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Supreme National Security Council secretary Ali Shamkhani (center) visits Iran Khodro car making company.

Iran's priority is to minimize human casualty in Idlib

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — It is Iran's priority to minimize human casualties in Idlib, a former Iranian envoy to Syria has said.

Speaking to IRNA in an interview published on Monday, Mohammad Reza Rauf Sheibani said that the second priority is to tackle the existence of terrorists in the region which are

internationally considered as both active and potential threats to regional and international security.

The third priority, he underlined, is that no part of Syria should fall out of the hands of the central government.

Regarding the Syrian issue, he said the current U.S. administration has turned into a mouthpiece for Israel and Saudi Arabia.

Medical tourist arrivals in Iran doubles in spring

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Medical tourist arrivals in the country has nearly doubled in the first three months of the current Iranian calendar year, corresponding to spring 2018, from a year earlier, said an official with the Ministry of Health.

Saeid Hashemzadeh who presides over

the ministry's medical tourism department told ISNA in an interview published on Sunday, "Based on official statistics, the country attracted over 300,000 medical travelers during the past Iranian calendar year [ended March 20]. He didn't provide more details on the number of such visitors this year. **→10**

IAEA reaffirms Iran's compliance to nuclear deal

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Monday renewed its assurances that the Islamic Republic of Iran stays compliant to the 2015 nuclear deal - aka Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) — that is backed the UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

"My report on Verification and monitoring in the Islamic Republic of Iran in light of United Nations Security Council

resolution 2231 (2015) covers relevant activities of the Agency in that country in the last few months," IAEA Director General Yukia Amano told the body's Board of Governors.

"Iran is implementing its nuclear-related commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. It is essential that Iran continues to fully implement those commitments," he stated. **→2**

'With declining U.S. influence and ascending Chinese power, a new EuroAsia emerging'

By Syed Zafar Mehdi

TEHRAN — The new government in Pakistan led by Imran Khan faces challenges on multiple fronts, in combating corruption, rebuilding institutions, fighting extremism and reshaping foreign policy. Khan has in first few weeks reaffirmed his commitment to bring economic reforms on domestic front, and bolster ties with neighboring countries, notably India, China and Iran. His government has charted a new course for itself, in which Pakistan will be less dependent on U.S.

Jan Achakzai is a senior politician, commentator and author based in Pakistan. In an interview with Tehran Times, he says Pakistan and Iran has convergence on many issues and they will highly benefit from mutual cooperation. He adds that with declining U.S. influence and

ascending Chinese power, a new EuroAsia is emerging and Pakistan is incrementally pivoting towards EuroAsia.

Following are the excerpts:

■ The newly-elected government led by Imran Khan faces challenges on multiple fronts, but the main challenge is economy. There have been reports that Pakistan will approach IMF for a bailout although US has objected to it. Can you tell us more about how Pakistan seeks overcome this hurdle?

A. The U.S. objection to Pakistan potentially going to IMF was more political than financial. Pakistan is also a member of IMF and can use the institution as a lender of last resort. Also IMF has a mandate not to let a country go bust where it has loaned billions of dollars. However,

Imran Khan led government is trying its level best to raise loans from China and Saudi Arabia in order to avoid going to IMF.

■ Relations between Pakistan and U.S. are fast deteriorating, which is evident from Washington's cancelation of military aid to Islamabad and statements from Trump and other U.S. officials that Pakistan is the hotbed of militant groups. How do you view these developments?

A. Yes, the anti-Pakistan rhetoric has been ratcheted up by the Trump administration and also it has taken certain measures to arm twist Pakistan. However, the U.S. still needs Pakistan's help on Afghan reconciliation, logistics support to sustain NATO mission in Afghanistan and its intelligence leverage in the region against extremists like ISIS and remnants of Al-Qaeda. **→6**

Sheikha Qassim's health is improving: Al-Daqqaq

By Mohammad Fatemi Zadeh

The leader of the Bahraini Islamic Movement Ayatullah Isa Qassem, who had been hospitalized for a long time due to health problems, was discharged from the hospital after having a successful operation in London.

Meanwhile, Bahraini groups are now demanding the lift of Sheikh Isa Qassim's home arrest so that he can seek medical care and his health would no longer be at stake.

Regarding this issue, Mehr news agency correspondent had an interview with the director of the Bahraini Seminary in Qom.

The following is the full text of interview:

■ Please tell us about Sheikh Isa's health condition following his surgery. Will the sheikh return to Bahrain again after the operation, and if so, will the Bahrain authorities put him

under home arrest?

A: Sheikh Isa's surgery was a huge success, and afterwards he was moved to his house in London. He goes to the hospital for periodic medical examinations. Sheikh Isa is recovering for now and physically and mentally getting better day by day. He may remain in London for another month to complete his cancer treatment. The senior cleric will go back to Bahrain after his medical treatment ends. Regarding his fate, I must also say that we hope that the ruling regime in Bahrain allows the sheikh to return to his family and homeland, and he'll be able to live like any other ordinary citizen. We hope that he'll get to continue to play his role in the religious, social and political realm like others.



EDITORIAL

Mohammad Ghaderi
Tehran Times editor-in-chief
@ghaderi62

Mogherini is happy, why not!

EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini is now satisfied over Iran's commitment to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). As it was recently reported by Xinhua, Mogherini said that Tehran complies with all its nuclear related commitments and that is a "good news", when EU is still working on preserving the Iranian nuclear deal.

"EU member states are cooperating with some other Non-EU states to make sure Iranians can benefit from the economic relations", said Mogherini as the EU member states foreign ministers gathered in Vienna to discuss a series of important issues.

"Our work continues to preserve the nuclear deal," she said."

The reason for Mogherini's satisfaction with the current situation is clear! The imbalance between "Iran's commitments" and "Western reciprocal obligations" regarding the JCPOA is so evident that even American and European officials have acknowledged it. At the moment, it is only Iran that fulfills its obligations. Speaking about the other side, they have not only violated "all" their obligations, but also refused to take any practical steps to preserve the nuclear deal.

Here we're specifically speaking about the "European Union"! Immediately after Trump's withdrawal from the nuclear deal, the European troika has announced that the German, French and British officials will hold negotiations to offer a package of proposals to Tehran (for preserving the JCPOA). But within a few weeks, Europeans' "Negotiations with Tehran" turned to be "making deals with Americans"! The reason for European official's double-sided measures should be sought in the talks held between the U.S. Secretary of State and the foreign ministers of the three countries of Germany, Britain and France.

The truth is that the European troika did nothing to maintain the nuclear deal, and based on the advice of the U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and John Bolton, the United States National Security Advisor, they had intentionally postpone their so-called package of proposals to the Islamic Republic of Iran. **→7**



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"The land of turquoise-colored waters"

Photo depicts travelers reveling in natural sceneries adjacent to Atashgah village in Lordegan county of Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari province, western Iran, September 9, 2018.

The region is nicknamed "the land of turquoise-colored waters" due to having abundant seasonal falls.

Certainly, they are not amongst the world's highest, wildest, or heaviest waterfalls but what makes them amazing is that they are in a land that its climate mainly varies between arid and semiarid.

Zakzaky's 1000 days of wrongful incarceration

By Yusuf Abdullahi

TEHRAN — It's been 1000 days of Sheikh Ibrahim el-Zakzaky's wrongful incarceration along with his wife and other associates since the Zaria massacre where about 1000 innocent Nigerians were killed in cold blood by those constitutionally mandated to protect them. Programs and protests were organized all across the world to demand justice for Zakzaky and to draw the attention of Nigerian authorities towards the repercussions of tyranny and injustice meted against the Islamic Movement of Nigeria.

The London-based Islamic Human Rights Commission, an umbrella organization of about 30 Islamic and other nongovernmental organizations, as part of #FreeZakzaky campaign held protests in London and called for immediate release of Zakzaky and his associates. Protests were also held in other countries including USA, India, Iran, Australia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Switzerland, Malaysia, Ghana, Sudan and Nigeria.

Allah states in the Holy Quran: "And they ill-treated them for no other reason than that they believed in Allah, exalted in power, worthy of all praise (85:8). This verse contains the central philosophy of justice and its importance in human society. According to a popular adage, justice delay is justice denied and injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. So justice is the key to peace and stability of all nations.

No doubt the overwhelming solidarity and sympathy for the leader of Islamic Movement in Nigeria, notwithstanding its humanitarian nature, owes a lot to his visionary and insightful leadership. Since the gory Zaria massacre, the demands of Islamic Movement apparently remain unchanged: unconditional release of the Sheikh, his wife and other detainees; handing over the bodies of slaughtered men dumped in mass graves to the Movement for their proper Islamic burial; compensation for the damages made, and of course the urgent need to bring the mass murderers to book.

Rallies and peaceful protests by all justice loving people continue across the world. Zakzaky doesn't only belong to Nigeria now. He belongs to everyone and everywhere. Even though the calls for justice have fallen flat on the ears of Nigerian authorities, no matter how long, hope is never lost in the struggle for justice. Despite the contemptuous nature of the government, the Movement is optimistic on the undecided cases (issues) with the Federal High Court Kaduna, and the International Criminal Court. **→6**

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



MP: Government, parliament authorized to decide on FATF

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has given permission to the government and parliament to decide about Tehran's accession to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), chairman of Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee said on Monday.

