bids compared to those in the national-level tenders due to local conditions, like land costs, transmission infrastructure, and track record of state firms to make timely payments.

Mercom Capital CEO Raj Prabhu indicated that there could be delays in auctions of already announced tenders as stakeholders would review that positions.

(Source: cleantechnica.com)

Emirates boss rails against price of airline fuel, says oil should be at \$52 per barrel



Airline fuel is overpriced, and the underlying cost of oil should sit around \$52 per barrel, Tim Clark, President of Emirates told CNBC Friday.

"I am one of these people that says it is hugely overpriced. If you are at \$77 or \$83 dollars (per barrel) it should be at \$52. That's where it needs to be," Clark said in an interview with CNBC's Jomanna Bercetche on the side-lines of The Aviation Festival in London.

"Those people, those countries, those entities that say they can't make money on \$52, they need to be doing something else," he added.

The oil price has risen about 20 percent in 2018, and on Friday morning, Brent crude futures traded at around \$76.48. U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures sat at \$67.76.

Clark added that as spot prices for oil were now roughly matching the futures price, the market had sensed the oil price was unlikely to rise further from this point.

"I think fuel is now capped out. The forward curve is flat," he said before adding "There's a certain amount of flakiness going forward that fuel will rise above where it is today. That's my view," Clark said.

Emirates, which employs approximately 25,000 cabin crew staff around the world, has seen growth hampered by a prolonged period of lower oil prices in recent years — a key driver of wealth in the Persian Gulf region.

Clark said fuel prices for his airline were now running at roughly 44 percent higher than the same time last year. However, he

warned however that many oil producers weren't exhibiting a traditional response to a higher price.

"As the oil producing countries, largely in the Middle East get a benefit of that, historically there was an uptick very rapidly in demand, but we are not seeing that," Clark said.

He added that many emerging markets and Middle East countries were struggling to match the performance of the United States and global growth looked uncertain.

"One has got to worry a little bit about what is driving all of this. Whether it is an inordinate amount of debt creation and that is likely to take its toll. We saw that ten years ago," he said.

On Wednesday Federal health authorities and local police quarantined an Emirates Airline jumbo jet Wednesday morning in New York after several passengers said they were ill.

Flight 203 arrived in New York with around 100 travelers and flight staff complaining of cough, fever and "symptoms of gastrointestinal illness," according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 11 people were then taken to hospital as an additional precaution.

Clark told CNBC that no source for the sudden outbreak of sickness had been found as yet, but he expected to discover the root of the problem "within a week."

The Emirates president added that he didn't expect to lose custom over the incident before adding that the airline was an extremely safe organization that "prides ourselves on health and safety."

(Source: CNBC)

In response to Trump, Saudis ramp up oil exports into the U.S.

Saudi Arabia has markedly increased oil exports to America, a sign OPEC's leading producer is responding to pressure from U.S. President Donald Trump to cool down the energy market.

While the export boost started earlier this year, it accelerated over the past three months after Trump repeatedly -- both through private diplomacy and public Twitter harangues -- asked the Saudis to lift production to keep energy prices in check.

Saudi oil shipments into the U.S. reached a four-week average of one million barrels a day last week for the first time since late 2017, according to government data, and are up roughly 250,000 barrels a day since late May.

"The Middle East producers are becoming much more aggressive, wanting to bring their barrels back into this market," Gary Heminger, the chief executive of Marathon Petroleum Corp., the second-largest U.S. refiner by distillation capacity, said at an investor conference earlier this week.

The increase in Saudi exports into the U.S. equates to almost half the overall output increase the kingdom has implemented since late May after the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and allies including Russia agreed in June to boost output.

Saudi oil shipments into the U.S. plunged to a 30-year low in October last year. This prompted talk that America's freedom from Saudi oil -- a rhetorical aspiration for generations of American politicians, from Jimmy Carter to George W. Bush -- was within reach, even if it was largely the choice of supplier rather than customer.

In late October, the four-week average of U.S. imports of Saudi crude hit a low of 506,000 barrels a day, compared



with last week's four-week average surge to 1,009,000 barrels a day, according to government data.

■ OPEC undertaking

Last year, the Saudi export drop was part of a wider undertaking by OPEC to fight a global glut that weighed on oil prices. Because the U.S. is the most transparent oil market, with the government publishing weekly data about the size of crude stockpiles, the Saudis specifically targeted the American market trying to reduce the inventories.

Saudi Arabia has been able to entice U.S. refiners to buy more crude in part by lowering the price it charges to customers in America. In June, Riyadh sold its flagship export grade -- Arab Light -- at just 60 cents a barrel above a basket of crude pumped in the U.S. Gulf of Mexico, down from \$1.30 a barrel in late 2017. The kingdom lowered even

more the price of its lower-quality crude -- Arab Medium and Arab Heavy.

The surge in Saudi exports has returned Riyadh to the second position in the ranking of top U.S. crude oil suppliers, which it briefly lost to Iraq and Mexico in late 2017 and early 2018. Historically, the American market has long been Saudi Arabia's most prized, both for economic and political reasons. Aramco, the kingdom's state-owned company, controls the largest refinery in the U.S., the Motiva plant in Port Arthur, Texas.

■ Traditional diet

Motiva cut its imports of Saudi crude sharply last year, at one point even importing more Iraqi crude than Saudi. But in recent months the company, owned 100 percent by Aramco, has returned to a more traditional diet. According to data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration, Motiva bought more than 70 percent of its crude from Saudi Arabia.

As Saudi Arabia has regained its market share in the U.S., Iraq, the Middle East's number two exporter, lost out. The four-week average of Iraqi shipments into the U.S. has dropped to less than 400,000 barrels a day, down from 500,000 to 800,000 in late 2007 and early 2008. Kuwait has also lost market share.

In ramping up shipments into the U.S., the Saudis also appear to be responding to American lawmakers threats to resurrect the so-called "No Oil Producing and Exporting Cartels Act," or NOPEC, which proposes making the cartel subject to the Sherman antitrust law, used more than a century ago to break up the oil empire of John Rockefeller.

(Source: Bloomberg)

Scotland's oil hub embraces green energy

Scotland's leader Nicola Sturgeon launched on Friday a major renewable energy project boasting the world's most powerful wind turbines, which she hopes will also propel the independence ambitions of her nationalist party.

The 11 191-meter-high turbines in the waters of Aberdeen Bay will eventually produce 312 GWh of power a year - enough to power 80,000 households - helping to reduce Scotland's reliance on its oil industry.



"Scotland is a world leader in energy and that is good for our present and our future, whatever that may be," Sturgeon told Reuters, standing on a ferry underneath the churning blades of the new European Offshore Wind Deployment Centre (EOWDC), which is run by Swedish utility Vattenfall.

The Scottish National Party she leads, which is seeking to maintain its drive for independence from the United Kingdom, has embraced renewable power as the center of its energy policy.

The party's emphasis on optimistic-looking future oil revenues was seen by many as a key weakness in the failed campaign to win an independence referendum in 2014.

An SNP strategy published this year removed oil from the party's baseline plans for the economy, describing it instead as a "bonus", while renewables were seen as one of Scotland's economic motors, with food and drink and finance.

At the same time, renewable projects such as EODCW enhance the SNP's appeal to the 61 percent of Scottish voters who think climate change is an urgent concern, according to a survey of households published by the Scottish government this week.

Sturgeon wants 50 percent of all of Scotland's energy to come from renewables by 2030, compared with an EU target of at least 27 percent.

Scotland's energy minister, Paul Wheelhouse, said the renewable power and low carbon sector provided 49,000 jobs in Scotland, compared with 115,000 in oil and gas, but the difference was narrowing.

With Scots unhappy about Britain's exit from the European Union, another referendum for Scottish independence is a possibility which Sturgeon does not rule out.

The EU's financial support for renewable projects such as the EOWDC has underpinned support for the bloc.

Scotland has the majority of the UK's onshore wind energy resources and the seas around Scotland have up to 25 percent of Europe's tidal power, 10 percent of its wave power and around 25 percent of European offshore wind resource potential.

Even so, the value of the oil still under the North Sea has defied predictions of a quick collapse and still dominates Scotland's economy for now, especially with the recent recovery in the oil price.

At the same time, more efficient techniques for dismantling old oil rigs in deep and often treacherous waters is a skill that Scotland is pioneering as another revenue earner.

Not everyone is a fan of the new wind power project in Aberdeen Bay.

Before he was elected as U.S. president, Donald Trump objected to the wind farm being located in full view of his golf course at Balmedie. He was defeated in a court battle.

"Maybe on his next trip to Scotland he can come and see it and change his mind," Sturgeon said.

(Source: Seeking Alpha)

Washington announces sanctions on Syrian oil industry

The U.S. Department of Treasury announced sanctions against five Syrian companies and four individuals on allegations of facilitating crude oil shipments and financing to the Assad government, Reuters reports, citing a statement by the department.

One of the targets of the sanctions are businessman Muhammad al-Qatirji and a trucking company he owns, that, the Treasury said, facilitated trade in fuels between the Syrian government and ISIS, even though the government, with the assistance of Russia, is officially fighting this same terrorist group and most of it has been driven out of territories it occupied in Syria previously.

According to the Treasury statement, Al-Qatirji's company was also involved in weapons shipments from Iraq to Syria.

Another target of the sanctions is a fuel trade network that spans Syria, the UAE, and Lebanon, securing fuel supplies to the war-torn country. One of the companies participating in this network, Abar Petroleum Service SAL, last year took part in the sale of fuels worth \$430 million to the Syrian government.

Two other companies in the network, "Lebanon-based Nasco Polymers and UAE-based Sonex Investments were designated for facilitating shipments to Syrian ports by serving as consignees and chartering the vessels," the statement also said.

The Syrian army is currently preparing for an offensive against Idlib, the last major rebel stronghold controlled by terrorist groups.

The offensive once again put Washington at odds with Moscow, since Russian forces began bombing the town ahead of the Syrian offensive despite a warning from President Trump that the offensive could end in tragedy. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov referred to Idlib, to where Russian and Syrian forces earlier in the conflict provided passage for militants from other parts of Syria that government forces took control of, as "a pocket of terrorism" and a problem that needs to be solved.

(Source: oilprice.com)

NEWS IN BRIEF



China's FM visits Pakistan

INTERNATIONAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi is on a three-day official visit to Pakistan, which started on Friday. It is the first official visit by a senior Chinese official since the formation of a new government in Pakistan.

During the visit, Wang Yi held delegation-level talks with senior Pakistani officials, including his counterpart Shah Mehmood Qureshi, a spokesman for the Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs said. He also called on the president, the prime minister, National Assembly speaker, and the army chief.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said the visit came on the invitation of Pakistan's foreign minister. Chunying said China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic partners, adding that the two countries are 'good neighbors, good friends, and good brothers'.

She China-Pakistan relations have maintained a good momentum of development. "The two sides have maintained frequent high-level exchanges and pragmatic cooperation in various fields has progressed smoothly," adding that the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has achieved fruitful results.

"We hope to continue the traditional friendship between China and Pakistan, promote mutually beneficial cooperation in various fields, and push China-Pakistan all-weather strategic partnership to a new height" she added.



Mattis makes unannounced visit to Kabul

INTERNATIONAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — After visiting Pakistan and India, the U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis made an unannounced, whirlwind visit to Kabul on Friday, a day after deadly bombings at a sports center claimed dozens of lives.

According to reports, Mattis was accompanied by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Joseph Dunford and they were received at the highly-fortified U.S. military headquarters in Kabul by the new U.S. commander in Afghanistan, Gen. Austin Scott Miller.

Mattis also met the Afghan president Ashraf Ghani and government's chief executive Dr. Abdullah Abdullah. The officials did not make any public comments during the visit.

Security situation in the war-ravaged country continues to deteriorate with sharp increase in terror attacks, especially in the capital city. In the last two weeks alone, two major attacks were carried out in the Shia-dominated neighborhood of Kabul, resulting in hundreds of civilian casualties.

Last week, the outgoing commander of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan Gen. Nicholson urged all parties to end the war, including his own country, echoing the sentiments of the war-weary people in Afghanistan.

The war in Afghanistan, America's longest war, has entered its 17th year already and there have been no results for the U.S.-led coalition that invaded the country in 2001.



Myanmar welcomes repatriation plan of Rohingya

INTERNATIONAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — After facing blistering criticism and outrage from across the world, Myanmar has welcomed the Bangladeshi government's plan to begin the long-delayed process of repatriating Rohingya refugees back to their homeland.

Speaking to media persons in the country's administrative capital Naypyidaw on Friday, government spokesman Zaw Htay, citing Bangladeshi foreign minister Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali's comments Wednesday, said the move was "very much welcomed" by Myanmar, a report in South China Morning Post stated.

Myanmar and Bangladesh agreed in November last year to repatriate Rohingya refugees from camps in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazaar to Rakhine State. But the process has been delayed.

Almost a million Rohingya refugees at currently stationed in Bangladesh, who fled from Rakhine following the brutal crackdown of Myanmar military in August last year.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) on Thursday ruled that it had the power to investigate the forced deportation of Rohingya to Bangladesh, even though Myanmar has not signed the statute.



Under pressure, Pakistan PM sacks advisor

INTERNATIONAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — The newly-elected Pakistan government, succumbing to the pressure from far-right groups, has asked a leading academic to resign as an economic adviser to Prime Minister Imran Khan.

Atif Mian, an economist who belongs to the Ahmadiyya sect of Islam, had been appointed to the Economic Advisory Council (EAC) last week by PM Khan. His appointment invoked outrage from radical outfits who called for his resignation.

Under pressure, the government quietly asked him to step down. Mian confirmed the news on Twitter, saying that he stepped down because of "adverse pressure regarding my appointment from the Mullahs (Muslim clerics) and their supporters", adding he was always willing to serve his country.

Pakistan has a sizeable population of half a million Ahmadis, a long-persecuted minority that has not been included in the fold of Islam under the country's law. The official position in Pakistan is that the Ahmadis are 'heretics'.

Mian is currently a professor of economics at Princeton University in the United States, serving as the director of the Julis-Rabinowitz Center for Public Policy and Finance.

Iran to hand over Chabahar Port to India in October, sticking to agreed timeframe

INTERNATIONAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — In an important development that is likely to cement ties between India and Iran further, Indian officials said on Friday that Iran plans to hand over the operational responsibility of the strategic Chabahar Port to India in October, sticking to the agreed timeframe.

The announcement came following talks between Iran's transport minister Abbas Akhoundi and his Indian counterpart Nitin Gadkari on Friday. Akhoundi is in India to attend the Global Mobility Summit organised by the NITI Aayog.

Speaking at the summit on Friday, the Iranian minister reaffirmed Iran's commitment to hand over the facilities of the port next month, putting speculation to rest. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi also spoke at the summit and batted for greater connectivity between India and its neighbors, including Iran.

Speaking to media persons on the sidelines of the summit, Akhoundi said the two countries have "moved a step in the right direction already". "We have provided a banking channel to India and India has accepted that formally," he said.

Akhoundi was quoted by India's state-run news agency saying that Iran was ready to hand over the port to Indian company "to operate in interim agreement that already we had with Indian part for one and a half year."