After corresponding regularly with the office of the Leader on Iran's accession to FATF, the Leader finally tasked the government and parliament with deciding about it, ISNA quoted Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh as saying.

The government and parliament could either approve or reject four bills concerning FATF UNTOC (the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime) and UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) proposed by the Rouhani administration, he added.



'Iran ready to chase enemies outside borders'

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Yahya Rahim Safavi, a top military adviser to the Leader, on Monday warned that Iranian armed forces will chase enemies kilometers away from the national borders in case of the slightest aggression.

The remarks came a day after the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) confirmed missile strikes against the headquarters of the Kurdistan Democratic Party – Iran (KDP-I) terrorist group in the Iraqi Kurdistan region, vowing harsher response if terrorist attacks continue.

Rahim Safavi also said Iran will come out victorious from the economic war launched by the United States, Fars reported.



Judiciary urges people to report on corrupt individuals

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Judiciary spokesman Gholam-Hossein Mohseni-Eje'i on Monday called on the nation to report on corrupt individuals, citing people's key role in reporting on terrorists in the first decade after the Islamic Revolution.

Mohseni-Eje'i said the Judiciary is dead set on imposing harsh punishment against financial corruption and disruption of national economy, Fars reported.

The Judiciary chief has emphasized that the recent economy-related crimes should be pursued by the courts very quickly, boldly and justly, and the Judiciary must not be affected by the smear campaign against itself, the spokesman added.



Aref apologizes for Rouhani administration's shortcomings

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Mohammad Reza Aref, chairman of the pro-reform Hope faction in the parliament, on Monday apologized to the nation for the Rouhani administration's shortcomings in handling the economy as well as implementing reforms.

"We apologize to the people for the problems because we brought to power an administration which doesn't want or cannot implement the reformists' intentions," Mehr quoted Aref as saying.

The senior lawmaker, however, said the decision to support Rouhani's presidential bid both in 2013 and 2017 was right, emphasizing that the reformists don't regret their decision.



Pharmaceuticals affected by U.S. secondary sanctions

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Health Minister Hassan Qazizadeh-Hashemi said on Monday the Americans are intimidating foreign firms and banks out of doing business with Iran by secondary sanctions, to which pharmaceuticals and medical equipment are not exceptions.

"Since the U.S. government withdrew from this international agreement (JCPOA) and imposed secondary sanctions in addition to the primary sanctions, the government and people have definitely faced difficulties," Qazizadeh-Hashemi said, IRNA reported.

He also said Tehran expects the United Nations and the World Health Organization to prevent health-related harms to the Iranian nation.

"The sanctions only target ordinary people and aim at increasing public discontent and harming women, children and the elderly," he added.



'Rouhani should propose resolution against U.S. unilateralism'

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — An international affairs analyst has called on President Hassan Rouhani to propose a resolution in support of multilateralism as opposed to U.S. unilateralism in his speech at the UN General Assembly this month.

"If Mr. Rouhani's speech, like in previous years, would not lead to any resolution or international conferences, it would be better he didn't go," the Arman newspaper on Monday quoted Mehdi Zakerian as saying.

Zakerian further said Rouhani should not act passively against U.S. President Donald Trump, who is in favor of unilateralism. He also urged Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif to actively pursue Iran's rights with regard to U.S. illegal withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear agreement.

Ill-wishers seeking to depict future as 'uncertain': vice president

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri said on Monday that the ill-wishers of the Iranian people are seeking to depict an uncertain future.

"We should take counteractions if the enemy seeks to endanger the people's trust," he said during a conference at the Iran University of Science and Technology.

The vice president said the country is going through a difficult time, however, there are opportunities even in the difficulties.

He attached great importance to role of the universities in helping find solutions to problems.

Jahangiri said that "scientific advancement guarantee the country's survival".

"University can be focal point of boosting the national integrity," he noted.

Elsewhere, he noted that "sustainable development" originates from inside



Zarif wishes happy New Year for Jews

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on Sunday wished a very happy New Year for the Jews in Iran and the entire world.

"As the sun gives way to the moon, I wish all my Jewish compatriots and Jews worldwide a very Happy New Year filled with peace and harmony. Happy Rosh Hashanah," Zarif tweeted.

Iran, a home for Jews for more than 3,000 years, has the Middle East's largest Jewish population outside of Israel.

Ali Younesi, the presidential aide for ethnic and religious minorities, also sent a message of congratulations to Iranian Jews on advent of Rosh Hashanah.

Younesi said the chief aim of the teachings of Moses and all other divine prophets was promotion of monotheism, ethics, human dignity, peace and justice.

Calling Iranian Jews the oldest followers of divine religions, the presidential aide said the Jews in Iran have merged valuable Jewish teachings with original Iranians principles "such as peace, tolerance, diversity, and respect for others and human rights".

Younesi said Jews have been contributing to Iranian culture and civilization, citing Sapir Hospital (a charity center in Tehran) which has been receiving all Iranian citizens regardless of their religion is an example of this.

In an interview with DW in April 2017, Siamak Morsadegh, the director of Tehran's

Jewish Committee and representative of Jews in parliament, said Jewish life in Iran was "always better than in Europe."

"Generally speaking, the Jews' condition in Iran has always been better than in Europe. In our country's history, there was never a time when all Iranians had the same religion, race or language, so there is a high degree of tolerance. Jews and Muslims respect each other, but at the same time, we know there are differences," Morsadegh stated.

He also said life for a Jew is a "lot better than many people think".

"Jews are a recognized minority here, so we can practice our religion freely. We have more than 20 working synagogues in Tehran and at least five kosher butcheries."

Morsadegh, a physician who works at Sapir Hospital, also refuted claims that Jews are separate from other religious groups in Iran.

"We have economic relationships with Muslims, my closest friends are Muslims. The hospital I work in is a Jewish hospital, for example, but more than 95 percent of both our personnel and patients is Muslim. It's strictly forbidden to ask about religion there because the most important verse of Torah, which is written on top of the hospital, says: "Treat other people like yourself." It does not say "other Jews," it says "other people." It shows that we have a practical relationship with each other and cooperate to make the world a better place.

Sanctions should turn into opportunity, Shamkhani says

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Ali Shamkhani, secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, said on Monday that sanctions should be turned into opportunities by tapping domestic capacities.

"Our enemies, especially the U.S., have put the issue of imposing sanctions against the country's economy and industry on agenda. So, our domestic capacities should be activated," he said during a visit to the Iran Khodro auto company.

Enemies have targeted Iran's economy and production

sector, the security chief noted.

However, he said, Iran will disappoint the U.S. through taking economic and political actions to make the strategy of imposing sanctions "ineffective".

U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew Washington from the 2015 nuclear deal on May 8 and ordered restoration of sanctions against Iran.

The first batch of sanctions was snapped back on August 6. The second batch will be restored on November 4. The November sanctions target Iran's central bank and oil exports.

Reformists plan to form parliament: Construction party

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Yadollah Tahernejad, a member to the Servants of Construction Party, has said that reformists plan to establish a parliament in the second half of the current Iranian calendar year after receiving permission from the Interior Ministry.

The second half of the calendar year begins on September 23.

"All the issues related to declaring position and the reform faction's policy making will be delivered to the reform parliament after it starts its job," he told Mehr news agency in an interview published on Monday.

Tahernejad also said that about two thirds of the charter of the reform parliament have been approved.

"The general mechanism is that the secretary generals of the reform parties and groups and a number of the parties' central council members will be at the reform parliament," he explained.

He also said that the reform parliament will have 500 members.

"The reform parliament will have one central council which will hold meetings monthly. The assembly of the reform parliament will hold meeting two times in a year to approve the general policies of the reformists, and after that the central council will follow to implement approved



policies," he stated.

Elsewhere, he said that leaders of reformists will be replaced with the reform parliament.

He also regretted sudden price rises, especially in the gold and foreign currency markets, blaming inefficiency and indiscretion by officials.

Tahernejad said technocrats in the construction party cannot "remain silent" toward such price volatilities.

He also said it has become difficult for parliament representatives to talk directly to the president. "Even the (pro-reform) Hope faction has not succeeded to have a direct meeting with the president."

In his interview, the construction party member said Rouhani made a lot of efforts for clinching the nuclear agreement but unfortunately it was not welcomed by the public.

Expert: Trump's better nuclear deal is an 'illusion'

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — President Donald Trump is doing his utmost to fulfill his "irresponsible" campaign promise on the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, irrespective of situation and outcomes, the director for Nonproliferation Policy at the Arms Control Association has said, IRNA said on Monday.

Kelsey Davenport said Trump is aiming to fulfill his irresponsible campaign promise to tear-up the nuclear deal with Iran, therefore, nothing would prevent him in blasting the deal, even the reports of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Iran's commitment.

On August 30, the IAEA confirmed that Iran has remained committed to its obligations under the deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

This was the second confirmation by the international watchdog since Trump withdrew from the deal accusing Iran of breaching it.

Referring to Trump's claims that he can pressure Iran into a "better deal", Davenport said, "Trump's better deal is an illusion. He has little support for his pressure-centric approach and even less credibility."