New Delhi has expressed hope and optimism that the handover will happen as announced by the Iranian minister. "They have moved as per schedule so far and we hope the handover will happen as agreed," a senior government official was quoted saying by The Hindu.

Akhoundi's visit to India coincided with the 2 plus 2 dialogue in New Delhi, which was attended by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Defense Secretary James Mattis.

The strategic Chabahar port in Sistan-Balochistan province, the energy-rich southern coast of Iran, is seen as an alternative to Pakistan's Gwadar Port. This port will allow India, Iran and Afghanistan to do trade with central Asian countries, bypassing Pakistan.



The first phase of the port was inaugurated in December 2017 by Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, who said at the inauguration ceremony that "routes of the region should be connected on land, sea and air."

Under the agreement signed between India and Iran, India is to equip and operate two berths in Chabahar Port Phase-I with capital investment of \$85.21 million and annual revenue expenditure of \$22.95 million on a 10-year lease.

Speaking on the impact of U.S. sanctions on oil trade, Akhoundi expressed hope that oil trade between India and

Iran will continue. "At the end of the day, both sides will find out some way out to carry on their relationship as we hear from the Indian part that they are already committed to buy the crude oil and we are also committed to continue our trade relationship with India and buy rice and other food material and also industrial material from the Indian side".

On the development work on Farzad-B gas field in Persian Gulf area, he said Iran welcomes Indian firms developing the gas field. "Iranian side is very keen to invest there. We are still to receive the project proposal," he said.

‘Notion of zero imports of Iranian oil to India is economically and politically unrealistic’

1 → Internationally, too, India may not wish to be seen as on the same side as the United States under its current, unpredictable leadership. The notion of zero imports of Iranian oil to India seems then to be both economically and politically unrealistic, even if perhaps possible in practical terms.

■ U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo led delegation held 2+2 talks in New Delhi on Thursday during which the U.S. delegation reportedly urged India to completely halt oil imports from Iran. India, sources say, expressed inclination to continue oil trade with Iran, although no official decision has been made yet. What do you think India will do?

A. Indian officials have said that India 'will act in its interests'. This is a vague statement, but it reflects the enormous complexity of the economic and geostrategic challenges posed by being a friend of both Iran and the United States, being heavily dependent on oil imports, and being close to election time.

India's likely response will be to hedge – to find a way of reducing imports to some extent to signal goodwill to the US, but to continue with Iranian oil imports as far as possible. The delay of an official decision



from India also has utility in so far as India may be able to extract concessions from one or both sides as it weighs its options – such as, for example, Iran's recent offer of almost free shipping and an extended credit period of 60 days.

Of course, the question of Iranian oil imports is about much more than just the oil. The U.S. may be a growing defense and trade partner of India at a moment when it is facing an increasingly assertive China, but India

has strong historical, cultural and political ties with Iran, and New Delhi recognizes well that it needs good friends in the region, too.

■ Iran is critical to India's energy security and other geopolitics interests. Do you think India can afford to cut oil imports from Iran under the U.S. pressure, given the exceptional concessions and discounts given by Iran?

■ Regardless of what decision India makes, the U.S. sanctions on oil trade with Iran will be damaging to the Indian economy.

India will certainly seek some alternative supplies, meaning import costs will rise. Given that we are in the run up to the May 2019 election, the Indian government may also seek to subsidize the increase in petroleum prices through tax reductions, which will incur further gross fiscal costs. But the Indian economy is in a far stronger position today than it was in the early 1990s.

In 1991, mounting fiscal and balance of payment difficulties combined disastrously with an increase in the oil price bill stemming from the Gulf War, and India famously had to physically transfer 47 tons of gold to the Bank of England as collateral for an IMF loan. Today, India is better positioned to weather the storm of more costly oil imports, in gross economic terms, at least.

■ According to reports, Pakistan's military has secretly sought to engage with India to resolve outstanding issues. Do you think, with the new government in Islamabad, we can expect betterment of ties between the two South Asian estranged neighbors?

A. I think we will need to wait until the Indian elections next year before any substantive progress can be made on India-Pakistan relations.

Why U.S. attempts to woo India would fail

1 → The U.S. government has been pushing countries to stop oil imports from Iran after unilaterally withdrawing from the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and six world powers. India has also felt the heat although Modi government has not taken any final decision yet. India is the second largest buyer of Iranian crude oil after China and the U.S. is seeking to influence its energy-import policy, urging it to switch imports from Iran to Saudi Arabia and other U.S. allies. But, can India afford to do that? Certainly not, believe experts.

Iran is extremely critical to India's energy security and larger geopolitical interests. Moving away from Iran and embracing U.S. and its allies is contrary to wisdom and logic. Ahead of the 2+2 talks in New Delhi, a senior US State Department official was quoted saying that the U.S. was in "very detailed conversations" with India over completely stopping India's oil imports from Iran. The U.S. delegation reportedly raised the issue with the Indian side, however, there was no categorical response.

While the U.S. wants India to bring oil imports from Iran to zero, India is treading cautiously and seeking a waiver from the U.S. sanctions on Iran. Earlier this week, India gave permission to state-owned refiners to import oil from Iran with Iranian tankers and insurance, in a sign that India may not cut off Iranian oil imports. The response from the Indian side to Pompeo-Mattis was on the same lines, sources said.

So, as it appears, the U.S. delegation failed to clinch a deal that figured prominently on their agenda - to get New Delhi to completely halt Iranian oil import. The two sides did sign deals to bolster cooperation in trade and defense



fields, but it could not convince New Delhi on halting oil imports from Iran.

Since the beginning of this fiscal year, the oil purchase from Iran has surged substantially, primarily due to heavy discounts, free shipping and extended credit period for oil sales offered by Iran. The popular opinion is India is overwhelmingly in favor of India's continued oil trade with Iran, without succumbing to the U.S. pressure. Many experts have urged the Modi government to continue importing oil from Iran, which is not only a trade partner for India, but a time-tested ally. Hence, New Delhi is adopting a cautious approach.

Meanwhile, as an indication of deteriorating relations

between the U.S. and Pakistan, two former allies, the joint statement issued after the 2+2 talks said the two sides also discussed terror emanating from Pakistan. India's foreign minister Sushma Swaraj said the two sides "agreed that Pakistan needs to do a lot more to curb terror originating from it," which will certainly not go down well with the civilian and military leadership in Pakistan.

Last week, just before Pompeo's visit to Islamabad, the U.S. military announced the suspension of \$300 million military aid to Pakistan for its perceived failure to take decisive action against militant sanctuaries in Pakistan. The two former allies have slowly drifted away since Trump's hyperbolic New Year tweet in which he accused Pakistan of "lies and deceit". The new government in Islamabad led by Imran Khan has further antagonized the Trump administration by reaching out to Iran and backing Tehran's position on the 2015 nuclear deal.

With the U.S. losing friends quickly and getting entangled in an ugly trade war with China and European countries, Trump is now banking on India - an important regional player - to be its all-weather ally. But, India has its own interests and can ill-afford to antagonize its important trade partners like Tehran, Moscow and Bangkok.

The writing is on the wall: the trade and defense deals notwithstanding, India and U.S. cannot be all-weather allies and New Delhi cannot afford to abruptly halt oil trade with Tehran. As the petroleum minister of India asserted recently, 'national interest' is paramount. For India, it should be energy security.

Saudi-backed delegates leave Yemen peace talks

A delegation from Yemen's former government has left UN-brokered talks in Geneva after representatives of the Houthi movement were prevented by Saudi Arabia from attending the negotiations.

UN envoy to Yemen Martin Griffiths told a news conference that the Houthis were "keen" to get to Geneva.

Ansarullah accused the Saudis of planning to strand the delegation in Djibouti, where

their plane was to make a stop en route to Geneva. The Saudis were "still refusing to give permission to an Omani plane" to land at the Yemeni capital Sana'a and take the delegation to Geneva, the movement said.

It posted a statement, saying the Houthis needed to "ensure the safety of the delegation" and require a guarantee that they would be allowed to return "smoothly" to Sana'a airport.

Yemenis took to the streets in Sana'a on

Friday, blaming the United States, Britain, and Saudi Arabia for preventing the Houthis from joining the peace talks.

Loay al-Shamy, a senior Information Ministry official in Sana'a, said, "Regarding the peace talks, the delegation was formed and their names were announced and were ready to go but the UN, under pressure from the United States and Britain could not fulfill what was agreed on."

Yemen has been in turmoil since 2015 when former president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi stepped down and then fled to Riyadh.

Hadi then asked Saudi Arabia to launch a military campaign against Yemen, leading to a crisis which has continued to this day.

A cholera outbreak, resulting from the devastation of Yemen's health infrastructure, has also claimed more than 2,000 lives.

(Source: Press TV)

Saudi Arabia, Israel likely behind attack on Iran's consulate: U.S. analyst

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — A former U.S. army psychological warfare officer said a recent attack on Iran's consulate in the city of Basra in Iraq is an attempt to cause a rift between Iran and Iraq, adding that it was most likely carried out by provocateurs paid by mercenary agents from Riyadh and Tel Aviv.

"This (attack on Iran's consulate) is also an attempt to create tension and hostility between Iraq and Iran by trying to deceive Iran into thinking that Iraqi citizens are attacking Iran, when in fact these provocateurs are most likely paid mercenary agents from Saudi Arabia and Israel," Scott Bennett, from San Francisco, told Tasnim on Saturday morning.

Scott Bennett is a U.S. Army Special Operations Officer (11th Psychological Operations Battalion, Civil Affairs-Psychological Operations Command), and a global psychological warfare-counterterrorism analyst, formerly with defense contractor Booz Allen Hamilton. He received a Direct Commission as an Officer, held a Top Secret/Sensitive Compartmentalized Information (TS/SCI) security clearance, and worked in the highest levels of international counterterrorism in Washington DC and MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida. He has developed and managed psychological warfare theories, products, and operations for U.S. Special Operations Command, U.S. Central Command, the State Department Coordinator for Counterterrorism, and other government agencies.

His educational background includes a Bachelor of Science in Advertising and Spanish Minor from San Jose State University in California, a Master of Arts in International Business and Public Policy from George Mason University in Virginia, and a Ph.D. (ABD) in Political Theory from the Catholic University of America in Washington D.C. He currently resides in California.

The following is the full text of the interview:

■ One protester died and 11 more were wounded during demonstrations in Iraq's second biggest city Basra on Friday, local security and health sources said. What's your take on the demonstrations?

A: This appears to be part of a psychological operation designed to distract attention away from Idlib, Syria and movements of U.S. and NATO forces and their terrorist mercenaries, as well as their potential chemical weapons false flag attack which would be used by the United States and NATO to justify an attack upon Syria, which the Russians and the Iranians and the Syrian leadership have been warning the world about over the past few days. Most likely this internal protest and disruption operations are being conducted by Saudi Arabian and Zionist Israeli Mossad spies infiltrating the areas. The goal of the operation is to secretly facilitate some "chemical weapons" or other military or terrorist strike or event by distracting the world with a different event at a separate location. This different "event" or distraction operation is designed to generate sufficient "noise and



Most likely this internal protest and disruption operations are being conducted by Saudi Arabian and Zionist Israeli Mossad spies infiltrating the areas.

smoke and screams" so that the world turns its attention away from the Idlib, Syria territory, and is caught by surprise when the real event is unleashed—most likely a false-flag chemical attack executed by the White Helmets or other terrorist organizations in Idlib. It may even be an attempt to distract in order to execute an "assassination" of President Bashar Assad of Syria, as has been suggested by certain Western leaders in the past.

This unrest is also intended to distract attention away from the diplomatic talks between Iran, Russia, and Turkey and the Syrian settlement process. It is also intended to distract attention away from the nonsense and hypocrisy and lies being put forth by U.S. United Nations Ambassador Nikki Haley and the United Kingdom UN Ambassador, who are engaged in a joint full-scale propaganda campaign against Russia (using the Skripal poisoning false flag event) and Iran.

This potential false flag chemical attack is also an attempt to provoke President Donald Trump into engaging in a military strike against Syria, and overthrow President Bashar Assad. Ironically, however, this most likely would lead to the impeachment of President Donald Trump as a "war criminal", since the Democrats would use this "military response" by President Trump as an act of "unconstitutional declaration of war" and justify his removal from office. Additionally, American public support for President Trump would drop drastically because it would be seen as an unforgivable act of betrayal against the American public, since the vast majority of Americans voted for Trump because of his promises to remove the United States from Syria, and repair diplomatic relations with Russia. Any U.S. military strike against Syria in response to a false flag chemical attack would effectively be an act of war, and such

an act that was revealed to be orchestrated by terrorists as a deception operation, would effectively establish Trump's judgment as intolerably handicapped and require his removal; or disqualify Trump from remaining as President due to his intentional participation in a deception operation against the American public and a violation of the Smith-Mundt Act of 1948—which forbids targeting the American public with propaganda or deception operations by the U.S. Government or military.

■ Protesters stormed the Iranian consulate in Basra, setting it on fire. The Iranian consulate's building was not the first to be set on fire. The angry demonstrators had earlier set government buildings ablaze as well. It seems that attempts are underway to distort the image of Iran among Iraqis and also drive a wedge between Tehran and Baghdad. What do you think?

A: The plan most likely is to both distract attention away from Idlib, Syria, and destabilize the Iraqi regime because of its close relations and support for Iran and the economic relationship Iraq and Iran have been cultivating in response to the U.S. sanctions.

This is also an attempt to create tension and hostility between Iraq and Iran by trying to deceive Iran into thinking that Iraqi citizens are attacking Iran, when in fact these provocateurs are most likely paid mercenary agents from Saudi Arabia and Israel. Since Saudi Arabia and Israel have admitted to providing financial support, weapons, and medical help to Wahhabi terrorists in Syria, they would easily direct come of these agents to conduct similar operations in Iraq in an attempt to destabilize Iraq and damage its relationship with Iran.

■ Some other reports suggest that it is a plot orchestrated by Saudi Arabia, the U.S.

and members of the former Iraqi regime's Ba'ath Party to undermine Hashd al-Sha'abi and other popular forces that helped defeat Daesh in the Arab country. Do you believe so?

A: It is logical to assume that there are pro-Western agents in Iraq that are Sunni sympathizers and seeking to replace the Shiite dominant government in Iraq and restore the original Sunni-Ba'ath party.

Saudi Arabia is losing in its war against Yemen, which the world is increasingly seeing as a "war crime". Consequently, the U.S. is being pressured to abandon its support role for Saudi Arabia as the American people become increasingly aware of the campaign of genocide which Saudi Arabia has been conducting, and which the United States may easily be considered a "war crime" partner in. Additionally, Prince Mohammed Bin Salman is being criticized as mentally unstable and unsuitable to lead Saudi Arabia by other princes and Royal Family members in the House of Saud. Also Turkey and Qatar are switching sides and seemingly becoming closer to Russia and Iran—which is greatly upsetting to the Western globalists and neoconservative warmongers such as John Bolton, Nikki Haley, Mike Pompeo, and other war fanatics in the U.S. Congress.

This psychological operation seems also designed to distract attention away from the current domestic political events in the United States, which many are citing as the beginning of the next "Civil War" in America. Every day in America, the American people are discovering that for the past two (2) years, the American government, and specifically the intelligence and law enforcement agencies in the U.S. (the Department of Justice, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the State Department) have been conducting an attempted coup d'état against American President Donald Trump, and the American public and Congress are calling for investigations and prosecutions for crimes against the American people and the Constitution.

This potential domestic disturbances and social uprisings in America are becoming increasingly seen as a kind of "Civil War". This domestic instability is growing in tension, and this internal tension is pulling the United States government's attention from the Middle East, and towards its own domestic problems. Consequently, the Zionist and Saudi spies, working in concert with the U.S., CIA and British MI6, are attempting to shift attention back to the Middle East, in order to try to breathe new life into the old failed Western policy of regime change against Syria—and not against Iraq and Iran.

Thankfully, Russia, Iran, and China seem unwilling to allow this false flag attack to continue and would react to any U.S.-NATO-Israeli-Saudi military response with an overwhelming counter-attack, which would include the complete destruction of the entire U.S. Naval fleet in the Mediterranean and the elimination of every U.S.-NATO soldier in the territory of Syria.

American Democrats and JCPOA



➡ The second point is that the Democrats can't necessarily help them in their opposition to Trump. A sprawling series of contests for a plethora of offices in different states will be on the ballot in November. There's the whole House of Representatives, a third of the Senate, 36 governorships, and many state legislature seats.

To win a majority, the Democrats will need to keep the 194 seats they hold currently and flip at least 24 Republican seats. The House map is also tough for Democrats: In the House, all 435 seats will be up, as they are every two years. Democrats' magic number there is 24 seats — that's the net gain they need to retake control of the House. Strategists in both parties now consider Democrats likely to gain the 23 seats they need to reclaim a majority in the House of Representatives. That would let Democrats roadblock Trump's legislative agenda, launch oversight investigations and explore impeachment proceedings.

The Senate outlook remains in greater doubt as the parties

As former Secretary of State John Kerry has implicitly pointed out, Democrats are now focused on midterm elections, and subsequently, they're after winning the presidential elections in 2020.

wage even-money battles in eight states, most of them Trump-friendly. But no one dismisses Democrats' opportunity to gain the two seats they need for control, which would give them veto power over White House appointments to the Cabinet and courts.

In spite of all these, the Democrats' current silence regarding the JCPOA is considered intentional! So far, no Democrat senator or even a Democrat politician in the United States has spoken of returning

to the JCPOA (in case Democrats could win the Congress). This suggests that even if Democrats have such a decision, they will not publicize it until they win the elections.

Another point to be considered here is the confrontation between Democrats in Congress and the White House between 2018 and 2020. What is certain is that many Democrats are trying to face the economic crisis (in the field of domestic economy and welfare services) resulted from Trump's policies, and thus increase their chances of winning the presidential elections in 2020.

As former Secretary of State John Kerry has implicitly pointed out, Democrats are now focused on midterm elections, and subsequently, they're after winning the presidential elections in 2020. Some analysts believe that if Democrats win the congress elections, John Kerry will firmly stand against Trump's decision to cancel the nuclear deal. But it should not be forgotten that John Kerry failed several times in convincing the U.S. Congress over the extension of the AISA Act. The question is, will Kerry be able to make Democrats stand for the JCPOA in case they win the Congress elections? We should wait and see.

Ex-Army Officer reveals attempts by U.S. Gov'ts to hide Saudi links to 9/11

TEHRAN (FNA) — A former U.S. army officer and freelance writer disclosed that the U.S. administrations have always attempted to conceal links between Saudi Arabia with the hijackers who caused the 9/11 tragedy, regretting that many American citizens are not aware of Riyadh's role in spreading extremism, support for terrorism and crimes in Syria and Yemen.

"Since 9/11, there has been a sustained effort, across both Republican and Democratic administrations, to conceal from the public any indication of Saudi government links to the attacks," Brian McGlinchey told FNA on Saturday.

McGlinchey launched 28Pages.org in July 2014 as an information and activism hub for the nonpartisan movement to declassify 28 pages on Saudi links to 9/11.

"There is now an effort underway to achieve the release of many thousands of other 9/11 documents that are still being kept secret. Members of Congress have introduced resolutions in both the Senate and the House of Representatives urging the wide declassification of additional 9/11 documents, including many that relate to the investigation of possible Saudi government links to the attacks. Survivors and family members of those killed in the attacks have created a website, declassify911.org, to help build support for the declassification effort," he added.

McGlinchey noted that JASTA has enabled a civil lawsuit to move

forward, in which 9/11 survivors, family members and insurers are presenting a case alleging that officials of the Saudi government provided financial and other support to the 9/11 hijackers, and seeking financial compensation from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, saying, "That case is currently in the discovery phase, and the plaintiffs have asked both the U.S. and Saudi governments to produce documents about individuals accused of aiding two hijackers at the direction of Saudi officials."

McGlinchey explained that JASTA was not created to enable government prosecution, but instead to allow victims of terrorism to sue governments for compensation. The case is complex and moving very slowly, but JASTA is making it possible.

He said that one of the most important questions of 9/11 is why the CIA prevented two FBI agents from alerting FBI headquarters that a known al Qaeda operative and future hijacker had obtained a U.S. visa, adding, "Some people believe the CIA was attempting to turn one of more of the future hijackers into double agents who would provide information about al Qaeda to the CIA. If that's true, the CIA violated a U.S. law that prohibits it from operating inside the United States."

"Since 9/11, there has been a sustained effort, across both Republican and Democratic administrations, to conceal from the public any indication of Saudi

government links to the attacks. As recently reported by 28Pages.org, the FBI told a retired agent not to help 9/11 families pursue their lawsuit against Saudi Arabia because the Trump administration wants to have a good relationship with the kingdom. Over and over again, the U.S. government puts the interest of the Saudi government above the right of the American people to have all the facts about the worst terrorist attack ever carried out on American soil," McGlinchey underlined.

He referred to the Saudi government's largest foreign government lobbying operations in America, spending many millions of dollars each year, and said, "Its influence spreads even wider than Capitol Hill, thanks to its sponsorship of think tanks and institutes that mold the opinions of journalists, legislators and the public. In June, 28Pages.org reported that the director of a national security program at Syracuse University had registered with the U.S. Department of Justice as a public relations agent of Saudi Arabia."

"Last year, 28Pages.org revealed that Saudi lobbyists had tricked U.S. military veterans into lobbying against JASTA, flying them to Washington without telling them that the lobbying campaign was organized and paid for by the kingdom," McGlinchey said.

He explained that in addition to the U.S. intelligence community, there are many different interest

groups who want to preserve close U.S.-Saudi relations, and said, "One of the most prominent is the American weapons industry, which has enriched itself by arming Saudi Arabia and pressuring the U.S. government to maintain its close relationship with the kingdom."

"The American public has a general distrust of Saudi Arabia and is disturbed by the kingdom's violations of human rights. However, the average citizen is not very well-informed about the kingdom's role in spreading Salafist extremism around the world. Nor does the average American realize that the Saudi government, working with the U.S. government, has played a major role in destabilizing Syria. Similarly, thanks to a lack of reporting by U.S. media, most Americans are unaware of the horrible human toll of Saudi Arabia's intervention in Yemen," McGlinchey concluded.

A diplomatic mission in Tehran intends to employ a maid with the qualifications described in the website:
www.ir.emb-japan.go.jp

First Announcement

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1397.2664

Call for public tender (First/Second publish) - Retender
One -Stages tender (compressed) tender
 Subject of Tender: PART FOR OIL WELL DRAWWORKS MODEL
 E-2000 for Drilling Rig

National Iranian Drilling Company

Tender descriptions:

The Tender holder	Registration No. through national electronic tendering system	Tender No. /Indent No.	Estimated value (Rial/Euro)
National Iranian Drilling Company	3,173,686	Tender No.: FP/17-97/012 Indent No.: 48-22-9622027	14,390,568,451 Rial

• Qualitative evaluation of tenderers

Method	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Based on minimum scoring (60 Points) made in award criterion reflected in the tenderers pre-qualification forms.

• Purchasing & Submitting

Tender Document Distribution by Company	Distribution Place	Submitting Method
	Hall No. 113, 1 st floor, Foreign Procurement Dept., National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt in the amount of 510,000 Iranian Rials under account number 4001114004020491 (Shaba No. IR 520100004001114004020491) in name of "NIDC Income Centralized Fund" issued by I.R. of Iran Central Bank. Submitting format Request for the purpose of receiving Tender Documents.

Documents Receiving Method

Closing date	Address
35 Days after the last time of Purchasing the tender documents.	Hall No. 107, 1 st floor, Tender Committee, Operation building, National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN. Tel: +98-61-34148580 +98-61-34148569

• Tender Guarantee

Value of guarantee	720,000,000 Rial/ 14,596 Euro
Type of guarantee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bank guarantees or guarantees issued by non-bank institutions that obtain activity license from the central bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt under account number 4001114006376636 (Shaba No. IR 350100004001114006376636) in name of "NIDC saving account" by the central bank of Islamic Republic of Iran.
Duration of credit & quotation	Tender Guarantee & quotation should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum for one time in initial validity duration.

(Foreign Procurement Dept.)
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Organ recipients need financial, social assistance, says cardiologist

HEALTH **TEHRAN** — Organ recipients need social and financial assistance from the government, and if not some might lose their lives due to economic hardships of affording medications, cardiologist Babak Sharif-Kashani has said.

Every year, from 75 to 100 people receive heart transplant in the country, Fars news agency quoted Sharif-Kashani as saying on Saturday.

People who need heart transplant can also receive artificial heart, but as the surgery is too expensive many of the patients cannot afford it.

According to Science Daily, artificial heart is a prosthetic device that is implanted into the body to replace the original biological heart. It is different from a cardiac pump, which is an external device used to provide the functions of both the heart and the lungs. Thus, the cardiac pump does not need to be connected to both blood circuits. Also, a cardiac pump is only suitable for use not longer than a few hours, while for the artificial heart the current record is 17 months.

People receiving an organ need to continue to work closely with their transplant team and take all of their medications, however, some might stop using their drugs as things might get difficult financially, he regretted.

Unfortunately some might even lose their lives as they might not continue their treatment and that's why the government should offer financial and social assistance to these people, Sharif-Kashani added.

Another challenge organ recipients normally face is finding a job as employers prefer to recruit people who are healthy and that's what doubles the financial distress for such patients, he lamented.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Sharif-Kashani said that nowadays brain deaths have grown in numbers due to the increasing rate of road accidents and strokes and medicine has made it possible for many to receive organ transplant from brain dead patients, but unfortunately many families are reluctant to donate their loved ones organs and many waiting on the lists to receive an organ lose their lives.

Everybody can receive a donor card to improve the culture of organ donation and that even makes it easier for the families to



A challenge organ recipients normally face is finding a job as employers prefer to recruit people who are healthy and that's what doubles the financial distress for such patients.

decide whether to donate their loved ones' organs or not, he concluded.

In August, Omid Qobadi, deputy director for the Iranian Society of Organ Donation, said that while only 300 organ donor cards have been issued per day on average in the country over the past years, the number has now increased to 14,000 and currently, some 5 million Iranians hold organ donor cards.

Some 5,000 people die of brain death annually in Iran, he said, lamenting that out of 3,000 brain deaths reported last year being qualified to be organ donors, only 926 donated their organs.

Also in May, the Masih Daneshvari hospital's manager Ali Akbar Velayati said that

some 10,000 people are waiting in transplant lists and every day some 10 people waiting for an organ lose their lives.

How to manage your health after an organ transplant

According to WebMD website, after an organ transplant, most patients quickly feel better. They go on to enjoy a significantly improved quality of life, but they are also likely to face big health challenges.

After an organ transplant, one will need to take immunosuppressant (anti-rejection) drugs. These drugs help prevent the immune system from attacking ("rejecting") the donor organ. Typically, they must be taken for the lifetime of your transplanted organ.

Keeping all doctor appointments, undergoing every recommended lab test, and take all the prescription drugs are vital for the organ recipients.

Although rejection is a scary word, it doesn't necessarily mean that the recipient will lose their donor organ. Most of the time, a rejection can be reversed if the doctor detects its early signs.

The symptoms of rejection -- and the medical tests used to detect rejection -- vary by the type of the organ transplant. So, it's important to familiarize with the early symptoms of rejection that are specific to each transplant. If the doctor identifies a rejection, he or she will first try to reverse it by adjusting the medications.

Just 6 hours of sleep loss increases diabetes risk

The importance of sleep is well-known. A recent study enforces this by demonstrating that sleep deprivation might increase diabetes risk — after losing just 1 night of sleep.

Lack of sleep and diabetes

A new study expands on our understanding of this relationship. The authors of the latest study, at Toho University Graduate School of Medicine in Japan, explain further, saying:

"It was not clear whether glucose intolerance was due to the changes in food intake or energy expenditure or to the sleep deprivation itself."

In other words, are the changes in diet and exercise related to poor sleep the reason for a rise in diabetes risk, or is something else at work? The researchers set out to understand exactly why sleep deprivation might undermine insulin sensitivity.

To do so, they used a mouse model, focusing on changes in their livers. For just 1 night, they kept half of the mice awake for 6 hours during their usual sleep time.

The scientists observed the mice carefully and, every time they appeared to be dozing off, they would gently handle or touch them. In this way, they kept them awake without causing undue stress to the animal.

To pick apart the impact of lifestyle factors, for 2 weeks before the study began, all mice were given access to unlimited high-fat food and sugar water; also, the mice had their movement restricted.

Their findings are now published in the American Journal of Physiology: Endocrinology and Metabolism.

The effects of 6 hours of sleep deprivation

Immediately after the sleep intervention, the scientists measured glucose levels and fat content in the liver. They found elevated blood glucose in the liver of sleep-deprived rats. These changes were significant after just one 6-hour period of sleep deprivation.

The researchers also measured triglyceride levels in the liver because an increase in production is associated with an increase in insulin resistance, or an inability to process insulin correctly. As expected, in the sleep-deprived rats, levels were elevated.

Also, in the sleep-deprived mice, the investigators measured changes in liver enzymes that are associated with metabolism. The authors believe that these may be the root cause of insulin resistance and buildup of fat in the liver.

The authors conclude that sleep deprivation is, therefore, a risk factor for diabetes, regardless of changes in activity and diet. If this is the case, and further studies back up the findings, ensuring that people with increased diabetes risk have a good sleep routine could be vital.

(Source: Medical News Today)



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Other areas: Farmaniyeh Aghdasiyeh Shahrak Gharb Shariati-Pasdaran Valiasre Tajrish Jordan Vanak Arjantin Zafar... nice cases ready to move in.

Provincial tourism train makes debut in Kerman



TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — The Islamic Republic of Iran Railways has launched a tourism train service across the southeastern Kerman province, ISNA reported on Thursday.

The train route, which takes sightseers to the UNESCO-registered Bam citadel, ancient Rayen Castle and some other historical and natural destinations, made its debut last week.