Commenting on the U.S. threat of secondary sanctions on other countries for doing business with Iran, the expert said Trump was putting the international community between a rock and a hard place by forcing states to choose between honoring Resolution 2231 in calling to support and sustain the JCPOA and abiding by the U.S. sanctions reimposed on Iran for no legitimate reason.

the country.

"Domestic capacities are the main and focal points of the resistance economy," he added.

Pointing to the U.S. psychological warfare against Iran, Jahangiri said, "The U.S. thinks it can put pressure against our economy and public opinion by its economic and media power."

U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew Washington from the nuclear deal on May 8 and ordered restoration of sanctions against Iran.

The first batch of sanctions was snapped back on August 6. The second batch will be restored on November 4.

Back in May, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said that Washington will apply economic and military pressure against Iran and will impose "the strongest sanctions in history" on the Islamic Republic.

"Supporters of the deal should call out the United States for undermining the Security Council and Resolution 2231 during the September 26 meeting on Iran, but the Security Council is not going to 'solve' the problem of the U.S. violation or rectify the damage to the JCPOA caused by the reimposition of sanctions," said Davenport, who is also a member at the U.S. Council on Foreign Relations.

"These states must condemn the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA, highlight the negative ramifications of that move, and reiterate commitments to continue sustaining the agreement."

■ **'Trump's JCPOA move has isolated America'**

Trump's reckless and irresponsible approach to the JCPOA has further isolated the United States and reduced its credibility, she remarked.

Referring to the demand of the French foreign minister who had called on Iran to negotiate on its ballistic missile program, she said any further negotiation at the point when the nuclear deal is in jeopardy is "premature", arguing that "France and the remaining parties to the nuclear deal, should be focused on options to sustain and implement the current agreement. If those obstacles can be overcome, continuing discussions with Iran on the future of its nuclear program after certain JCPOA measures expire and areas of contention like ballistic missiles could be beneficial to both sides."

Back in May, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said that Washington will apply economic and military pressure against Iran and will impose "the strongest sanctions in history" on the Islamic Republic.

■ **'SNSC has formed anti-corruption committee'**

Shamkhani also said that a committee has been formed in the Supreme National Security Council to counter corruption.

"Recently, we activated the committee of fighting corruption to help the Judiciary fight seriously against corruption," he stated.

Tehran, Moscow confer on nuclear deal

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — In a meeting in Tehran on Monday, high-ranking Iranian and Russian officials discussed issues related to the 2015 nuclear deal and ways to keep the internationally-backed agreement alive.

The meeting was held between Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi and his Russian counterpart Sergei Ryabkov.

During the meeting, the two sides agreed to continue bilateral consultations in the future.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova had announced in August that Moscow would continue to honor its commitments under the landmark 2015 nuclear deal reached between Iran and major world powers as long as other countries abide by their obligations.

"My country would deem any changes to the deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), as destructive that could destabilize the already-volatile Middle East region," Zakharova said.

She underlined that Washington's efforts to undermine the JCPOA and restoring full-scale pressure through sanctions is absolutely unconstructive.

U.S. President Donald Trump an-



nounced on May 8 that Washington would no longer remain part of the JCPOA and promised to reimpose the highest level of economic sanctions against Iran.

After Trump's declaration, the Iranian government issued a statement calling the U.S. withdrawal as "unlawful". The statement underlined Iran's prerequisites for continuing the deal with the remaining five parties. These conditions that were reiterated later by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei later mainly included Iran's guaranteed crude sales and transfer of its revenues back home.

President Hassan Rouhani has voiced his disappointment over a recent package of incentives proposed by the European Union countries to Tehran, and said that the Islamic Republic expected a much better, clearer and explicit stance by the EU.

IAEA reaffirms Iran's compliance to nuclear deal

1 → Amano added, "The Agency continues to verify the non-diversion of nuclear material declared by Iran under its Safeguards Agreement. Evaluations regarding the absence of

undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran continue."

The deal, agreed to by Iran on one side and the 5+1 (the U.S., UK, France, Russia, China, and Germany) on

the other, was put into practice in early 2016 to curb Iran's nuclear program in return for termination economic sanctions on Tehran.

Britain's MI6 planning chemical attack in Syria: U.S. senator

A United States senator has indicated that British intelligence services are planning to stage a chemical attack on civilians in Syria to implicate the government and its allies as they seek to liberate the last remaining regions from the grip of militants.

Virginia state Senator Richard Black said last week that Britain's MI6 had been working on a chemical attack in Syria for the past few weeks, adding that the main aim of the plan was to blame the Syrian government and military for targeting defenseless civilians.

"Around four weeks ago, we knew that British intelligence was working towards a chemical attack in order to blame the Syrian government, to hold Syria responsible," said Black in an interview with Al Mayadeen, a news channel based in Beirut.

The Democratic senator, who was in Syria recently to meet with senior government officials, reiterated his claims about fake chemical attacks in Syria in an interview with The Washington Post, saying Britain had no intention of carrying out such attacks itself, but it was to direct militants, including members of the so-called White Helmets, a group with alleged humanitarian mission, to launch the attack.

"The plan is to use the White Helmets who have always been involved in these notorious deceptions, to portray an attack," he said, adding, "From what I can tell, they have been planning a fake attack, not a genuine one, but one where they actually move people out of a town and they have trained people to portray victims of a gas attack."

Black's remarks echoed similar concerns raised by the Syrian government and its allies about the possibility of a chemical attack in the northwestern province of Idlib, where the military is planning a large-scale offensive against militants.

Home to some 1.5 million militants and their families, Idlib is the last remaining bastion of anti-government forces in Syria. Russia, a main ally of the Syrian government in its fight against the foreign instigated terror, has repeatedly warned that militants and their supporters in the West could use a fake chemical attack as a pretext to slow



the government offensive into Idlib.

Rebel-held areas bombed as Turkey reinforces outposts

Meantime, Syrian government forces have pounded rebel-held areas in northwest Syria, killing at least five people in a second day of heavy bombardment, according to rescuers, as Turkey sent more troops to the region.

The intensified strikes on Sunday, targeted villages in southern Idlib and northern Hama provinces.

The escalation comes amid growing fears over a seemingly imminent all-out offensive against the densely populated Idlib province, the last rebel bastion in Syria.

Activists told Al Jazeera that while hundreds of people have been fleeing the attacks in northern Hama and southern Idlib provinces, there has not been a significant wave of civilians moving towards the north.

In some cases, the activists said, people would leave their villages early in the morning and return after sunset once the bombardment stopped.

According to Britain-based so0called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), over the past 72 hours, Syrian army forces

and its ally, Russia, have hit rebel-held areas 1,060 times with air attacks.

In response, al-Jabha al-Wataniya lil-Tahrir (NLF), a major armed opposition group, on Sunday shelled government forces' positions in northern Hama, SOHR reported.

Elsewhere, another convoy of Turkish military vehicles crossed into Idlib province on Sunday.

Over the past 10 days, a number of similar convoys carrying weapons and armored cars have entered northern Syria to reinforce 12 observation points manned by Turkish soldiers.

These outposts, which are located in rebel-held areas in western Aleppo, northern Hama and Idlib provinces, were established under the de-escalation agreements reached by Turkey, Iran and Russia.

Already hosting more than three million Syrian refugees, Turkey is eager to avoid a full-fledged government offensive. Its call for a ceasefire, however, was rejected on Friday by Russia at a summit in Iran's capital, Tehran.

Speaking to reporters earlier on Sunday,

Suleyman Soyli, Turkey's interior minister, warned of the possibility of mass displacement in the event of a large-scale military offensive on Idlib.

"We care about humanity and we won't give up. We will not be responsible for a migration wave in case of possible attacks [on Idlib]," Soyli said.

The northwest province bordering Turkey is home to an estimated three million people, half of whom are internally displaced.

Soyli added that 255,300 Syrians have returned to their homes over the past two years, including 160,000 who went to the "Euphrates Shield region" in northern Aleppo province, which rebel groups and the Turkish army took over from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist outfit in 2016.

YouTube shuts down pro-Syrian government channels

Separately, YouTube has suspended the accounts of at least three media outlets run by the Syrian government, weeks after a report claimed the channels were violating the United States sanctions and generating revenue from ads.

The video streaming giant appeared to suspend the accounts of Syria's public international news organization, SANA, the Ministry of Defense and the Syrian Presidency.

All three accounts appeared on Monday with a message, which read: "This account has been terminated due to a legal complaint," or "This account has been terminated for a violation of YouTube's Terms of Service."

The Damascus-based Sana TV's channel also appeared to be taken down, with a message reading: "This page isn't available. Sorry about that. Try searching for something else."

The move comes just weeks after on-line news website TomoNews revealed the government-run accounts were generating advertising revenue in violation of the U.S. sanctions.

The U.S. sanctions prohibit American companies from providing services to Syria without obtaining a license from the Treasury Department, according to the report.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

Russia: U.S. dropped phosphorus bombs over Syria, which Pentagon denies

Russia's military said on Sunday that two United States F-15 fighter jets dropped phosphorus bombs over Syria's Deir al-Zor province on Saturday, the TASS and RIA news agencies reported, an allegation the United States denied.