One and two-day tours have been projected for the package trips, which are operated under the supervision of the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization, the report said.

The big and sprawling province has been a cultural melting pot since antiquity, blending Persians with subcontinental tribe dwellers. It is home to myriad historical sites and scenic landscapes such as Bazaar-e Sartasari, Jabalieh Dome, Ganjali Khan Bathhouse, Malek Jameh Mosque and Shahdad Desert to name a few.

British Airways isn't anybody's favorite airline



It's lucky for airline executives that they're a well-paid bunch, because when things go wrong the job's a living nightmare. Besides the ever-present, low-level risk of a tragic accident, the complexity and customer-facing nature of aviation means that any operational snafu can become a crisis that dominates news coverage for days.

Alex Cruz knows this only too well. Since being named boss of British Airways in 2016, he's had to deal with a power and IT failure that left tens of thousands of passengers stranded over a busy holiday weekend. Now, he faces another public relations disaster: A breach of BA's website exposed the credit card details of hundreds of thousands of customers.

This would be challenge for any company, but Britain's flag carrier — part of International Consolidated Airlines Group SA — already has a problematic public image.

Its ample profits have been supported by ruthless cost-cutting, including a decision to start charging economy passengers for food on short-haul flights. Frequent fliers bemoan the loss of their premium frills but because parent company IAG controls most of the slots at Heathrow, the U.K.'s only big hub airport, Britons often have to fly BA.

(Source: Bloomberg)



ROUND THE GLOBE

Hanseatic city of Lubeck

Founded in 1143 on the Baltic coast of northern Germany, Lubeck was from 1230 to 1535 one of the principal cities of the Hanseatic League, a league of merchant cities which came to hold a monopoly over the trade of the Baltic Sea and the North Sea.

The plan of the Old Town island of Lubeck, with its blade-like outline determined by two parallel routes of traffic running along the crest of the island, dates back to the beginnings of the city and attests to its expansion as a commercial center of Northern Europe.

To the west, the richest quarters with the trading houses and the homes of the rich merchants are located, and to the east, small commerces and artisans. The very strict socio-economic organization emerges through the singular disposition



of the Buden, small workshops set in the back courtyards of the rich hares, to which access was provided through a narrow network of alleyways (Gange).

Lubeck has remained an urban monument characteristic of a significant historical structure even though the city was severely damaged during the Second World War.

Almost 20% of it were destroyed, including the most famous monumental complexes- the Cathedral of Lubeck, the churches of St Peter and St Mary and especially the Grundungsviertel, the hilltop quarter where the gabled houses of the rich merchants clustered. Selective reconstruction has permitted the replacement of the most important churches and monuments.

(Source: UNESCO)

Iran's 5-month intl. tourist arrivals up 45% y/y

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — The number of international tourists visiting Iran surged 45 percent in the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21) from a year earlier, tourism chief said on Wednesday.

Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization Director Ali-Asghar Mounesan also referred to ecotourism being developed in the country saying, "Presently some 600 eco-lodges are being constructed across Iran," CHTN reported.

Sources say the surge in foreign tourist arrivals is mainly due to rising numbers of pilgrims and visitors from the neighboring countries.

In July, CHHTO deputy director for tourism Mohammad Moheb-khodaie announced that visitors from Azerbaijan, Iraq, Afghanistan and Turkey constituted topmost arrivals in the first three months of the current year.

"The number of inbound passengers from European countries cut by 24 percent year on year during the same period," Moheb-khodaie added.

Iran has launched extensive plans to bolster its tourism sector. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, the country is expecting to increase the number of tourism arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million.



Iranian companies to partake in Paris tourism fair

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — Several Iranian travel businesses and exhibitors are scheduled to participate in the 40th International French travel market (IFTM Top Resa 2018), a four-day tourism exhibit running at the Paris Expo Porte de Versailles from September 25 to 28.

Iran's pavilion, which will span 155 square meters in area, will be run by the Touring & Automobile Club of the Islamic Republic of Iran (TACI) in collaboration with the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization.

Amongst the Iranian companies are Iransafar Tours, 2001 Tour and Travel Agency, Iran Aito, Marcopolo Iran Touring Company, Niknam Tour & Travel Ser-

vices Co., Pardisan Tour & Travel Company, and Pars Tourist Agency, CHTN reported.

Filled from corner to corner with ancient bazaars, museums, mosques, monuments, gardens, historical sites, rich natural and rural landscapes, Iran hosts some of the world's oldest cultural monuments, including 22 UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Founded in 1978, the event is estimated to attract over 30,000 professional visitors from more than 1,600 brands at its vast venue, the Paris Expo Porte de Versailles. Today, IFTM Top Resa has become a multi target trade show for all travel segments: leisure, business and events.

Isfahan to host national crafts exhibit

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** — A national sales exhibit of handicrafts will open its door today to the public at the premises of the renowned Chehel Sotoun palace in Isfahan.

A total of 100 stands have been dedicated to artisans and exhibitors from 31 provinces, CHTN reported.

The event puts on show woodwork, illuminated manuscript, miniature, textile printing, enamel, leatherwork, handwoven products, calligraphy, traditional musical instruments, metalwork, and marquetry, amongst other works.

Organized by the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization, the exhibit will be running through September 13.

Iran exported \$280 million worth of handicrafts during the past Iranian calendar year, which ended on March 20. Traditional ceramics, pottery vessels, handwoven cloths as well as personal ornamentations with precious and semi-precious gemstones are among Iranian exports to Iraq, Afghanistan and Germany, the U.S., the UK and other countries.

Dozens of Iranian handicrafts have gained the UNESCO Seal of Excellence during the past couple of years.



When (and how) to talk to your hotel's general manager

By Shivani Vora

Most travelers only talk to their hotel manager when there's a problem. Instead, you should seek them out as soon as you arrive. They can be a huge help, and a great friend.

A hotel's general manager can make your stay at a property that much better, said Bettina Landt, general manager of The White Elephant in Nantucket, Mass. But Ms. Landt, who has more than 20 years' experience as a general manager, also said that most guests don't take advantage of what they offer.

"Guests don't rely on general managers as much as they should because they don't know how to," she said. Here are some of her on tips on how to use your hotel's general manager:

■ When the hotel is sold out

Although there's no guarantee, general managers may be able to get you a room at their properties when the inventory is showing as sold out. "Managers know their inventory cold, and they have the ability — unlike reservation agents — to move things around or see an opening so that a room becomes available," Ms. Landt said.

It's always worth asking to speak to them for help. If they can't help you right now, they probably know when a room may become available and how you can snag it when it does, since they know the cycles of their inventory better than anyone.

■ When you'd love an upgrade

While hotels usually assign rooms the day before guests check in, room availability often changes the day they arrive. The check-in staff has some discretion to upgrade guests, but the general manager yields more authority to do so.

If you're looking for an upgrade (and who isn't?), ask to speak to the manager, politely, when you arrive at the



property and before you check in. Make it clear that you want to get to know them and ask their help while you're in town, if they're available. Be cordial, and accept their answer if they don't have any upgrades available. Another insider tip: General managers usually look over room assignments, and if you're a regular guest at the property who already has an established relationship with them, your chances of an upgrade are more likely.

■ When you need tips on what to do around town

Guests usually turn to the concierge staff when they want ideas of local activities, sights and restaurants, but the general manager can also help. Ms. Landt said. "We're ambassadors for the destination and love giving advice on what to see and do," she explained.

Ms. Landt, for example, often shares her favorite menu items at various restaurants in Nantucket with guests, and also recommends her favorite activities for kids that her own children have enjoyed. Also, general managers are well connected in their destination and can make introductions

to local artists, store owners and managers at non-hotel-related bars and restaurants who you may not normally meet.

■ When you want a friend who'll look out for you

Or at least someone in your corner. Many guests don't meet their hotel's general manager and may not even know who they are, but they should, Ms. Landt said. "I love when guests introduce themselves," she said. "Over the years, I've formed great relationships with many of them."

She advised seeking out the general manager a few times throughout your stay just to say hello and share feedback on the hotel as well as your trip overall — even more so when someone is doing a great job and deserves praise.

This personal connection sometimes has benefits: general managers will often arrange for a round of free drinks at the hotel's bar for guests they know, and will also take care to ensure that they get a prime table at the property's restaurant. But don't go into it expecting to get something out of it. It's certainly enough to make a new friend when you're far from home.

(Source: The New York Times)

This is when to book your holiday travel to score the cheapest flights

There's no place like home for the holidays. Getting there, however, can be a financial nightmare.

Luckily, knowing when to book your travel can save you a lot.

Although the holiday season is still months away, now is the time to start prepping. Travel site Hipmunk crunched the numbers and found that the best weeks to book Thanksgiving and Christmas flights are coming up.

For Thanksgiving, the best time to score flight deals is the week of October 1, 2018. Travelers who book during this week will save, on average, 23 percent off the peak booking price, according to Hipmunk. On average,

the flights will be around \$387, round-trip, within the U.S.

The best week to snag savings for Christmas flights is the week of October 15, 2018. During this week, flights will be going for \$357, round-trip, within the U.S., an average savings of 25 percent from peak prices.

■ How to get the best deals

Set fare alerts with sites like Hipmunk, Google Flights or Kayak — or use the Hopper travel app to really get the most for your money. These alerts will let you know when is precisely the best time to book. Hipmunk found that travelers who used fare alerts saved 6 percent and 7 percent on Thanksgiving and Christmas flights, respectively.

■ Choose travel days carefully

Flying on Thanksgiving or Christmas Day will almost always be cheaper. The most expensive days will be the Wednesday before Thanksgiving and the Friday before Christmas, December 21, 2018, according to Hipmunk.

■ Cash in your rewards points

CNBC Make It found that the best travel credit card is the Capital One Venture Card, which pays out two miles for every dollar you spend. Plus, if you spend \$3,000 on the card within the first three months after opening an account, you'll get 50,000 bonus points. That's equal to \$500 in travel.

■ Try nearby airports

Most travel sites will let you search mul-

tiple airports when looking for flights, so if you're close enough to several airports, make sure to include them in case one offers cheaper flights.

■ Think of "coach" as a luxury

Consider opting for basic economy fare class. Airlines like Alaska, American Airlines, Delta and United offer budget fare classes that restrict your seat selection and your luggage, allowing you usually only a small handbag, but give you a break on the price. If you can pack light, this may be a good option for you. Just make sure to read the fine print on these budget fare classes before booking.

(Source: CNBC)

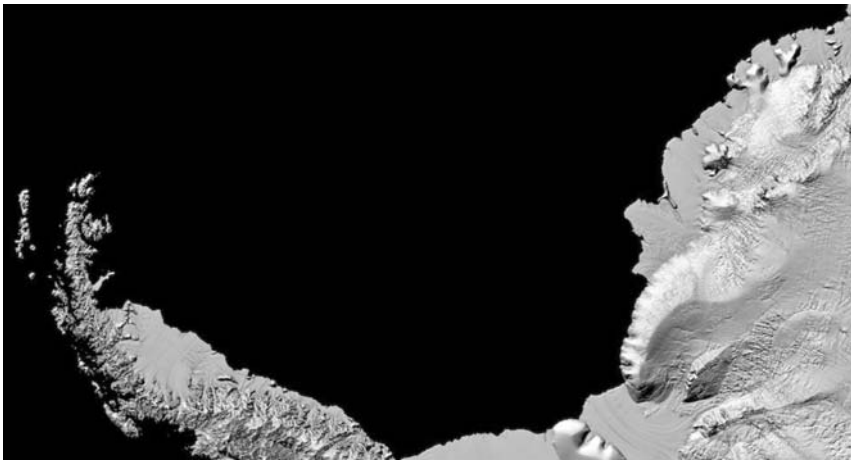
New super-high-resolution map shows Antarctica in unprecedented detail

We've seen a lot of good maps of Earth's polar regions of late. A map that shows the thickness of the entire Antarctic ice sheet. Another that shows Greenland's hidden bedrock contours in unprecedented detail. But a new terrain map of Antarctica is still special. It's not just the highest resolution ever produced for the frozen continent, but the highest resolution for any continent period.

The map released on Tuesday by a consortium of ice researchers — is the very first version of the Reference Elevation Model of Antarctica (REMA), a National Science Foundation-funded initiative to produce the highest quality digital surface models of Earth's largest slab of ice. Covering approximately 98 percent of Antarctica to a latitude of 88 degrees south (there's a slight hole right at the South Pole due to a lack of satellite coverage), the map has a resolution of 2-8 meters (6.6-26.4 feet). Which, if you think about how little of Antarctica humans have actually set foot on, is kind of stunning.

"Up until now, we've had a better map of Mars than we've had of Antarctica," Ohio State University glaciologist Ian Howat, who led the mapping effort, said in a press release. "Now it is the best-mapped continent."

■ **Polar orbiting satellites**
The map draws on hundreds of thousands



of stereoscopic pairs of images collected and 2017, according to the REMA website. Satellite altimetry data was also used to

Covering approximately 98 percent of Antarctica to a latitude of 88 degrees south (there's a slight hole right at the South Pole due to a lack of satellite coverage), the map has a resolution of 2-8 meters (6.6-26.4 feet).

register the precise elevation at any point. All of the data was fed into a supercomputer in order to assemble the continental-scale topographic map, with a total file size of over 150 terabytes.

The map, which can be updated continuously with new data, will inform any number of research projects, from investigations of changing snow cover to the motion of ice, thinning of glaciers, or changes in rivers and volcanic activity. Scientists can also use the map to plan field expeditions into unexplored regions of the icy continent.

Finally, the map will help benchmark data collected by ICESat-2, NASA's new ice-scanning space laser that launches into orbit next week.

"This is AMAZING," NASA cryosphere program scientist Tom Wagner told Earthier via email. "We're imaging the polar regions at a level of granularity never before possible."

You can learn a lot more about how this first version of the map was constructed and explore the data for yourself here. You can also download high-resolution poster versions of the map to print out and slap on your wall if you want a permanent reminder of what Antarctica looked like circa 2018.

(Source: gizmodo.com)

Large wind and solar farms in the Sahara would increase heat, rain, vegetation: study



Wind and solar farms are known to have local effects on heat, humidity and other factors that may be beneficial — or detrimental — to the regions in which they are situated. A new climate-modeling study finds that a massive wind and solar installation in the Sahara Desert and neighboring Sahel would increase local temperature, precipitation and vegetation. Overall, the researchers report, the effects would likely benefit the region.

The study, reported in the journal Science, is among the first to model the climate effects of wind and solar installations while taking into account how vegetation responds to changes in heat and precipitation, said lead author Yan Li, a postdoctoral researcher in natural resources and environmental sciences at the University of Illinois.

"Previous modeling studies have shown that large-scale wind and solar farms can produce significant climate change at continental scales," Li said. "But the lack of vegetation feedbacks could make the modeled climate impacts very different from their actual behavior."

■ **Focused on the Sahara**
The new study, co-led with Eugenia Kalnay and Safa Motescharrei at the University of Maryland, focused on the Sahara for several reasons, Li said.