The air strikes targeted the village of Hajin, the last major stronghold of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) in Syria, and resulted in fires, but there was no information about casualties, the Russian military said.

A Pentagon spokesman denied that U.S. planes dropped phosphorus bombs. "At this time, we have not received any reports of any use of white phosphorus," said Commander Sean Robertson. "None of the military units in the area are even equipped with white phosphorous munitions of any kind."

Human rights groups have said the U.S.-led coalition against ISIL has used white phosphorous munitions over the course of the Syria conflict. The bombs can create thick white smoke screens and are used as incendiary devices. The rights groups criticize use of the munitions in populated zones because they can kill and maim by burning people to the bone.

The coalition or partner forces likely conducted aerial strikes in July on eastern Syria where remnants of ISIL are holed up, the coalition has said.

The U.S.-Russian tensions have heightened in recent days as the Trump administration considers military options should Syria ignore the U.S. warnings against using chemical weapons in an expected assault on Idlib, the last big enclave of rebels opposing Syria's government.

Russian and Syrian jets resumed strikes in Idlib and Hama on Sunday as Damascus stepped up its assault after a Russian-Iranian-Turkish summit failed to agree on a ceasefire.

(Source: Reuters)

Protests erupt in Germany's Köthen after 2 Afghans detained over man's death

Two Afghan men have been arrested on suspicion of murdering a German man in a fight in the eastern town of Köthen, German police announced. The circumstances of the man's death remain unclear.

Hundreds of protesters took to the streets of Köthen in eastern Germany on Sunday, moving in silence towards the playground, where a 22-year-old German man died following a clash with two Afghans.

Even though the mayor of the town, Bernd Hauschild urged locals to steer clear of the demonstration, police said that hundreds held a "memorial march," and the participants, who later dispersed peacefully, were holding German flags and chanting slogans such as "We are the people."

Earlier on Sunday, two Afghan nationals were "provisionally detained on homicide" following the death of the young German man on September 8, Deutsche Welle reported. Police further said that the probe was still underway, and that they were investigating the incident "from all angles."

The two suspects are reportedly 18 and 20 years old, and are being investigated on suspicion of aggravated assault and causing bodily harm resulting in death, DW cited prosecutors as saying.

According to Die Welt, the victim might have had a dispute with the two suspects, which resulted in his death. The cause of death, however, remains unclear, with Die Welt saying that it may have been a brain hemorrhage, while police said he died of heart failure that was "not directly caused by the injuries suffered."

Another German newspaper, Mitteldeutsche Zeitung, reported that the now-deceased had previously experienced cardiac problems.

The circumstances behind his death also remain unclear, with the German newspaper Bild reporting that the suspects engaged in a dispute with another Afghan national a German woman at the playground. After two other Germans approached them, the fatal fight erupted.

The Köthen incident came two weeks after the fatal stabbing of a German man in the eastern city of Chemnitz. Shortly after that, an Iraqi and a Syrian national were arrested on suspicion of murdering Daniel Hillig. The case has triggered multiple rallies in Chemnitz, during which a number of right-wing activists called for the deportation of all illegal migrants.

According to the police data, at least 4,500 people gathered at the Chemnitz rallies to protest against the German government's open-door migration policy. The rallies have reportedly left 18 people injured, while hundreds have been detained.

(Source: Sputnik)

New UN rights chief urges Saudi regime accountability on civilian deaths in Yemen

The UN human rights boss Michelle Bachelet has called on Saudi Arabia to hold to account the perpetrators of deadly airstrikes on civilians in Yemen.

In her maiden speech to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva on Monday, the former Chilean president touched on the Saudi regime airstrike on a bus of children in Sa'ada last month, which left more than 50 people dead.

Bachelet urged the Saudi regime military to show greater transparency in their rules of engagement in Yemen which is under an all-out invasion by the regime since 2015.

On Saturday, UN-brokered talks in Geneva collapsed after representatives of the Ansarullah (Houthi) movement were prevented by Saudi Arabia from attending the negotiations.

UN envoy to Yemen Martin Griffiths 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 said.

Reports on Monday said some 84 people have been killed in Saudi airstrikes and clashes around Yemen's strategic port city of Hudaydah since the failure of the peace talks.

(Source: Press TV)

Turkish court sentences 115 suspects to jail over affiliation to Gulen movement

A court in Turkey has handed down jail terms to more than 100 people, including former air force officers, on suspicion of affiliation to a movement led by the United States-based opposition cleric Fethullah Gulen (Muhammed Fethullah Gulen), whom the Ankara government accuses of having masterminded the July 2016 coup attempt against President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

A judicial source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said on Monday that Ankara Heavy Penal Court sentenced 35 suspects to eight years and 9 months in jail, while the remaining 80 suspects received jail terms up to seven years and 6 months.

Meanwhile, the Chief Public Prosecutor's Office in Istanbul has issued arrest warrants for 102 active serving and former soldiers over their alleged links to Gulen movement.

Security forces have so far managed to arrest 56 of the suspects during separate operations across Istanbul. A total of 89 suspects are accused of communicating with Gulenists.

During the 2016 botched putsch, a faction of the Turkish military declared that it had seized control of the country and the government of Erdogan was no more in charge. The attempt was, however, suppressed a few hours later.

Ankara has since accused Gulen of having orchestrated



the coup. The opposition figure is also accused of being behind a long-running campaign to topple the government via infiltrating the country's institutions, particularly the army, police and the judiciary.

Gulen has denounced the "despicable putsch" and reiterated that he had no role in it.

Libya's National Oil Corporation's Tripoli offices under attack

Armed men have stormed the headquarters of Libya's National Oil Corporation (NOC) in Tripoli, killing at least two of the firm's staff and wounding 10 others.

Two of the gunmen were also killed in the attack on Monday as security forces fought to regain control of the landmark glass-fronted building in the center of the Libyan capital.

"The death toll so far is two killed from NOC staff and two attackers," Ahmed Ben Salim, a spokesman for the Special Deterrence Force, told Reuters news agency.

Forces linked to Libya's United Nations-backed government published pictures of a leg which it said belonged to one of the gunmen who had blown himself up.

No group has so far claimed the attack.

At least one explosion rocked the building soon after the attackers went in, starting a fire that swiftly spread through the lower floors, according to officials.

Photos posted on social media show fire-



fighters trying to evacuate people from the building's top floors, and wounded people being carried away from the scene.

The head of the company, Mustafa San-

allah, told a Libyan television channel that explosions and an exchange of gunfire between the attackers and the building's security guards have caused an unspecified number

of deaths and injuries. "The building was heavily damaged due to the fire. Smoke is everywhere," Sanallah said. "The gunmen attacked the lower floors with random shooting and explosions. It's a very violent attack."

An NOC staff who said he jumped out of a window to flee told Reuters that "several people were shot" during the attack.

The attack on Monday came less than a week after a fragile truce suspended fierce clashes between rival armed groups in Tripoli, the latest eruption of violence in Libya, which has been in turmoil since a 2011 uprising.

In May, fighters affiliated with the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist outfit claimed a deadly attack on the national election commission offices in Tripoli.

The group had also claimed an attack in 2015 on the Corinthia hotel, a landmark location in Tripoli.

(Source: agencies)

Bahrain arrests 5 children in besieged village of Diraz

Bahraini forces have arrested five children during raids across the besieged village of Diraz, which is home to the spiritual leader of the country's Shia majority, Sheikh Isa Qassim.

Troops raided the village outside the capital Manama in the early hours of Monday, arresting Hussein Muhammad Saleh, Sayed Ali al-Sayed Taha Fadl, Sayed Mortada Sayed Sadiq, Montazer Ali Mirza al-Rayes and Sayed Ahmed Sayed Musa, the Arabic-language Bahrain Mirror news website reported.

The arrests come despite the Bahraini authorities' promises

to release children detained as part of the regime crackdown on the opposition. Local sources have said most of the recently arrested children are under 15. They added that the House of Khalifah regime unjustifiably detained the children to exert pressure on their parents.

Diraz is the hometown of leading Shia cleric, Sheikh Isa Qassim, who was stripped of his nationality in 2016 over allegations of serving "foreign interests" and promoting "sectarianism and violence."

The move sparked angry protests and sit-ins in Diraz.

Bahraini regime forces launched a fierce crackdown on those gatherings, placed the Shia leader under house arrest and imposed a military siege on the village.

Thousands of anti-regime protesters have held demonstrations in Bahrain on an almost daily basis ever since a popular uprising began in the tiny Persian Gulf state in mid-February 2011. Scores of people have lost their lives and hundreds of others sustained injuries as a result of the House of Khalifah regime's crackdown on dissent.

(Source: Press TV)

STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	146998.7
IFX	1686.37

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	48,506 rials
GBP	54,256 rials
AED	11,436 rials

Source: mehrnews.com

COMMODITIES

WTI	\$68.07/b
Brent	\$77.34/b
OPEC Basket	\$71.35/b
Gold	\$1194.65/oz
Silver	\$14.22/oz
Platinum	\$796.55/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

NEWS IN BRIEF



Liquidity at above \$381b in a month

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran's liquidity stood at 16.02 quadrillion rials (about \$381.4 billion) during the fourth month of the present Iranian calendar year, Tir (June 22, July 22, 2018), according to a report released by the Central Bank of Iran (CBI).

The CBI announced that the liquidity figure shows 20.1 percent growth in comparison with the same period in the preceding year, IRIB reported.



Banking arrears of govt. up 22.4% in a month on year

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Debts of the Iranian government and state-run companies to the banking system hit 2.83 quadrillion rials (about \$67.3 billion) in the fourth month of the present Iranian calendar year, Tir (June 22, July 22, 2018), according to the latest report of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI).

The figure shows 22.4 percent increase compared to the same month in the preceding Iranian year.

From the said amount, 320 trillion rials (about \$7.6 billion) goes to the debt of state-run companies to the banking sector.

Asia markets mixed as U.S.-China trade jitters linger

Asian markets were mixed on Monday as trade tensions between the U.S. and China remained in focus.

Both the Nikkei 225 and South Korea's Kospi extended their earlier gains to close higher. The Nikkei 225 ended the day up by 0.3 percent at 22,373.09 while the Kospi saw gains of 0.31 percent at 2,288.66, with industry heavyweight Samsung Electronics rising 1.34 percent.

Down Under, the ASX 200 recovered from its earlier losses to end the trading day largely flat, even though the heavily weighted financials sector closed 0.14 percent lower.

The Greater China markets, however, suffered losses, with Hong Kong's Hang Seng index down 1.62 percent as of 3:29 p.m. HK/SIN. Over on the mainland, the Shanghai composite closed lower by 1.21 percent at 2,669.49 while the Shenzhen composite fell by 1.845 percent to end at 1,406.92.

Wall Street ended the trading week in negative territory on Friday. The Nasdaq Composite slid by 0.3 percent to close at 7,902.54, declining for the fourth straight day and posting its worst start to September since 2008. The S&P 500 fell 0.2 percent to close at 2,871.68. The Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped by 79.33 points to 25,916.54.

The moves stateside came after U.S. President Donald Trump said on Friday that the country was primed to impose tariffs on an additional \$267 billion worth in Chinese goods. Trump's comments came following the end of a deadline for public comment on U.S. tariffs for another \$200 billion in Chinese goods.

While the U.S. tariffs on \$200 billion Chinese goods have not been implemented, Trump said they could "take place very soon, depending on what happens with them."

In a morning note, Mizuho Bank said Trump has "left no doubt" that the tariffs on \$200 billion of Chinese imports into the U.S. are "imminent."

"What's striking is that escalating US trade aggression suggests that the appeals of US businesses, warning that tariffs will place burden of rising costs disproportionately on US businesses and consumers, have been in vain on Trump's administration," the note said.

Echoing that sentiment, Louis Kuijs, head of Asia economics at Oxford Economics, warned in a note: "We expect the trade conflict to escalate further before subsequent de-escalation, when the negative impact in the US becomes more visible."

The U.S. dollar index, which tracks the greenback against a basket of currencies, was at 95.531 as of 3:08 p.m. HK/SIN, climbing from its earlier low.

The Japanese yen lost its earlier gains but was still up slightly against the greenback at 111.01, while the Australian dollar was largely flat at \$0.7104, as of 3:18 p.m.

In oil markets, prices continued to increase in the afternoon of Asian trade. The global benchmark Brent crude futures rose 0.92 percent at \$77.54 a barrel. U.S. crude futures also gained by 0.68 percent at \$68.21 a barrel.

(Source: CNBC)

Winners of 2nd 'League of Stock Market Stars' announced

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — The top teams in the second 'League of Stock Market Stars' of Iran were announced in a ceremony on Sunday, IRIB reported.

As reported, 34 teams from 34 universities of the country participated in a two-month competition organized by Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO).

It is while the number of participating teams was just 10 in the previous edition of the competition held in August 2017.

University of Tehran, Kharazmi University, and Islamic Azad University East Tehran Branch were selected as the first, second and third winners of the competition, respectively.

Addressing the Sunday ceremony, SEO Head Shapour Mohammadi said: "In this event, we tried to focus on investing on the principles of science and observance of ethical standards in order to gain a better market experience in

the field of capital, while many participants in this contest had a very good learning and some kind of culture for transactions in the capital market."

The aim of the event was to familiarize the society with the capital market and to test the practical knowledge of business and finance students, in a bid to elevate the financial knowledge in the society.

Holding the first edition of this league was among the first-ever successful experiences of Iran's stock market in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20, 2018).

Of the other first-ever achievements it could be referred to the data vending deal which was signed between Iran Financial Center (IFC) and Greece's Inforex S.A., and also the first offering of wheat at guaranteed price in Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) instead of the guaranteed purchase of the grain by the government.

Iran, Mongolia discuss expansion of trade ties

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Mojtaba Khosrotaj, the head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), met with Mongolian Deputy Foreign Minister Battsetseg Batmunkh in Tehran on Sunday to discuss ways of expanding trade ties, the portal of TPO reported.

During the meeting Khosrotaj Emphasized the high costs of transportation of goods be-

tween the two countries as the main limiting factor for the two countries trade and called for finding efficient ways for removing this hurdle.

Referring to Iran's export capabilities and expressing the country's readiness to supply Mongolia's most important commodities, the official noted that removing visas, reducing customs duties and the establishment of banking relations by Mongolia would encourage



Iranian economic activists to enter the Mongolian market.

Khosrotaj further mentioned the upcoming Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) summit 2018 which is due to be held in Tehran in the next month as a good opportunity for the two countries to hold bilateral summits and talks in order to expand economic ties.

Batmunkh for his part emphasized find-

ing ways to develop bilateral trade relations, noting that his country is aiming to diversify its markets and building relationships with new business partners.

The official further called for the training of Mongolian engineers and technicians in Iran and investment in Mongolia's mining industry as well as the purchase of oil products, including bitumen from Iran.

'No need for wheat import by next year'

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN**— Iran has been self-reliance in wheat production over the past three years and there is also no need for importing the grain by the next year, Kaveh Zargaran, the chairman of the Agricultural Committee at the Tehran Chamber of Commerce Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA), announced.

He made the remarks in the 'Annual International Conference Black Sea Grain and Oilseeds 2018/19' which was held in Moscow. TCCIMA website published on Monday.

Islamic Republic of Iran's approach in terms of wheat is to be self-reliance, Zargaran further stressed.

Of the 8.5 million hectares of land under cultivation in Iran, some 60 percent is under wheat farming which



Agricultural Committee Chairman of TCCIMA Kaveh Zargaran (2nd L) speaking in Black Sea Grain and Oilseeds Conference in Moscow

shows the significance of this grain in the country, he added.

Referring to an agreement on Iranian private sector's purchase of wheat from Russia and transit of flour from Iran to Iraq, he said that the related document has not been still signed by the agriculture ministers of Iran and Russia and when it is signed the task will be done in case of usance letter of credit to be opened by Russia.

Replying to a question about Iran's strategy of importing corn, Zargaran said: "Our country's seeking water resources management and in this due it will import some part of its required corn from other countries. Iran needs 6-7 million tons of corn per year and Russia can be one of the providers of the grain to Iran."

First Announcement

IN THE NAME OF GOD

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING

INTERNATIONAL TENDER NO. 97-06/169

Tender Holder:
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

Subject of Two-Stage Tender:
HD MCR Equipment for Project of SD to HD TV Channels 1,2,3 (Tehran IRIB Center) according to the tender documents

Deadline of Receiving Documents:
As of publishing second announcement of advertisement latest by the business hour dated on **Monday September 17, 2018.**

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

Type and Amount of Guarantee for Participating in Tender:
The amount of **USD 55,429** which should be in the form of extendable bank guarantee

Time and Place of Delivering Priced Bid:
The sealed A, B & C packages/envelopes should be submitted within one main envelope marked with tender number no later than **15 p.m.** on **Saturday October 20, 2018** and submitted to the Secretariat of Commission of Tenders.

Time and Place of Opening Envelopes
The date of opening envelopes A&B is at **8:30 a.m.** on **Monday October 22, 2018** in the office of Vice President of IRIB Planning and Financial Resources and opening of envelope C will be after technical evaluation.
It should be noted that bidders should hold license from the authorized bodies.

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

Public Relations Dept. of IRIB

Oil up as U.S. drilling stalls, Iranian sanctions bite

Oil prices rose on Monday as U.S. drilling stalled and as investors anticipated lower supply once new U.S. sanctions against Iran's crude exports kick in from November.

Benchmark Brent crude oil rose \$1.09 a barrel, or 1.4 percent, to a high of \$77.92 and was trading at \$77.85 by 0900 GMT. U.S. light crude was 70 cents higher at \$68.45.

"A higher oil price scenario is built on lower exports from Iran due to U.S. sanctions, capped U.S. shale output growth, instability in production in countries like Libya and Venezuela and no material negative impact from a U.S./China trade war on oil demand in the next 6-9 months," said Harry Tchilinguirian, oil strategist at French bank BNP Paribas.

"We see Brent trading above \$80 under (that) scenario," he told Reuters Global Oil Forum. U.S. drillers cut two oil rigs last week, bringing the total count to 860, Baker Hughes said on Friday.