"We chose it because it is the largest desert in the world; it is sparsely inhabited; it is highly sensitive to land changes; and it is in Africa and close to Europe and the Middle East, all of which have large and growing energy demands," he said.

The wind and solar farms simulated in the study would cover more than 9 million square kilometers and generate, on average, about 3 terawatts and 79 terawatts of

electrical power, respectively.

"In 2017, the global energy demand was only 18 terawatts, so this is obviously much more energy than is currently needed worldwide," Li said.

The model revealed that wind farms caused regional warming of near-surface air temperature, with greater changes in minimum temperatures than maximum temperatures.

The "greater nighttime warming takes place because wind turbines can enhance the vertical mixing and bring down warmer air from above," the authors wrote. Precipitation also increased as much as 0.25 millimeters per day on average in regions with wind farm installations.

■ **Doubling of precipitation**
"This was a doubling of precipitation over that seen in the control experiments," Li said. In the Sahel, average rainfall increased 1.12 millimeters per day where wind farms were present.

"This increase in precipitation, in turn, leads to an increase in vegetation cover, creating a positive feedback loop," Li said.

Solar farms had a similar positive effect on temperature and precipitation, the team found. Unlike the wind farms, the solar arrays had very little effect on wind speed. "We found that the large-scale installation of solar and wind farms can bring more rainfall and promote vegetation growth in these regions," Kalnay said. "The 'increase in rainfall and vegetation, combined with clean electricity as a result of solar and wind energy, could help agriculture, economic development and social well-being in the Sahara, Sahel, Middle East and other nearby regions," Motescharrei said.

(Source: phys.org)

A study of ants provides information on the evolution of social insects



One of the great puzzles of evolutionary biology is what induced certain living creatures to abandon solitary existence in favor of living in collaborative societies, as seen in the case of ants and other social, colony-forming insects.

A major characteristic of so-called eusocial species is the division of labor between queens that lay eggs and workers that take care of the brood and perform other tasks. But what is it that determines that a queen should lay eggs and that workers shouldn't reproduce? And how did this distinction come about during the course of evolution? Evolutionary biologists have now found a completely unexpected answer: one single gene called insulin-like peptide 2 (ILP2), which is probably activated by better nutrition, stimulates the ovaries and triggers reproduction.

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■ **A major characteristic**
A major characteristic of so-called eusocial species is the division of labor between queens that lay eggs and workers that take care of the brood and perform other tasks. But what is it that determines that a queen should lay eggs and that workers shouldn't reproduce? And how did this distinction come about during the course of evolution?

Evolutionary biologist Dr. Romain Libbrecht has been considering these problems over the past years and in cooperation with researchers at Rockefeller University in New York City has found a completely unexpected answer: one single gene called insulin-like

peptide 2 (ILP2), which is probably activated by better nutrition, stimulates the ovaries and triggers reproduction.

"It may seem almost inconceivable that just one single gene should make all the difference," Libbrecht pointed out. The researchers drew their conclusion from a comparison of 5,581 genes in seven ant species in four different subfamilies that differ from each other with regard to numerous characteristics. But in one thing are they all alike: there is always a greater expression of ILP2 in the brain of reproductive insects. Queens thus have higher levels than workers.

■ **Peptide found in the brain**
A further finding indicates that this peptide is found only in the brain, where it is produced in a small cluster of just 12 to 15 cells.

It is postulated that the origins of social behavior in insects are to be found in wasp-like ancestors that alternated between reproduction and brood care phases. A female wasp would lay an egg and take care of the larva until it pupated. However, these two phases were separated and their associated duties assigned to different individuals, namely queens and workers, during the evolution of eusociality.

Libbrecht and his colleagues in New York City investigated the ant species *Ooceraea biroi* to determine the molecular mechanisms underlying this division of labor. *O. biroi* is a small species of 2 to 3 millimeters in length that originated from Asia but has spread throughout the tropics. The insects live in underground passages, attack the nests of other ant species, and feed on their brood.

(Source: Science Daily)

New research could reduce primate electrocutions and help conservation strategies

New research has mapped and analyzed the incidence of primate electrocutions in Diani, Kenya to identify hotspot areas that should be prioritized to reduce the risk of electric shock. The study could also inform conservation strategies in other parts of the world where primate electrocutions are common.

Electrocution threatens a wide range of primate species across the world and the hazard could become more widespread as species are increasingly restricted to human-dominated landscapes.

Katy Turner, Reader in Infectious Disease Epidemiology from Bristol Veterinary School, aimed to investigate primate electrocutions along power lines, which threatens five of the six primate species living in the Diani area.

The research team worked with local primate conservation organization, Colobus Conservation, who regularly attend primate welfare callouts, such as electrocutions, in the area. As well as providing veterinary treatment to the primates, the organization record the location of the incident either by documenting the GPS coordinates or describing the location.

Using all the GPS coordinates the researchers mapped the electrocutions and then went out with their own GPS to search for all the locations and get coordinates.

Diani has become a popular touristic town dominated by beach resorts, and as the town has developed and expanded, it has increasingly encroached into the habitat of many species, exposing the native wildlife to a variety of new risks such as roads and power lines.

Black and white colobus monkeys, Sykes' monkeys, vervet monkeys, and baboons are popular primate species in the area and travel through gardens, hotels and across roads. While these species have adapted to the human-dominated landscape, road traffic accidents and electrocutions are among the common causes of death.

(Source: eurekalert.org)

Study shows hooved animals learn how to migrate from their parents

Unlike other animals, ungulates or hooved mammals know when and where to migrate from the knowledge that is being passed down from generation to generation.

Scientists have long suspected that ungulate migration is learned from their parents and other members of the herd, but this is the first time that it has been tested and proven in a study.

To confirm that ungulate species pass down information from the older generation to younger animals, the researchers attached GPS trackers to bighorn sheep and moose. The findings were published in Science Magazine.

Since the 1800s, because of hunting and disease transmission from domestic sheep, the population of bighorn sheep declined steeply.

However, in the 70s, wildlife officials began efforts to reestablish lost herds, moving bighorn sheep from surviving population to areas they historically occupied. The translocation effort was a success and has established new herds.

Matthew Kauffman of the University of Wyoming and his team used this information for the experiment. The researchers tracked 129 bighorn sheep from an established population along with 80 bighorn sheep and 189 moose that have recently been moved.

The "pattern was striking," stated doctoral student and lead author Brett Jesmer. "Detailed GPS data revealed that fewer than nine percent of translocated animals migrated, but 65 to 100 percent of animals migrated in herds that had never been lost."

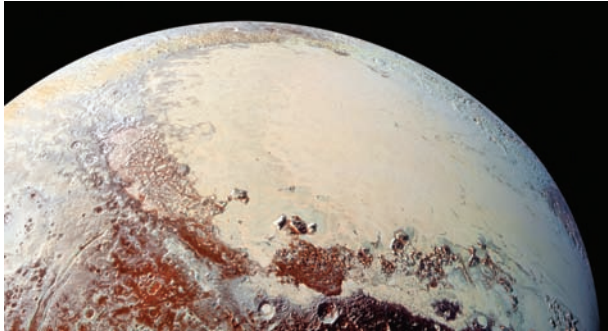
However, translocated animals did not know this. They refused to move because they were unfamiliar to the new territory and, therefore, have no collective information to pass to the herd. They needed more time to explore their surroundings, learn to the surf the wave, and teach it to younger generations.

(Source: Tech Times)

New research makes the case for Pluto as a planet

There was no doubt Pluto was a planet back when Clyde Tombaugh spotted it in 1930, but scientists rethought that after learning more about the Solar System. In 2006, a new definition of what makes a planet from the International Astronomical Union (IAU) saw Pluto demoted to dwarf planet status. That decision has never set right with some members of the public and scientists.

A new study from University of Central Florida planetary scientist Philip Metzger makes the case that Pluto should regain its planet status.



In decades past, Pluto seemed like a slightly odd planet, but clearly still a planet. However, scientists have since learned about the scale of the Kuiper Belt and even spotted several Kuiper objects that are larger than Pluto. The 2006 IAU definition of a planet included several key requirements.

A planet needs to be spherical, which Pluto is. However, it also needs to have cleared its orbit to become the primary gravitational force. That's where Pluto failed the test. It crosses the orbit of Neptune, the gravity of which affects Pluto. There are also multiple large Kuiper belt objects in space near Pluto.

You could call Metzger a skeptic of dwarf planets. He reviewed scientific literature over more than 200 years to determine if the IAU definition makes sense. According to the paper, Metzger found just a single instance of orbit clearing as a planetary descriptor, and that was in 1802. The reasoning used in that paper has also long since been disproven. Metzger claims that the IAU definition applies standards that aren't even used in planetary research. He cites more than 100 instances of researchers using the term "planet" to refer to objects that don't fit the IAU definition in recent publications. He goes so far as to call the IAU definition "sloppy."

(Source: extremetech.com)

Bank Pasargad's Customers Can Block Debit Card If Stolen or Lost

Customers of Bank Pasargad can inactive or block their debit cards if their cards are stolen or blocked, the Public Relations Dept. of the bank reported.

To prevent any abuse and misuse after debit card is lost, customers of the card can

embark on inactivating or blocking the card using various methods such as taking advantage of the possibility of blocking card in internet site of the bank and/or inactivating the card in mobile systems of the bank (including Mobile Bank system, Mobile Payment System),

Automated Teller Machines (ATMs), online banking system of Bank Pasargad, getting in touch with Consultation Center and EMDAD Bank by dialing Phone No. 82890, Bank Pasargad's Electronic Payment Company by dialing 23505 as well as referring to the bank branches

across the country.

For further information, interested individuals may log on to the website of the bank at: www.bpi.ir and/or get in touch with the Consultation and Information Center at 82890, the Public Relations Dept. of the bank concluded.

IRANOL Oil Co.'s Exports Terminal Inaugurated in Presence of Labor Min.

Exports Terminal of IRANOL Oil Company with the capacity of 25,000 tons was inaugurated in Bandar Imam Khomeini (RA) in the presence of Caretaker of the Minister of Labor, Cooperatives and Social Welfare Dr. Mohseni Bandpey, the Public Relations Dept. of the company reported.

This giant project has launched with the investment of about 630 billion rials, the report added.

The inaugural ceremony also was attended by Eng. Shariati Governor General of Khuzestan Province, Eng. Lotfi CEO of Social Security Investment Company (Persian acronym for SHASTA), Eng. Taghizadeh CEO of State Pension Fund, Eng. Makhdoumi CEO of TOPICO, Eng. Peyvandi Chairman of the Board and also a number of senior officials of the country.

Eng. Isa Is'haghi CEO of IRANOL Oil Company was



the first speaker in the inaugural ceremony of exports terminal in Bandar Imam Khomeini (RA) who said, "relying upon the assistance of the Almighty God, IRANOL Oil Company's Exports Terminal was launched in the year named after 'Supporting Homemade Products', located on a land area as large as 2.5 ha with 25,000-tons tank capacity including eight 5,000-ton tanks applicable for heavy products and four 2,500-ton tanks applicable for various types of base oil as well as one tank applicable for firefighting."

Concurrent with the inauguration of Export Terminal of IRANOL Oil Company, a rail line for transferring exports products from Tehran Refinery to the Exports Terminal in Bandar Imam Khomeini (RA) was put into operation, the issue of which will cost transport cost to a great extent.

TOD survey finalized, aiming to combat air pollution

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — A survey on Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) in Iran in order to overcome air pollution and traffic congestion through development of public transport has been completed and finalized, head of transportation and traffic affairs at Tehran Municipality said on Saturday.



There are two main factors in the TOD design, one of which is transport planning, and the other is urban development, if these two factors will be commonly considered in our planning, then we will not see a city inefficiently develop, Siadat Mousavi said, ISNA reported.

Pointing to creation of human-centered urban development since the [13]70s (falling on 1990s), he regretted that “for many years, human-centered urban development has been neglected in our country’s urban planning, however, it’s time to give human beings priority and ensure the security for residents.”

Fortunately, after one and a half year of activity, with the Transport and Urban Development Ministry’s decision, the general outlines of the national TOD plan were approved, he stated.

Through the implementation of the plan, which is the national guideline for urban development and public transport, the unbridled development of cars will be halted, he said, adding that because we believe that the only way out of the air pollution is the development of public transport, and TOD can help us with the development of public transport in the future.

In a seminar held on January 17 in Tehran, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Iran Municipalities and Rural Management Organization (affiliated with Interior Ministry) officially marked the beginning of yet another joint cooperation to tackle the problem of air pollution and traffic congestion through development of public transport through Transit- Oriented Development (TOD) programs.

The “Data Collection Survey on Transit- Oriented Development in the Islamic Republic of Iran” was planned to be started as the beginning of a bigger project for better urban planning and development.

■ **TOD**
According to tod.org transport oriented development or as it is well-known TOD is the creation of compact, walkable, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use communities centered around high quality train systems. This makes it possible to live a lower-stress life without complete dependence on a car for mobility and survival.

TOD can be an optimal solution to the complicated, pressing problem of climate change and global energy security by creating communities which greatly minimize the need for driving and energy consumption. This type of living arrangement can reduce driving by up to 85%.

Components of TOD includes walkable design with pedestrian, train station as prominent feature of town center, regional node containing a mixture of uses in close proximity (office, residential, retail, civic), large ride-in bicycle parking areas within stations and collector support transit systems including streetcar, light rail, and buses, etc.

Higher quality of life with better places to live, work, and play, reduced traffic congestion, car accidents and injuries, healthier lifestyle with more walking, and less stress, reduced dependence on oil, reduced pollution and environmental damages are among the benefits of TOD.

LEARN ENGLISH

Last Will and Testament

A: I, Luke Thompson, **residing** in California, being of **sound** mind, do hereby declare this instrument to be my **last will and testament**.

A: I **hereby revoke** all previous wills and codicils.

A: I direct that the disposition of my **remains** be as follows: I am to be cremated and taken to the **summit** of Mount Everest where my ashes will forever remain at the ceiling of the Earth.

A: I give all the rest and residue of my **estate** to my **spouse**, Betty Thompson, should she survive me for days. If my spouse, Betty Thompson, does not survive me, I give all the rest and residue of my estate to English Pod.

A: If neither Betty Thompson nor English Pod survives me, I give all the rest and residue of my estate to my heirs as determined by the laws of the State of California, relating to descent and distribution.

A: I **appoint** Robert Porter, to act as the executor of this will, to serve without bond. Should Robert Porter be unable or unwilling to serve, then I appoint Jason Smalls to act as the executor of this will.

A: I herewith **affix** my signature to this will on this the twenty third of May two thousand ten in the presence of the following witnesses, who witnessed and **subscribed** this will at my request, and in my presence.