The number of rigs drilling for oil in the United States has stalled since May, reflecting increases in well productivity but also bottlenecks and infrastructure constraints.

Outside the United States, Iranian crude



oil exports are declining ahead of a November deadline for the implementation of new U.S. sanctions.

Although many importers of Iranian oil

have said they oppose sanctions, few seem prepared to defy Washington.

"Governments can talk tough," said Energy consultancy FGE.

"They can say they are going to stand up to Trump and/or push for waivers. But generally the companies we speak to ... say they won't risk it," FGE said. "U.S. financial penalties and the loss of shipping insurance scare everyone."

While Washington exerts pressure on countries to cut imports from Iran, it is also urging other producers to raise output in order to hold down prices.

U.S. Energy Secretary Rick Perry will meet counterparts from Saudi Arabia and Russia on Monday and Thursday respectively as the Trump administration encourages the world's biggest exporter and producer to keep output up.

Investors are concerned about the impact on oil demand of the trade dispute between the United States and other large economies, as well as the weakness of emerging markets.

"Trade wars, and especially rising interest rates, can spell trouble for the emerging markets that drive (oil) demand growth," FGE said.

Despite this, the consultancy said the likelihood of much weaker oil prices was fairly low as the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries would probably adjust output to stabilize prices. (Source: Reuters)

Iraq pumping crude oil at record levels, unaffected by protests

Iraq is pumping crude at record levels and the violent street protests that engulfed the oil-rich south have not affected energy facilities in OPEC's No. 2 producer.

The country's crude exports reached a record of 3.59 million barrels a day, Oil Minister Jabbar al-Luaibi said after a meeting with representatives of foreign oil companies working in Iraq. Iraq is producing crude at a level of about 4.36 million barrels a day, as agreed with limits set by OPEC, and has a capacity to pump about 4.75 million barrels, without the semi-autonomous Kurdish region in the north, he said.

"Security forces in Basra took measures to protect oil fields and foreign employees," al-Luaibi told reporters in Baghdad. "Our message was clear and strong to oil majors that Iraq is safe and what is happening in Basra was a passing cloud that passed peacefully."

Iraq boosted protection in the south after protesters demanding jobs and basic services torched government buildings and the Iranian consulate in the southern city of Basra. A number of them briefly forced their way into a water intake facility that supplies an oil field operated by Lukoil PJSC on Saturday. Iraq has been working to raise crude production quickly, amid investment constraints and hold-ups that have seen Royal Dutch Shell Plc exit one of the country's biggest oil projects.

The security situation in the south is improving and energy installations were not affected by the protests, al-Luaibi said. Eni SpA Chief Executive Officer Claudio



Descalzi and al-Luaibi discussed an additional increase in the production of the Zubair oil field in southern Iraq, the Italian company said in a statement on Sunday.

Refinery restart

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and its allies agreed in June to increase oil production, with Saudi Arabia and Russia saying about 1 million barrels a day will be added to the market. But they didn't detail how the production increase would be split between OPEC and non-OPEC nations. A committee of OPEC and its allies is scheduled to meet in Algeria later this month to discuss allocations.

Iraq restarted the Salahuddin-2 unit of the Baiji oil refinery, north of Baghdad, on Sunday, al-Luaibi said. The unit is currently processing 70,000 barrels a day, he said. Baiji was damaged in fighting with Islamic State militants. The government, which declared all regions free from the militant group last year after fighting that erupted in 2014, has ambitious goals to end its reliance on refined-fuel imports. Baiji's last unit, North, needs about a year to be repaired, he said.

(Source: Bloomberg)

Australia could be 100% renewable by 2030s, meet Paris targets by 2025

Australia could reach the equivalent of 100 per cent renewables for its electricity needs by the early 2030s by doing nothing more than maintaining the current pace of wind and solar development, a new research report has found.

The report – published by a heavy-hitting team of Australian National University researchers, including solar PV and pumped hydro expert Andrew Blakers – says keeping up the current rate of renewable energy deployment would also meet Australia's entire emissions reduction task "for the whole economy" by 2025.

To reach these conclusions, the team analyzed data for the federal government's own Clean Energy Regulator, showing that during 2018 and 2019 the nation would install about 10,400MW of new renewable energy.

ANU Energy Change Institute director Professor Ken Baldwin said that at that rate, Australia would eclipse the Renewable Energy Target, reaching 29 per cent in 2020, and by 2025 would reach 50 per cent – a number the federal Coalition likes to say is "recklessly high", even for 2030.

Perhaps even more importantly, staying on the current trajectory would see electricity sector emissions reduced by 26 per cent in 2021, and the Paris economy-wide emissions reductions target of 26 per cent met five years early, in 2025.

It's an impressive set of numbers, particularly considering that just three years ago, much the same ANU team forecast that Australia could reach 100 per cent renewables by 2040 by adding just under 4GW (4,000MW) of wind and solar capacity a year.



The upwards revision could be partly due to what the report calls "an important recent development": the rapid growth in deployment of solar PV on the roofs of commercial and industrial enterprises (see Figure 6, below).

The ANU forecast compares to recent modelling from the Australian Energy Market Operator, which shows renewables making up 46 per cent of NEM generation by 2030 in their "neutral scenario", and 61 per cent of generation by 2030 in their "fast change" scenario.

But while the ANU experts have every faith in the renewable energy industry – and the technology – to get the job done, they have their doubts about the politics, which at a federal level is now more uncertain than ever for investors in solar and wind.

"Australian industry is proving it's not difficult or expensive to make deep and rapid cuts to greenhouse gas emissions," said Baldwin in comments on the report on Monday.

"All the evidence points to Australia's capacity to be a renewable energy superpower, with all the economic and environmental benefits that come with that.

(Source: Renew Economy)

Risk management firm DNV GL sees oil demand peaking in 2023

Global oil demand will peak in 2023 as electric vehicles (EVs) become competitive with cars fueled by petrol and diesel, and after 2040 no new oil developments will likely be needed, quality assurance and risk management firm DNV GL said on Monday.

The forecast from the Norway-headquartered firm, which offers certification and consultancy services to around 100,000 customers globally, adds to investors' worries about some oil assets becoming stranded if demand enters into permanent decline.

"Amid declining consumption in the future, we see little scope for adding capacity in high-cost areas, such as in the Arctic," DNV GL said in its long-term forecast, highlighting such a risk.

By around mid-2030s, EVs will account for half of all new light-duty vehicles sold in the world, and 10 years later half of all road transport, light and heavy, will be electric, it added. The transport sector is the main user of oil.

"After 2040 we will likely enter a period where new oil fields are not required to replace depleted fields," DNV GL said, adding that by 2050 oil demand is expected to be about a half of its peak.

Demand for natural gas is expected to grow until the mid-2030s, when capital spending on non-fossil energy will overtake spending on fossil energy, DNV



GL said in its report.

"The attention of boardrooms and cabinets should be fixed on the dramatic energy transition that is unfolding," said Remi Eriksen, the group's president and chief executive.

Investors are increasingly worried that some oil and gas assets could be left in the ground as a result of stricter regulations to curb carbon emissions and the fall in costs of renewable energy and car batteries.

Oil majors have different views on possible oil demand peak, but all say that even if demand peaks, trillions of dollars of investments in oil and gas will still be needed to develop new barrels due to the

natural decline of existing fields.

Exxon Mobil, the world's largest listed oil company, said on Feb. 2 that oil demand could fall by 25 percent to around 78 million barrels per day (mbd) from the current levels if governments choose to implement measures to limit global warming.

The company, however, did not disclose how efforts to limit carbon emissions would impact its business. In a separate report it said that excluding those climate measures, oil demand is expected to grow by 20 percent by 2040, driven by commercial transport and the chemical industry.

In April, Anglo-Dutch Shell said it saw little risk of having "stranded assets" in its portfolio, because four-fifths of its current oil and gas reserves would be extracted before 2030.

Shell, which has been producing oil since 1907, sees the oil demand peaking as early as the end of the next decade, while its London-based peer BP sees it coming a decade later.

The Paris-based International Energy Agency (IEA), which advises industrialized nations on energy policy, sees oil demand rising to 105 mbd by 2040 under its central New Policies scenario, based on existing legislation and announced plans.

(Source: Reuters)

Qatargas announces LNG agreement with PetroChina

Qatargas has announced a long-term Sale and Purchase Agreement (SPA) with PetroChina International Company Limited, a unit of PetroChina Company Limited (PetroChina), to supply China with around 3.4 million tons of liquefied natural gas (LNG) per annum.

Under the 22-year SPA, which ends in 2040, Qatargas will supply LNG from the Qatargas 2 project, a joint venture between Qatar Petroleum, ExxonMobil and Total, to different receiving terminals across China, with the first cargo to be delivered to China later this month.

Commenting on this landmark agreement, President and CEO of Qatar Petroleum and Chairman of the Qatargas

Board of Directors Eng. Saad bin Sherida Al Kaabi said that the agreement underscores Qatargas' trusted capability in ensuring energy security to countries around the world, particularly in Asia.