■ **Key vocabulary**
reside: live in a place permanently
sound: free from disease or injury; in good condition
last will and testament: a paper made to settle property after one’s death
hereby: by means of or as a result of this
revoke: cancel
remains: the body of a dead person
summit: the highest point; top
estate: everything you own; all your assets
spouse: a person’s partner in marriage
appoint: choose someone to do a particular job
affix: add or append
subscribe: to sign at the end of the will or contract
■ **Supplementary vocabulary**
residence: a person’s house or dwelling
donation: give something free of charge (usually of value)
funeral: celebration of a person’s life after passing

Iran wins UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy

1 → **UNESCO International Literacy Prizes**

Today, at least 750 million young people and adults still lack basic literacy skills. Two-thirds of them are women and 102 million of them are youth aged 15 to 24. At the same time, many of the 192 million unemployed young people and adults worldwide are unable to achieve decent livelihoods due to, among others, the lack of foundational skills, including literacy, and failing to meet the skill demands of the rapidly changing labor market.

According to the UNESCO official website UNESCO International Literacy Prizes have rewarded excellence and innovation in the field of literacy since 1967. So far over 485 projects and programs undertaken by governments, non-governmental organizations and individuals around the world have been recognized.

UNESCO aims to support effective literacy practices and encourages the promotion of dynamic literate societies by the means of these prestigious Prizes. This year’ theme focused on literacy and skills development.

UNESCO International Literacy Prizes include the UNESCO King Sejong Literacy Prize (2 awards) and the UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy (3 awards).

UNESCO King Sejong Literacy Prize was established in 1989, with the support of the Government of the Republic of Korea. It gives special consideration to the development and use of mother-tongue literacy education and training.

The UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy was also established in 2005, with the support of the Government of the People’s Republic of China. It gives special consideration to literacy amongst adults in rural areas and out-of-school youth, particularly girls and women.

Aid Afghanistan for Education (AAE) and the Ministry of Education and Culture in Uruguay were awarded the 2018 UNESCO King Sejong Literacy Prize.

In addition to Iran, the Nigerian Prisons Service, and



the Foundation Elche Acoge of Spain won the UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy.

■ **Iran’s Literacy Movement Organization**

Established in 1979, the Organization is the main and largest literacy organization in the country with more than 50,000 instructors and 6,000 administrators.

It has branches located in more than 300 villages in 28 provinces. The Organization is officially tasked with eradicating illiteracy and educating illiterate youth and adults.

It actively promotes literacy and continuing education through a range of programs for children and adults

particularly targeting women and girls in rural areas and from minority tribes.

Iran’s prize winner program aims to combine basic literacy skills with International Computer Driving License (ICDL) skills. It combines computer courses, which include English language and computer skills training, and literacy courses, which include Persian literature, mathematics, Islamic teachings, culture and sciences.

In 2017, more than 4,200 girls benefited from the program and it is hoped to continue its implementation until 2021.

GCF may allot \$10m to Iran for lake conservation project

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — The Green **d e s k** Climate Fund (GCF) as part of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) financial mechanism may earmark \$10 million for preserving Bakhtegan Lake in Fars province, southern Iran, ISNA news agency reported on Saturday.

GCF is a new global fund created to support the efforts of developing countries to respond to the challenge of climate change. GCF helps developing countries limit or reduce their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and adapt to climate change. It seeks to promote a paradigm shift to low-emission and climate-resilient development, taking into account the needs of nations that are particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts.

Set up by the 194 countries parties to the UNFCCC in 2010, it was a part of the Convention’s financial mechanism, aiming at delivering equal amounts of funding, grants, loans, equity or guarantees to mitigation and adaptation, while being guided by the Convention’s principles and provisions.

When the Paris Agreement was reached in 2015, the Green Climate Fund was given an important role in serving the agreement and supporting the goal of keeping climate

change well below 2 degrees Celsius by granting funds which come mainly from developed countries, but also from some developing countries, regions, and Paris.

“One of the major uncertainties in joining the Paris climate change agreement is the lack of financial and technological resources to reduce fossil fuel consumption in developing countries,” Vice-President of Conference of the Parties (COP), Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA), Conference of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP) UNFCCC Bureau of Asia-Pacific group has said.

This is also the main problem for Iran to join the agreement and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change,” Majid Shafiepour explained.

“The GCF will allot a total fund of up to \$10 million and low-interest loans to implement climate change projects in low-income countries,” he added.

So far, Iran had not proposed any projects in this regard to use the funds up until last year, that a project to protect the natural ecosystems of Bakhtegan lake, Zagros forests and related water resources was initiated by the Department of Environment (DOE) and with the participation

of the Ministry of Energy and Ministry of Agriculture, he highlighted.

Shafiepour went on to say that the project is almost drawn up and approved nationally, and international advisers also have confirmed it, so that the country can receive some \$10 million to implement the project.

Shafiepour who also serve as president of the National Institute on Climate Change and Environment at University of Tehran noted that it is anticipated that the GCF will receive about \$100 billion annually from developed and developing countries such as China, Brazil, South Korea and the Gulf states that are able provide financial assistance.

He also added that each of the international financial institutions such as the World Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, the European Development Bank and the Asian Development Bank have allocated over tens of billion dollars to fund the climate change projects.

“The UNFCCC has demanded the 40 developed countries to allocate a fund of \$100 billion per year,” he said, adding that the fund will be given to the countries on bilateral negotiations, for instance, Iran can negotiate a developed country and request the amount it has spent on climate change.

He went on to highlight that developing countries first must prepare project proposals and ask the UNFCCC to approve it.

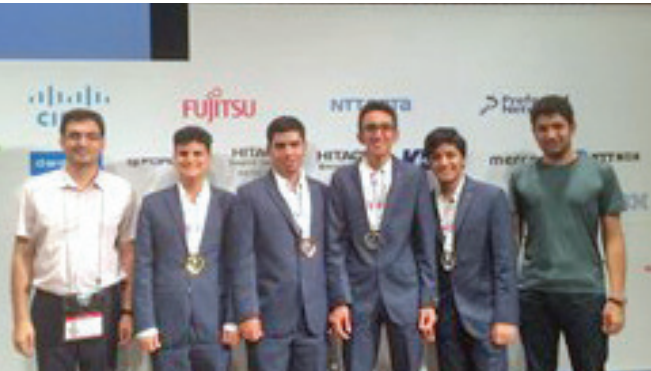
“So far, countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, the Philippines, and even small African countries have been granted funds to implement projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change,” he concluded.

■ **Climate change**

Long-term changes in the earth’s climate system have been significant and are occurring more rapidly than in the past. Continued emissions into the earth’s atmosphere are projected to cause further warming and increase the likelihood of severe, pervasive, and irreversible effects on every continent. In addition, climate change has a disproportionately stronger impact on the lives and livelihoods of those societies which depend on the natural environment for their day-to-day needs.

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are continuing to rise, making the globally agreed target of keeping atmospheric temperature increase below 2°C more and more difficult to achieve. According to the IPCC, the current trajectory of GHG emissions rates will cause global temperatures to increase by 4°C by the end of this century.

Iranian students snatch 4 medals at IOI 2018



SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Iranian students secured 4 colorful medals at the 30th International Olympiad in Informatics (IOI 2018) which was held in Tsukuba, Japan, on September 1 to 8.

Iran’s team finished in eleventh place claiming one gold medal, two silver medals, and one bronze medal, Mehdi Safarnejad, head of the Iranian delegation said.


This year, 341 students from 87 countries participated in the event. Mohammad Mahdavi grabbed the gold medal, Keivan Rezaei and Mehrdad Saberi were the silver medal winners, and Seyed Mahdi Sadegh Shobeiri claimed the bronze medal, Fars reported on Saturday.

Iran first participated the IOI in 1992, and have claimed some 22 gold medals, 54 silver medals and 25 bronze medals, over the past 26 years.

The IOI is one of five international science Olympiads. The primary goal of the IOI is to stimulate interest in informatics (computing science) and information technology. Another important goal is to bring together exceptionally talented pupils from various countries and to have them share scientific and cultural experiences.

The event is organized annually in and by one of the participating countries. Each participating country typically sends a delegation of four contestants and two accompanying adults. Students compete individually and try to maximize their score by solving a set of informatics problems during two competition days.

First Announcement




N.I.O.C
1397.2663

Call for public tender (First/Second publish) - Retender

One - Stages tender

Subject of Tender: CATERPILLAR SR4 A.C SYNCHRONOUS GENERATOR MODEL 3512B for Drilling Rig



National Iranian Drilling Company

Tender descriptions:

The Tender holder	Registration No. through national electronic tendering system	Tender No. /Indent No.	Estimated value (Rial/Euro)
National Iranian Drilling Company	3,173,461	Tender No.: FP/17-97/019 Indent No.: 48-22-9622018	3,299,363,408

Qualitative evaluation of tenderers

Method	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The evaluation will be made subject to submission of needed certificates in meeting for opening the received tenderer's proposals.
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Purchasing & Submitting

Tender Document Distribution by Company	The distribution of the documents will be started one day after the publishing of second advertisement and ended on the following tenth day thereof (closing date 1397/07/03 – Sep 25,2018)
Distribution Place	Hall No.:113, 1 st floor, Foreign Procurement Dept., National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN
Submitting Method	Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt in the amount of 510,000 Iranian Rials under account number 4001114004020491(Shaba No. IR 520100004001114004020491) in name of "NIDC Incomes Centralized Fund" issued by I.R. of Iran Central Bank Submitting format Request for the purpose of receiving Tender Documents
Closing date	Days after the last time of Purchasing. (closing date 1397/08/12- Nov 03,2018) 35 (13/08/1397) The envelopes will be opened At 9:30 a.m On Nov 04,2018
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Tender Guarantee

Value of guarantee	165,000,000Rial /3,356 Euro
Type of guarantee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank guarantees or guarantees issued by non-bank institutions that obtain activity license from the central bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt under account number 4001114006376636 (Shaba No. IR 350100004001114006376636) in name of "NIDC saving account" by the central bank of Islamic Republic of Iran.
Duration of credit & quotation	Tender Guarantee and quotation should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum for one time in initial validity duration.

(Foreign Procurement Dept.)
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تهران تایمز نویت اول ۹۷/۰۶/۱۸نویت دوم ۹۷/۰۶/۱۹

Cristiano Ronaldo is disappointed in certain journalists

The biggest story of the summer was Cristiano Ronaldo’s move to Juventusand he continues to be a talking point when it comes to Real Madrid, with every performance analysed in relation to his absence. Several Spanish journalists have been writing about how Los Blancos look good without him and this has hurt the Portuguese player.

He is upset by the criticism received and feels that what he achieved at Real Madrid is being underappreciated.

Beleiving that his relationships with certain journalists were ones of friendship, he expected a different kind of treatment to that which he has received in recent days.

One of the main talking points of the past couple of weeks has been his decision to stay away from UEFA’s gala, at which Luka Modric beat the No.7 to the best player award.

According to several different Portuguese publications, the forward called Modricto congratulate him for his success, even if he still feels that he deserved to win the prize.

His apology for the non-attendance has reduced tensions with his former teammates and Ronaldo is set to attend FIFA’s The Best awards on September 24.

He and his close circle have confirmed that he’ll attend the event in London. As for Juventus, the directors in Turin are not unhappy with the player and they consider his decision not to attend the UEFA gala as a personal one.

They didn’t mind his no-show and are satisfied with his professionalism.

(Source: Marca)

Bolt takes break from Mariners for overseas commitment

Olympic sprint champion Usain Bolt will put his efforts to carve out a football career on hold for a week to fulfil a “previously planned” overseas commitment, the A-League’s Central Coast Mariners said on Saturday.

The 32-year-old Jamaican has been trialling with the Mariners for the last three weeks in the hope of securing a professional contract for the 2018-19 A-League campaign.

The break, from Sept. 9-16, had been agreed before he joined Mike Mulvey’s team for training, the club said in a statement.

Bolt made his debut for the Mariners on Aug. 31, coming off the bench for 18 minutes against a local amateur side.

The Mariners won the game 6-1 but Bolt looked well short of match fitness and lacked the touch on the ball of many of his team mates. Bolt himself said he would need at least four months to get up to speed. Bolt’s attempt to transform himself from the face of global athletics to professional football player has generated huge publicity for the Mariners, who finished bottom of the 10-team A-League last season.

It has also drawn scepticism, with Adelaide United coach Marco Kurz questioning Bolt’s open-ended trial, saying the A-League should focus on recruiting proven talents and improving Australian youngsters.

(Source: Reuters)

Sane leaves Germany squad for ‘private reasons’

Manchester City winger Leroy Sane has left Germany’s team hotel for “private reasons” and will not be available for Sunday’s friendly with Peru.

Sane, 22, was left out of Germany’s squad for the World Cup in Russia. However, he made a brief substitute appearance in Thursday’s UEFA Nations League goalless draw with France.

Germany tweeted on Friday that after discussions with head coach Joachim Low, “Leroy Sane has left the team hotel in Munich for private reasons”.

International team-mate Toni Kroos claimed earlier this week that Sane, who has made 13 senior appearances for Germany, was not fulfilling his potential and must improve his attitude.

“Sometimes you have the feeling with Leroy’s body language that it’s all the same if we win or lose,” Real Madrid midfielder Kroos said. “He’s a player who has everything you need to be a world-class player but sometimes you have to tell him he has to perform better.”

Sane, who cost £37m plus add-ons when he joined City from Schalke in August 2016, has yet to start a Premier League game for the champions this season.

He was left out of the 18-man squad for their most recent match, a 2-1 Premier League win over Newcastle on 1 September, although manager Pep Guardiola afterwards rejected reports that he was unhappy with the player’s attitude.

(Source: BBC)

Red Star fans banned from Champions League trips to PSG, Liverpool

Red Star Belgrade have been banned from selling tickets to their fans for the club’s next two Champions League away games because of crowd trouble during last month’s playoff tie at Salzburg, European soccer’s governing body said on Friday.

Red Star were charged with several offences, including a pitch invasion by fans who also set off fireworks, as they came back from two goals down to draw 2-2 and reach the group stage on away goals at Salzburg’s Red Bull Arena.

UEFA’s disciplinary committee also fined the Serbian club 30,000 euros (\$34,695) and ordered them to contact Salzburg within 30 days to pay for damages caused by their supporters.

Red Star fans will not be allowed to buy tickets for the Champions League Group C games at Paris St Germain on Oct. 3 and Liverpool on Oct. 24.

Serbian champions Red Star, who won the European Cup in 1991, have got to the group stage for the first time since the Champions League was launched in 1992.

(Source: Goal)

Injured Nadal stops, setting up del Potro-Djokovic US Open final

Rafael Nadal felt the pain sear into his right knee early in his U.S. Open semifinal, on what he called “a bad movement.” It was a familiar pain, one that he’s dealt with off-and-on for years.

The defending champion looked up at his guest box and indicated something was wrong. He tried to continue. Eventually, he could not.

Nadal stopped playing after dropping the opening two sets Friday night, putting Juan Martin del Potro back in a Grand Slam final for the first time since he won the 2009 U.S. Open.

“That was not a tennis match at the end. Just one player playing, the other staying on one side of the court,” Nadal said. “I hate to retire, but staying one more set out there, playing like this, would be too much for me.”

On Sunday, del Potro will play for the title against Novak Djokovic, who advanced with a 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 victory over Kei Nishikori in the second semifinal.