Al Kaabi added that the agreement also highlights Qatar's unique position as the world's largest LNG producer, supplying safely and reliably across the globe, expressing pleasure to be of support to China in its quest to secure LNG supplies to meet the country's growing energy requirements.

"As we announce this long-term SPA, we look forward to continuing to supply reliable and clean energy to China and to countries all over the world that seek

to use the cleanest fossil fuel available to meet their energy needs," Al Kaabi said.

For his part, HE Qatargas Chief Executive Officer Sheikh Khalid Bin Khalifa Al-Thani said that the agreement is an important milestone for Qatargas, expressing pleasure that LNG from Qatargas continues to contribute towards meeting the huge demand for energy in the world's second largest economy.

He noted that with China expected to become one of the world's largest gas markets, this SPA will further strengthen the existing relationship between Qatargas and PetroChina over the long-term.

The SPA allows flexibility in delivering LNG to various receiving terminals across

China, including the Dalian, Jiangsu, Tangshan and Shenzhen LNG receiving terminals, utilizing Qatargas fleet of 70 conventional, Q-Flex and Q-Max LNG vessels.

Qatargas is the world's largest LNG producing company with an annual production capacity of 77 million tons.

PetroChina is China's largest gas supplier, supplying 66 percent of China's domestic demand in 2017. It is anticipated that China will become one of the world's largest gas markets.

Chinese gas consumption grew by 15 percent in 2017 alone, with LNG imports growing by more than 40 percent. (QNA) (Source: thepeninsulaqatar.com)

The downside for oil is limited

More than two weeks of nearly uninterrupted price gains for crude oil ended this week, with the rally running out of steam. The question is what happens next?

Oil prices posted steep losses just as the bulls were back on the march. WTI briefly topped \$70 per barrel in recent days and Brent was flirting with \$80. But the rally was kneecapped by a variety of factors, and it could be challenging to break above those key pricing thresholds in the near future.

"[A]lthough the timing of the price slide comes as a surprise – Brent dipped well below \$76 for a time [on Thursday] – the slide itself does not, as expectations recently have doubtless been too optimistic," Commerzbank wrote in a note. In fact, to some, the timing was not all that surprising – WTI faced technical resistance at around \$70-\$71, and having failed to break above that threshold, was forced back down.

But beyond the technical analysis, oil prices also face some questions on the fundamentals. The emerging market turmoil (some say crisis, or contagion) has not gone away. Currency problems continue to dog a long list of emerging market economies, pushing a few into, or to the brink of, recession.

In fact, the MSCI Emerging Market Index of equities officially fell into bear market territory on Thursday, and there is little sign of light at the end of the tunnel. "My fear of contagion is that right now the sentiment towards the whole emerging-market spectrum is very fragile," Mario Castro, a Latin America currency strategist at Nomura, said in a Wall Street Journal interview.

Because much of global oil demand and growth is concentrated in rapidly-developing economies, currency weakness could have an outsized impact on crude oil demand.

"The worries about demand and a possible spillover from emerging markets are weighing on prices," Hans van Cleef, senior energy economist at ABN Amro Bank NV, told Bloomberg. "We have tested breaking higher, but that failed, so now we have a temporary setback. I still expect the market to turn higher at some point, probably driven by Iran."

Meanwhile, the Trump administration is rumored to be on the verge of dramatically ramping up the trade war with China, potentially moving forward on some \$200 billion in tariffs. That would surely spark a response from China, and the back-and-forth retaliatory trade attacks could sap global growth. Also, China, specifically, is a major consumer of oil and one of the largest sources of demand growth, so a slowdown there could also go a long way to undercutting oil demand forecasts.

Also, this past week, the EIA reported weekly data that showed an uptick in gasoline inventories, a bearish sign that signals both an end to summer driving season and possibly hints at a slowdown in demand more generally. It's one data point, however, so it doesn't indicate a solid trend.

In fact, even as the markets sold off crude oil on the news, fearing a deterioration in the fundamentals, the reaction may have been overblown. "Gasoline demand growth has not been impressive in 2018, but total US oil demand growth has been stronger," Standard Chartered said in a note. "As for the rest of the weekly data, it was negative but also unremarkable for late August."

The softness in recent days has taken the wind out of the sails of crude oil, but it does not mean we are on the verge of another downturn. "The news backdrop does not really point to any further price slide: according to the DOE, US crude oil stocks declined by a surprisingly sharp 4.3 million barrels to 401.5 million barrels last week – their lowest level since February 2015. Things also remain interesting with respect to the Iran sanctions – particularly as far as the situation in India is concerned," Commerzbank said. "We assume that New Delhi will bow to the pressure from Washington – so the supply situation on the oil market will remain tight."

With two months to go on Iran sanctions, exports are falling fast. U.S. crude inventories are at their lowest point in years, and Saudi Arabia is going to be forced to burn through much of its spare capacity. U.S. shale, while signs of a production slowdown have yet to really materialize in the production data from the EIA, is still running into a rough patch. Just a few days ago, the CEOs of Schlumberger and Halliburton warned that drilling activity the Permian is cooling, which could translate into slower growth.

All of that is to say that while oil prices fell back at the end of this past week, it does not mean that we are in for another slide.

(Source: oilprice.com)

Second Announcement



Permit No. 1397.2739

Invitation For Prequalification

TENDER NO. : 08-21-9540013

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

Description	Quantity.
HSL (AN ULTRA WT.CMT.ADDITIVE)FOR OIL WELL CEMENT,IT FUNCTIONS AS A FLUID LOSS CONTROL ENITANDER,IT INCREASE THE COMPRESSIVE STRENGTH OF CEMENT,IT HAS VERY SPECIFIC SURFACE AREA WHICH RESULTING IN SLURRY STABILITY & ZERO FREE WATER SHOULD BE COMPATIBLE WITH ALL API CEMENT &TO BE PACKED IN WATER-PROOF MULTI-WALL BAGS PALLETIZED ON REINFORCED PVC PALLETS, SHRINK COVERED NOTE: MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEETS(MSDS) IS ESSENTIAL FOR TECHNICAL EVALUATION MANUFACTURE,TRADE MARK(ORDER MES) NO.,(PRODUCT/EXPIRY) DATE,MSDS TO BE MARKED ON BAGS METAL STRAPPED(2 NUMBERS HORIZONTALLY& 2 NUMBERS VERTICALLY) REF HALLIBURTON(S&S-4(HSL)) OR APP.EQUVALENT	01 Items including 2000 BG. IN 22 LB (10 KG) BAGS

Vendors who intend to participate in the A/M tender are requested to send their resume & tendency letter via fax/ mail to the following address not later than 14 days after the second announcement. The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide a bid bond of Euro 20,603 / Rls 1,000,000,000 in favor of NISOC. Iranian vendors shall submit their resume Acc. to forms Nos. 01, 02 and 03 which are available at www.shana.ir and www.nisoc.ir

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

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

Public Relations

www.shana.ir

www.nisoc.ir

<http://iets.mporg.ir>

روزنامه: تهران تایمز نوبت اول ۹۷/۶/۱۷ نوبت دوم ۹۷/۶/۲۰

NEWS IN BRIEF



BJP govt. to build 'New India' by 2022

INTERNATIONAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in India has pledged to build “new India” by 2022. The resolution was passed at the two-day party convention in New Delhi on Sunday.

India will go to polls early next year and all major political parties have begun campaigning. It's still the early phase of campaigning but BJP leaders have expressed confidence that they will retain power, saying that the opposition does not have a leader, a policy or a strategy to win elections.

Addressing media after the party meet, senior party leader and Minister Prakash Javdaker said the people don't stand by those who bring negativity in politics, launching an indirect attack on the Congress party, BJP's main opposition.

He stressed that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the government has vision, passion and imagination for the development of country. He said, the political resolution sought to build a new India by 2022 which will be free of poverty communalism, castism, corruption and terrorism.

Javdaker also said the BJP has expanded its base in the country under the leadership of Modi and now it was ruling in 19 states.

The Modi government in India also come under criticism for not taking appropriate action against cow vigilante groups that have been attacking and spreading hate against Muslims.



Pakistan's new govt. rekindles hope in India

INTERNATIONAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — India and Pakistan, the two estranged South Asian neighbors, have shown inclination to bury the hatchet and open a new chapter in their relationship since the change of guard in Islamabad.

Speaking on the new window of opportunity to improve ties between the two countries, Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan Ajay Bisaria said on Sunday that New Delhi was filled with cautious hope as Islamabad had opened a political window.

Bisaria, addressing a function in Indian city of Kolkata on Friday, said the relations between the two countries had received a setback after the Pathankot and Uri attacks, which India blamed on Pakistan. But, he added, the new government in Islamabad had filled New Delhi with cautious hope.

“Terrorism is a deal-breaker; what is important is a bilateral conversation and that will happen when terrorism ends,” he said, while stressing on enhanced bilateral trade and release of Indian prisoners in Pakistan and their repatriation on humanitarian grounds.

During the first two years of Narendra Modi government in New Delhi, New Delhi and Islamabad did hold peace talks but the peace process was virtually shelved after some terrorist attacks in India. In his victory speech after elections, PM Khan expressed his desire to improve ties with all neighbors including India. He said Pakistan will take two steps on Kashmir if India took one step.