“I don’t know how it looked, but it felt really good,” said Djokovic, who reached his record-tying eighth final in New York as he aims for a third U.S. Open championship and 14th major title. “Great intensity, great focus, good game plan. Obviously easier said than done. You have to execute the shots.”

Djokovic missed last year’s U.S. Open because of an injured right elbow, which required surgery in February. But he is back to his best, as evidenced by a Wimbledon title in July and his run in New York, where Djokovic has won his past 13 sets.

“Very solid everything,” was Nishikori’s assessment after he failed to break Djokovic while losing a 14th consecutive match to him. “Serve. Return. Groundstrokes. He was playing aggressive.”

Del Potro was leading 7-6 (3), 6-2 after two hours of



play when Nadal shook his head and said he had to retire, becoming the first man in the half-century professional era to do so during a semifinal or final at the U.S. Open.

“Of course, it’s not the best way to win a match,” said del Potro, who hugged Nadal when it was over. “I don’t like to see him suffering on court today. So I’m sad for him.”

The top-ranked Nadal has a history of tendinitis in his knees and a trainer put tape below that joint after the match’s seventh game. At the next changeover, Nadal pulled off the tape. Then, in the second set, Nadal took a medical timeout

for a fresh taping. By the end, he was walking with a bit of a hitch in his gait. When he approached the chair umpire to complain about a late call from a line judge, Nadal mentioned in passing that he was going to quit. Soon enough, he did.

Nadal wasn’t sure what lingering effects there might have been from his quarterfinal victory over Dominic Thiem, which lasted five sets and nearly five hours. The Spaniard, 32, did have that same knee taped during his win against Karen Khachanov in the third round.

(Source: Express)

Double Olympic champion Vogel ‘can’t walk’ after training crash



Double Olympic champion Kristina Vogel says she “can’t walk any more” after sustaining a serious spinal injury when she crashed during training in June.

The 27-year-old German was involved in a high-speed collision with another cyclist on a track in Cottbus.

Vogel, who is also a part-time police officer, won team sprint gold at London 2012 and the individual title in Rio.

“I believe that the sooner you accept a new situation, the sooner you learn to deal with it,” she told Der Spiegel.

The German Cycling Federation said Vogel remains in hospital in Berlin and that it would give her all its support.

“I was in pain, but there are no words,” Vogel said of the accident. “On the first X-ray images my spine looks like an Ikea folding table.

“In the meantime, I really thought that I was dying. But I said to myself: ‘I can not let go here now.’

She added: “No matter what fate holds for you, life goes on, in my case now on four wheels instead of two wheels. My arms are now my legs too.”

Cycling’s governing body, the UCI, said it would “stand by Kristina in this difficult

time” and expressed its “sympathy and support in a sad situation for track cycling and the sport”.

Its statement added: “This exceptional champion has also dedicated herself to our sport by working selflessly behind the scenes.

“Her determination and good humour are known and appreciated by all, and we at the UCI have no doubt that she will make full use of these remarkable qualities in her rehabilitation.”

Sir Chris Hoy, Great Britain’s six-time Olympic champion, said the news was “devastating”.

He added: “She is already one of the greatest track sprinters in history, but there was so much more to come from her. It’s absolutely heartbreaking.

“I have no doubt that in the future she will find new ways to challenge herself and to achieve greatness again and in doing so continue to inspire.”

Vogel has won 11 world titles, and the crash in Cottbus was not the first of her career.

She was put into an artificial coma for two days in May 2009 after hitting a car during a training session.

(Source: BBC)

Insults, threats and even shunned by his old school, how Mesut Ozil went from German hero to national pariah

In Gelsenkirchen, Ilkay Gundogan’s home town, a relative of the Manchester City star headed out for dinner.

Tucking into his meal, he noticed a gentleman on another table repeatedly peering over.

Gundogan’s relative realized the man was a former member of the German parliament, so he went over to shake his hand. The subsequent conversation chilled him to the core. The politician, supposedly from the Centre-left, warned Gundogan’s relative: “I hope this situation becomes much worse for you.”

Weeks earlier, in the build-up to the World Cup, Gundogan’s car was smashed by hooligans near the team hotel in Cologne. And there is no sign of tensions easing. Gundogan was jeered by a section of Germany fans when he came on as a second-half substitute in Thursday’s 0-0 draw with France in Munich.

These are the dismal consequences of the soap opera that has played out in the German national team this summer.

To recap, Gundogan and team-mate Mesut Ozil posed with the Turkish president Tayyip Recep Erdogan during the politician’s state visit to London in May. The fall-out has been explosive, culminating in interventions by German chancellor Angela Merkel and Ozil’s decision to retire from international football. In doing so, Ozil, the man once hailed by Merkel as the first ‘multi-kulti kicker’ and an emblem of modern Germany, has been deserted by team-mates, isolated by the German Football Association and transformed into a social pariah.

In the industrial heartland of the Ruhr Valley where Ozil was born and educated, opinion has always been split.

Andreas Winkler, the former academy director at local team Rot Weiss-Essen, recalls the many times Ozil was snubbed



during trials at Schalke. Winkler said: “Those coaches saw him and said “too thin, not strong enough, the body language” and then only at the last moment they took him.”

Ozil, like Gundogan, was born in Germany but has Turkish heritage. His grandfathers on both sides came to Gelsenkirchen in the mid-1960s and made Germany their home.

In his autobiography, Ozil wrote of his family: “They worked conscientiously. Industriosly. Hard. Without complaining. They did contract work, often with colds and backaches.”

Ozil grew up in a Bornstrasse apartment block where nine of 10 families were immigrants. Neighbours recall doors falling off hinges and children too frightened to retrieve their bikes for fear of rats.

Christian Krabbe, Ozil’s English teacher and mentor at Bergen Feld school, said: “Mesut is a grounded person. He paid for a class trip for his friends to London with his first

salary at Schalke aged 17. Most of these kids had never left Gelsenkirchen. He has funded other school trips to London since he joined Arsenal. We went to a Turkish restaurant in Golders Green, where Mesut wrote a card for each student and paid for everything.”

This summer, Ozil’s character has been forensically pulled apart in Germany. The meeting with Erdogan is controversial on both the left and right of politics. Since a failed coup, Erdogan has mercilessly clamped down on critics, including journalists and academics.

The New York Knicks NBA star Enes Kanter has publicly criticised Erdogan, calling him the ‘Hitler of our century’, while his father has been imprisoned. Yet the price of speaking out is high, with sponsors scared off and Kanter’s family home raided. Another critic, former Turkey striker Hakan Sukur, has taken refuge in California.

Kanter told Sportsmail: “We were told by a Nike representative that if they were to sponsor me, they would lose a lot of business in Turkey. ‘I imagine many professional athletes do not comment on things since they cannot afford to lose sponsorship. Erdogan takes pictures with celebrities to show other Turks that he has support of famous people. I do not know whether Ozil and Gundogan like or dislike Erdogan. I do know Erdogan has imprisoned innocent people just to grab power.”

“Many people are scared to show solidarity with the innocent people in Turkey. If Gundogan and Ozil expressed any view other than the mainstream opinion currently in Turkey, they would follow the same fate as me.”

(Source: Daily Mail)

Siamand Rahman not to break world record in Japan

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iranian super heavy-weight powerlifter Siamand Rahman says he is not going to break the world record in Japan.

The world's stronger Paralympian will do at the Asia-Oceania Open Championships in Kitakyushu, Japan, between 8 and 12 September.

Rahman broke the 300kg barrier in the men's over 107kg at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games, lifting an unprecedented 310kg.

In 2017, he won his second world title. No one even comes close to the Iranian, who only competes against himself and his own strength.

The 30-year-old is one of the biggest Paralympic stars and will most certainly shine again at Tokyo 2020. His next competition will also be contested on Japanese soil: the Asia-Oceania Open Championships in Kitakyushu.

"I will not try to break the world record in Japan," he said.

"I am saving my best lifts for October's Asian Para Games and, of course, for the next Paralympic Games.

"At Indonesia 2018 and Tokyo 2020 you will witness what no other powerlifter has done before. I am saving the best possible lifts for then."

The two-time Paralympic and world champion has already arrived in Japan and has started his trainings ahead of the competition together with the rest of the Iranian team.

Rahman has absolutely captivated the Japanese public. All those who meet him, either journalists, volunteers or other powerlifters, want to shake his hand or get a picture with their hero, Paralympic.org wrote.



Iran vs Iraq; one of the AFC Asian Cup Classic Matches

With the AFC Asian Cup 2019 on the horizon, The AFC official website look back at some classic matches from previous editions of Asia's most prestigious national team tournament, starting with arguably one of the most dramatic in recent memory.

It's no overstatement to stay that one of the standout games of the 2015 AFC Asian Cup was not the final, nor semi-final, but an action-packed quarter-final away from the big city lights of Sydney and Melbourne, but in the country's eighth largest city, the capital Canberra.

Never considered a football-hotbed - Canberra even now still lacks an A-League side - the Australian seat of government, for one night in January 2015, was turned into the centre of Asian football as Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq played out an instant classic in the tournament's last eight.

The opening spells of the match were frenetic and furious but amounted to little before a typical driving run down the right from Ashkan Dejagah on 24 minutes was brought to a halt through a firm tackle from Dhurgham Ismail.

Vouria Ghafouri, though, was on hand to pick up the pieces and whip in a venomous cross that Azmoun met with a thumping header into the bottom corner of the goal.

Alireza Haghighi then saved well from Younus Mahmood with his feet but as the first period drew to a close there was time for a final moment of drama.

After a coming together with Iraq goalkeeper Jalal Has-san, Mehrdad Pooladi received his second yellow card of the match to see Iran go into the break a man down.



And within three minutes of the second half Iran almost saw their goal advantage disappear, too, as Yasir Kasim's free-kick was athletically saved by Haghighi who launched himself to his left to tip the ball over the bar.

But on 56 minutes Iraq got the equaliser they had been threatening as Alaa Abdul Zahra's wicked cross from the left wing evaded defenders and attackers alike before Ahmed Yasin latched onto the ball at the far post and drove his low angled shot through a group of players and into the net.

Iraq continued to prod and probe at the 10-man side but were unable to take further advantage of their numerical superiority before the whistle was blown for the end of the 90 minutes and a period of extra-time.

And the deadlock was blown open in just the second

minute of extra time as a cross from Ismail saw the ball clip off Haghighi's outstretched leg and pounced upon by Mahmood whose stooping header found the back of the net for his eighth goal in AFC Asian Cup competitions to put Iraq 2-1 up.

A sensational spectacle was still not finished there, though, and with three minutes of the first-half of extra-time remaining Morteza Pouraliganji thundered home Andranik Teymourian's corner with a bullet header to level the scores again.

The defender went from hero to villain with five minutes remaining of the extra-time as his crunching tackle on Kasim saw a penalty awarded to Iraq. Ismail (above) showed impressive composure to drive his spot-kick down the middle of the goal with Haghighi already committed to his right.

But with two minutes remaining there was a further twist to the tail as once again from a Teymourian corner, Iran caused consternation in the Iraq defence as Javad Nekounam cannoned his header off the post and Reza Ghoochannejhad was on hand to head home to take the game to penalties.

Ehsan Hajsafi blasted his opening spot-kick over the crossbar for Iran, but Saad Abdulameer was unable to take advantage and struck his own effort wide.

And after Vahid Amiri hit the post in sudden death, Salam Shakir kept his composure to beat Haghighi and claim victory for Iraq and a place in the semi-finals for the third time in their AFC Asian Cup history.

(Source: AFC)

Indonesia president picks Asian Games chief to run re-election campaign



Indonesian President Joko Widodo on Friday picked billionaire businessman Erick Thohir to manage his re-election campaign, citing his successful role in organising the recent Asian Games hosted by the country.

Thohir, who is also chairman of Italian soccer club Inter Milan, was brought in to lead the Asian Games committee in 2015 amid concerns over a ballooning budget and whether some venues would be prepared in time.

"Our national campaign team chief, Erick Thohir, as many of you know, is a successful businessman. He owns media channels, soccer clubs, a basketball club and many others," Widodo told a televised news briefing.

"It is clear that anything he leads will gain success," said Widodo, singling out Thohir's handling of the Asian Games, which ended on Sept 2 and is the biggest multi-sports event after the Olympics.

Thohir is chairman of the Mahaka group, which owns the Republika newspaper and radio stations, and he also has an investment in U.S. soccer team DC United and was part of a consorti-

um that bought the basketball team the Philadelphia 76ers.

Widodo is running against former general Prabowo Subianto, who was once married to the daughter of former authoritarian leader Suharto, in elections set for April.

Subianto, who narrowly lost the election in 2014 to Widodo, is chairman of the nationalist Gerindra Party which forms the main opposition alongside several Islamic parties.

His campaign manager is a former head of Indonesia's military, Djoko Santoso.

While in office, Widodo has led a push to build infrastructure though annual growth in Southeast Asia's biggest economy, at about 5 percent, has yet to reach the 7 percent he pledged when campaigning in 2014.

He has been comfortably ahead in recent opinion polls, but a slide in the rupiah currency to levels not seen since the Asian financial crisis two decades ago has been jumped on by the opposition as a sign of economic mishandling.

(Source: Reuters)

Korea Republic satisfy head coach Bento



Paulo Bento's debut as Korea Republic head coach was made sweeter by the talent and quality his squad showed in the 2-0 win over Costa Rica in an international friendly on Friday.

Lee Jae-sung and Nam Tae-hee scored a goal apiece to get Bento off to a winning start with his new team at the Goyang Stadium in Goyang, north of Seoul ahead of the AFC Asian Cup UAE 2019.

"It's always happy when you win," Bento said at the post-match press conference. "I'm especially satisfied because it's a victory that showed our players' talent and quality. I also liked how we played the game, and how we created good moments."

Bento, who was named the new Korea Republic boss on August 17, used a 4-2-3-1 formation against Costa Rica. Under his guidance, the Taeguk Warriors were efficient and aggressive, with seven of 11 shots on target.

"Our goal was to dominate the match for 90 minutes," he said. "Our defence

was good and our transition from defence to offence was good. The players executed well and did what they were ordered to do."

Son Heung-min wore the captain's armband instead of Ki Sung-yueng, who had been captain for the past few years. Bento said the switch was made after his team had a long discussion.

"First of all, we played a good game as a team in a new phase," he said. "I can't tell in detail how we decided to choose Son as captain because that's our internal issue, but we had enough talks."

Ki previously hinted at retiring from the national team after the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia but following Bento's appointment, Ki played 45 minutes and earned his 106th cap.

"As far as I know, Ki will stay with the national team," Bento said. "There's no doubt about that."

Korea Republic play Chile next on Tuesday.

(Source: AFC)

Ghasemi pockets Iran's second gold at Dmitry Korkin Tournament

MNA— Iranian heavyweight freestyle wrestler Komeil Ghasemi gained the gold medal of Dmitry Korkin International Tournament in Russia.

The Iranian wrestler won a deserved gold medal in men's 125kg category without even conceding one point to his rivals.

The 30-year-old wrestler first defeated Kazakhstan's Inkar Yermukambet a German wrestler 10-0 before gaining yet another superb 11-0 victory over Belarus' Ibragim Magomedovich Saidov, bronze winner of 2016 Olympics. In the final contest, the two times Olympics medalist of Iran defeated Belarus' Zolbo Natsagsuren 2-0 and earned the gold medal.

Earlier, Ahmad Bazri had pocketed gold medal in 86kg category of the event.

The 11th edition of the International Freestyle Wrestling Grand Prix Tournament Dmitry Korkin kicked off on September 5 in Yakutsk city of Sakha Republic (Yakutia), Russia, and wrapped up today.

Iran takes first-ever seat of Asian skating Federation

IRNA — Head of Iran's Skating Federation was elected as the second vice-president of the Asian roller-skating body.

The election of the Confederation of Asia Roller Sports (CARS) took place on the sidelines of the 18th Asian Roller-Skating Championships in Namwon, South Korea.

Bahman Mohammadrezaei was elected as the second vice-president of the Asian federation after South Korean nominee.

Iranian national roller-skate team has participated in the event in speed, freestyle, and in-line skating categories in both men and women disciplines.

The 18th Asian Roller-Skating Championships kicked off on Sept 4 and will be underway until Sept 14

Iran's Maedeh Borhani Joins Turkey's Kecioren Volleyball Team

TASNIM — The Iranian national volleyball team's captain Maedeh Borhani has joined Turkish volleyball club Kecioren Municipality Baglum Spor.

The 30-year-old Opposite Striker has joined Kecioren on a one-year contract.

Borhani has joined Kecioren from Bulgarian volleyball club Shumen W.

She joined Shumen W last year and became the first ever Iranian woman volleyball player to play in a foreign league.

Borhani has also played in Iranian clubs Sepahan, Giti Pasand and Persepolis.

Iranian para lifter breaks world, Asia's record

MNA— Iranian power lifter Alireza Izadi broke the junior world and Asia's record in Kitakyushu 2018 Para Powerlifting Asia-Oceania Open Championships, Japan.

In men's under 49kg category, Alireza Izadi lifted 140 kg in his third attempt to break the junior world and Asia's record and to snatch three gold medals in the event. The 19-year-old lifter also gained three bronze medals in seniors' competition. The last junior world and Asia's record was also set by Iran's Mohsen Bakhtiari with 131 kg in April 2014.

Jordan's Omar Sami Qarada and China's Yu Zheng collected gold and silver medals of the seniors' category.

2018 World Para Powerlifting Asia-Oceania Open Championships opened in Japan's Kitakyushu today and goes through September 12. It is the qualification pathway for all Asian and Oceanian Para powerlifters striving to qualify for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games.



Carlos Queiroz Names Team Melli for Uzbekistan Friendly

TASNIM — Iran national football team head coach Carlos Queiroz has named his 25-man list for the friendly match against Uzbekistan.

The match is scheduled for September 11 at the Bunyodkor Stadium in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Iran is going to prepare for the 2019 AFC Asian Cup.

Team Melli has been drawn with Iraq, Yemen and Vietnam in Group D.

The competition will be held in the UAE from January 5 to February 1.

Squad:

Goalkeepers:

Alireza Beiranvand, Amir Abedzadeh, Hossein Hosseini

Defenders:

Ramin Rezaeian, Rouzbeh Cheshmi, Majid Hosseini, Morteza Pouraliganji, Pejman Montazeri, Milad Mohammadi, Sadeq Moharrami, Vouria Ghafouri, Armin Sohrabian

Midfielders:

Saeid Ezatolahi, Omid Ebrahimi, Ashkan Dejagah, Saman Ghoddos, Mehdi Torabi, Masoud Shojaei, Vahid Amiri, Ali Karimi, Ehsan Haji Safi

Strikers:

Alireza Jahanbakhsh, Ali Gholizadeh, Mehdi Taremi, Karim Ansarifard

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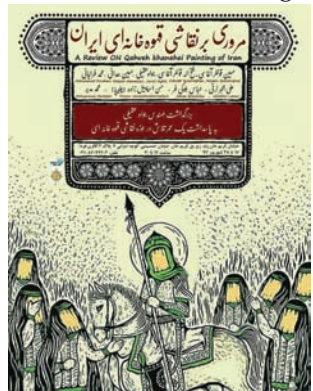
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Tehran gallery to review Persian teahouse painting

A R T d e s k TEHRAN — Tehran's Farda Gallery is reviewing Persian teahouse painting in an exhibition that opened on Friday.



A poster for a Persian teahouse painting exhibit at Tehran's Farda Gallery

Works by pioneers of this genre such as Hossein Qollar-Aqasi and Fat'hollah Qollar-Aqasi are on display at the exhibition, which will run until September 19.

The exhibit is also showcasing works by Javad Aqili, Hossein Hamedani, Mohammad Farahani, Ali-Akbar Larni, Abbas Bolukifar, Hassan Esmaeilzadeh and Mohammad Modabber.

The gallery can be found at 2 Araabi Alley, Hosseini St., off Karim Khan Ave.

WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES

Photo

■ Idea Gallery is displaying a photo exhibition titled "Colorful Shawls".



The photos, which are from a collection by Rokhsareh Shojaeiddin, will be on view until September 12 at the gallery located at 26, 18th St. off Sanai St., Karim Khan Ave.

■ An exhibition displaying 101 photos by 101 photographers is underway at Ariana Gallery.



The exhibit titled "Decisive" will run until September 12 at the gallery located at 9 Fereshteh St., off East Maryam St., in the Elahieh neighborhood.

■ Farhad Javid is showcasing his latest collection of photos of various theatrical performances in an exhibition at Saye Gallery.



The exhibition entitled "The Outlook between Two Darknenses" will continue until September 12 at the gallery that can be found at No. 21, 13th Alley, Sanai St. off Karim Khan Ave.

Painting

■ An exhibition of paintings by Sara Jafari is underway at Golestan Gallery.



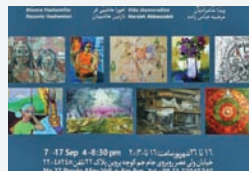
The exhibit runs until September 12 at the gallery located at 34 Kamasai St. in the Darus neighborhood.

■ An exhibition of paintings by a large group of artists, including Zahra Nazli, Nasrin Talebi, Maryam Farshad, Yekta Turki and Saba Qasemizadeh is currently underway at Fereshteh Gallery.



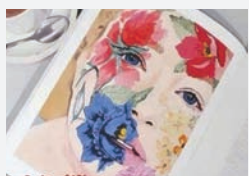
The exhibition titled "A Timeless Journey in Landscape" will continue until September 25 at the gallery located at 1671 near Sadr Bridge, Shariati Ave.

■ A group of artists, including Sajjad Gomar, Mohsen Gholami, Shilan Salimi and Nazanin Hashemi, is displaying their latest paintings in an exhibition at White Line Gallery.



The exhibit will be running until September 17 at the gallery that can be found at 22 Parvin Alley, off Jame Jam St. off Vali-e Asr Ave.

■ Tabassom Taham is displaying her latest collection titled "The Still Life Girls" in an exhibition at Saless Gallery. The exhibit will run until September 12 at the gallery located at 148 Karim Khan Ave.



Mohammad Foqani named Iran's Still Photographer of the Year

A R T d e s k TEHRAN — Mohammad Foqani has been selected as Iran's Still Photographer of the Year for his collaboration on Ahmadreza Motamedi's psychological thriller "The Misunderstanding".

He received his award during the 4th edition of the Celebration of Iranian Still Photographers held at Salam Gallery in Tehran on Friday evening.

The celebration, which is held by the Iranian Society of Still Photographers, also honored writer and director Kambozia Partovi, producer Morteza Shayesteh, actress Gohar Kheirandish and actor Abolfazl Purarab.

"Given today's various problems, persistence and working might be viewed as insensitivity, however, we believe that such meetings originate from the immortal source of love, love for cinema and what it creates," actress Niki Karimi who was the director of the celebration said during the event.

The organizers of the gala also honored Ardalan Azari as the Promising Still Photographer of the Year for his work on Iranian director Nima Eqlima's drama "Amir".

Amir-Hossein Shojaei also won an honorable mention for his work on director Ruhollah Hejazi's "Dark Room".

A collection of the submissions to the Celebration of Iranian Still Photographers is on display at the gallery in an exhibition, which will run until September 12.



Director Ahmadreza Motamedi (R) speaks after presenting the award for Iran's Still Photographer of the Year to Mohammad Foqani (L) at Tehran's Salam Gallery on September 7, 2018. (Cinema Ticket/Elaheh Karimi)

French Iranologist Gilbert Lazard dies at 98

CULTURE d e s k TEHRAN — Persian media reported on Saturday that French linguist and Iranologist Gilbert Lazard, famous for his lifetime endeavors and research on various Iranian languages and translations of classical Persian poetry, died in Paris on Friday. He was 98.

He was also the author of "Grammaire du persan contemporain" ("A Grammar of Contemporary Persian") and a Persian-French dictionary that was published in 1990.

Lazard studied at the École Normale Supérieure and graduated in 1946. He became a professor of the Persian language at the Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (INALCO) from 1958 to 1966.

From 1951 to 1969, he was in charge of the Iranian civilization course at the Sorbonne, where he became a lecturer and a professor of Iranian languages and civilization.

His teachings and works on the Persian language have had a very strong influence on the

whole of Persian studies in France since 1960.

His work covers many fields, particularly early Persian language and literature. He has also translated several works by Sadeq Hedayat into French.

In 2017, Lazard received Iran's Mahmud Afshar Historical Literary Award for the 24th edition of the award at Iran's Cultural Center in Paris. The award included a medal and a Persian carpet bearing the name of Gilbert Lazard.



French Iranologist Gilbert Lazard in an undated photo

Posters by Mehdi Saeidi on display at IGA Philadelphia

A R T d e s k TEHRAN — IGA Philadelphia — the American Institute of Graphic Arts is displaying a collection of posters by the Philadelphia-based Iranian artist and designer, Mehdi Saeidi.

Entitled "From Counter to Calligraphy", the exhibit puts a spotlight on the design vision of Saeidi, which is influenced by his focus on the contemplation of Eastern aesthetics, heritage and tradition.



A poster for "From Counter to Calligraphy" by Mehdi Saeidi

In a statement published on IGA Philadelphia website, the organizers wrote, "Saeidi uses his experience in graphic design, Persian calligraphy, and typography to transform Persian letters into different forms and shapes, rendering unique conceptions in graphic design."

Saeidi's works have been exhibited in numerous exhibitions around the world.

The exhibit opened on September 1 and will be running until October 31.

Mohammad-Ali Movahhed's book on Persian Gulf published in France

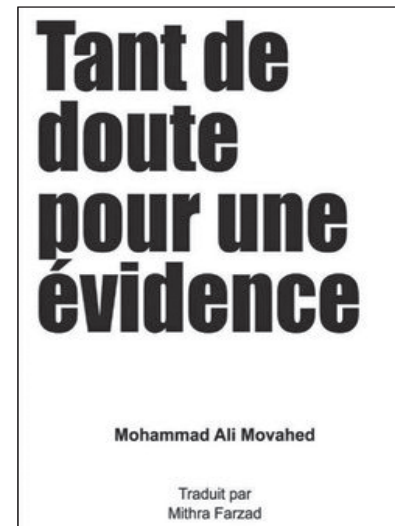
CULTURE d e s k TEHRAN — "Tant de doute pour une Evidance", a book written by Iranian scholar Mohammad-Ali Movahhed on the Persian Gulf, has recently been published in France, the London-based publisher Candle and Fog has announced.

"The book, which reviews the history of the Persian Gulf as well as international treaties between Iran and Britain, has been translated into French by Mithra Farzad, an Iranian scholar teaching at the University of Paris-Sud," Candle and Fog director Afshin Shahnetabar told the Persian service of ISNA on Saturday.

The book has been published in collaboration with Iran's Cultural Center in Paris and La Völva éditions, a publisher in the French city of Besancon. They plan to introduce the book in a special session in Paris in the near future.

The original book was published by Karnameh Publication in Tehran in 2014.

Movahhed, 96, is a graduate of



law and political science from the University of Tehran. He has carried out comprehensive studies on mysticism in Persian literature and Rumi's mentor, Shams-i Tabrizi.

Julia Roberts' first TV series gets Toronto festival premiere

TORONTO (Reuters) — "Pretty Woman" star Julia Roberts walked the red carpet on Friday to promote her first television series, Amazon Studios' "Homecoming", at the Toronto International Film Festival.

Roberts, 50, is the latest major Hollywood star to transition to television, joining the likes of Jane Fonda, Meryl Streep and John Travolta. Many like Roberts have signed on to shows by streaming services like Amazon and Netflix, which are drawing audiences away from traditional television.

Roberts shrugged off the attention her switch to the small screen has garnered.

"It's all the same," she told reporters on the Toronto red carpet. "It's all heart, it's all challenging and it's all fulfilling."

The psychological thriller, based on an eponymous podcast, stars Roberts as Heidi Bergman, a caseworker employed at a secret government facility in a program called Homecoming that is meant to help veterans returning from war transition into civilian life.



Actor Julia Roberts arrives for the world premiere of "Homecoming" at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) in Toronto, Canada, September 7, 2018. (Reuters/Mario Anzuoni)

Oscar organizers retreat on 'popular film' category after backlash

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) — The Academy of Motion Pictures said on Thursday it would not go ahead with its proposed new "popular film" Oscar category at next year's awards ceremony.

The proposal, announced just a month ago, was met with a huge backlash from the movie industry and film reviewers who said it would create a two-tier system of popular and unpopular films.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences said in a statement that "implementing any new award nine months into the year creates challenges for films that have already been released" and that the proposal needed further discussion.

It said it would "not present the new Oscars category at the upcoming 91st awards" in February 2019.

"There has been a wide range of reactions to the introduction of a new award, and we recognize the need for further discussion with our members," Academy Chief Executive Dawn Hudson said in Thursday's statement.

The idea of a separate category for popular films was widely seen as a bid to increase television viewers for the annual Oscar ceremony. The U.S. audience for the March 2018 cer-



An Oscar statue is seen outside the Dolby Theatre during preparations for the Oscars in Hollywood, Los Angeles, California, U.S. March 3, 2018. (Reuters/Lucy Nicholson)

emony was 26.5 million viewers, the smallest in the awards' 90-year history.

Critics said the idea would pit "popular films", such as superhero box office hits, against what would be seen as "un-

popular", smaller art house fare.

In recent years, Academy voters have chosen independent films like "Moonlight" and "The Shape of Water," as best picture winners, rather than box office hits like the "Star Wars" franchise or superhero movies such as 2017 blockbuster "Wonder Woman".

The Academy in August sowed confusion by not detailing how it would determine eligibility for which films would compete in the popular film category, as opposed to the traditional best picture race.

On Thursday, the Academy said it would go ahead with plans to shorten the annual awards show to three hours. It said between six and eight categories would be presented during commercial breaks in the televised ceremony, and then edited and aired later in the broadcast.

It did not specify which of the 24 awards handed out at the ceremony would be presented off camera, but said they would be rotated each year. Technical awards such as editing, costumes, and sound are expected to be most affected by the change.