'U.S. govt. misleading people on Afghan war'

INTERNATIONAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — A scathing report that indicts the U.S. government for its failure in Afghanistan despite 17 years of war and investment worth billions of dollars has blasted Trump administration for misleading the people of America on facts about war in Afghanistan.

The U.S. government was misleading its public to justify the 17-year-old war in Afghanistan, routinely using inflated data to justify its stay in the war-ravaged country, The New York Times reported on Saturday. The report comes amid the upsurge in violence and civilian casualties across the war-ravaged country. According to the United Nations, civilian deaths touched record high in the first half of this year, putting a big question mark on America's longest war in its history.

While the U.S. government says the Taliban control or contest 44 per cent of districts in Afghanistan, the NYT report claims that the insurgents actually control or contest about 61pc area.

The report also disputes the U.S. military's claim that the Afghan government effectively “controls or influences” 56pc of the country, saying that in many districts, the Afghan government controls only the district headquarters and military barracks, while the Taliban control the rest.



UN refugee chief visits Pakistan

INTERNATIONAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — The UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi visited Pakistan with UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock this week to assess the situation of Afghan refugees living there.

The officials recognized Pakistan's generosity and sought to explore solutions that could eventually help millions of Afghan refugees voluntarily return home, a report by UN refugee agency said. Pakistan hosts 1.4 million Afghan refugees, of whom 74 per cent are second or third generation, meaning they were born in Pakistan or are the children of refugees born there.

In a meeting with Prime Minister Imran Khan, Grandi and Lowcock expressed their gratitude to the people and government of Pakistan for generously hosting one of the world's largest refugee populations for nearly 40 years, the report said.

Khan, in turn, affirmed his government's commitment to ensuring that refugee repatriation remains voluntary.

So far, this year, UNHCR has facilitated the voluntary repatriation of almost 10,000 Afghan refugees, including some families who have lived in Pakistan for close to 40 years, the report added.

Pakistan PM says China is cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy

INTERNATIONAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — The new all-weather allies, Pakistan and China, took another big leap to strengthen their bilateral ties during Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi's first official visit to Islamabad since the formation of new government in Pakistan.

Wang, accompanied by a high-level delegation, was on a three-day visit to Pakistan during which he held wide-ranging deliberations with political and military leadership in Islamabad, including Prime Minister Imran Khan, President Arif Alvi and Army chief Qamar Bajwa.

“Foreign Minister underscored the significance of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) for the mutual benefit of the people of both countries,” Prime Minister Imran Khan's office said in a statement.

Wang conveyed the desire of Chinese government to work closely with the new political dispensation in Islamabad to further enhance the strategic partnership between the two neighbours.

PM Khan, according to a statement issued by his office, reiterated that Pakistan's friendship with China is a cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy, and reaffirmed commitment to the implementation of the CPEC.

Khan sought to send a strong message to the U.S., the old ally of Pakistan, which



is presently entangled in a bitter trade war with Beijing. Pakistan's growing proximity with China has raised many eyebrows in Washington, even leading to cancellation of military aid to Pakistan.

The regional situation and global issues also figured in talks between the two officials.

Earlier, Wang met his counterpart Shah Mahmood Qureshi and Army chief Gen-

eral Qamar Javed Bajwa. Qureshi, during his meeting with Wang, said that Pakistan was committed to CPEC which is a “proof of how seamless the belt and road initiative can become with the help of all stakeholders.”

The visiting official also attended the swearing in ceremony of new president, Arif Alvi. Alvi, who was sworn in as the new President of Pakistan on Sunday, received

‘With declining U.S. influence and ascending Chinese power, a new EuroAsia is emerging’

1 → U.S. still needs to work with Pakistan for respectable exit from Afghanistan hence will have no option but to engage Pakistan. The U.S. despite all its rhetoric for peace in Afghanistan, has huge trust deficit as if it is really interested in peace in Afghanistan.

■ Imran Khan led government has backed Tehran's position on the Iran nuclear deal and expressed desire to improve ties with Iran. Last week Iranian FM became the first foreign official to be hosted by Islamabad. How important are Iran and Pakistan to each other?

A. Pakistan and Iran has convergence on many issues and they will highly benefit from mutual cooperation. Pakistan can help Iran in areas including defence, economy, barter trade and can be a conduit for many items that Iran needs. Tehran can provide oil and gas. By linking Chabahar with Gawadar, Iran can enhance people to people contacts via sea, join in special economic zones on zero border with Balochistan/Pakistan. Iran also can benefit from Pakistan's advanced defence capability. So in many ways, it can circumvent U.S. harsh measures against Pakistan. Both countries can enhance volume of trade to \$10 billion in couple of years.

■ There have been reports that the new government in Islamabad will implement the Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline which had been put on the backburner by the previous government. Do you think it can prove significant in solving Pakistan's energy crisis?

A. Certainly, the pipeline project is vital for both countries as producer Iran will benefit and as consumers of oil and gas Islamabad will meet its energy needs. Pakistani policy makers are serious to implement this project. One option is to get Chinese help in construction of the pipeline on Pakistani side and extend it to China as well.

■ This week China's Foreign Minister also visited Pakistan and held talks with top government functionaries on many issues including the progress on CPEC. Do you think China has now effectively replaced U.S. as Pakistan's all-weather ally?



A) China is a strategic partner and has become Pakistan's all-weather friend indeed. The U.S. was never a strategic ally of Pakistan and bilateral relations were more transactional in nature so hostage to whimsical disruptions by the lone super power. Besides, declining U.S. influence, ascending Chinese power, a new EuroAsia is emerging in time and space so Islamabad is incrementally pivoting towards EuroAsia.

■ The new government has faced criticism for forcing a top economic advisor under pressure from far-right groups. Is this what 'Naya Pakistan' will look like?

A. Pakistan has many fault lines not to be allowed to manipulate by vested interests so it needs sectarian and religious harmony. A delicate balance in the constitution of Pakistan has been achieved not to exacerbate this fault line. Since the economist belongs to a minority (Ahmedia) community who call themselves Muslims with some members questioning

the covenant of faith of vast majority of Muslim population that there will be no prophet after Mohammad (PBUH).

They fear conversion of ordinary Muslims to Ahmedia faith challenging the finality of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) since the community does not agree with the definition of “mosalmaniat” defined in the Constitution. According to Constitution, a professed Muslim should not question the finality of Prophet (PBUH) and if somebody does that he or she to be categorised as non-Muslim minority. This is why a possible backlash with his appointment would have led to bloodbath so Khan-led government withdrew the economist's name from the advisory body.

■ The relations between India and Pakistan are likely to improve with peace overtures made by the new government in Islamabad and also Pakistan's army reportedly reaching out to India. Do you see it happening?

A. Pakistan has always been trying to reach out to India and jumpstart substantive talks on issues of contention but it takes two to tango. India being a much bigger power has always used talks and leverage against Pakistan and sought to keep the status quo believing it serves India's interest and hurts Pakistan in many ways. So with next year elections looming in India, there is less chance that PM Modi will reciprocate positive overtures of Khan-led government in Pakistan.

■ The news about the death of Haqqani Network patriarch Jalaluddin Haqqani made headlines few days ago. Do you think it will affect the group's activities? What has been his legacy?

A. Jalaluddin Haqqani was indisposed since long and his son Sirajuddin Haqqani was leading the Taliban faction in Afghanistan. So his death will unlikely affect the activities of his group within the Taliban conglomerate. His legacy will continue to be relevant and despite all angry noises from the U.S., Washington has to sit with his faction to make peace in Afghanistan after all it was the U.S. that supported and sponsored him in the first place during the Afghan Jihad.

Zakzaky's 1000 days of wrongful incarceration

1 → The dismay is clear over total disregard of Justice Kolawale Abuja's court verdict to release the ailing Sheikh and his wife unconditionally, provide a befitting house and security for them with a compensation of fifty million Naira. By refusing to do so, the regime has shown blatant disrespect to the rule of law. To the concerned individuals in the country and beyond, Sheikh el-Zakzaky's situation is proportionate to the Nigeria's security and socio-economic well-being.

Among other endless questions are: on what ground was the Sheikh initially arrested? Who benefits from the continued incarceration of the ailing Sheikh and his wife? What is the government's stand on the Federal High Court verdict? Why doesn't it respond to the demand of millions of Nigerians to take him abroad for medication? And how long should the detention continue? What is the stand of the government over one thousand Nigerians killed in the Zaria pogrom and related incidents? If peace, unity and progress of this country were important, who else has played better role than the leader of the Islamic Movement, Shaikh el-Zakzaky?

Using my constitutional right as a concerned citizen that contributes his best to the progress of the nation, I draw the attention of those in authority on the above subject as the Sheikh and his wife clock 1000 days in detention, and in defiance of the federal high court order on their unconditional release, the regime continues to keep them behind bars. The indifference on the side of the regime cannot help the country at all. No doubt, justice is the key to the much needed peace and stability of our nation which the Sheikh symbolizes.

In its forty years of existence, the Move-



ment was never been accused of vandalism or bloodshed. The Shaikh is widely credited for unequalled role in promotion of peaceful coexistence and ethno-religious tolerance. He is deeply concerned about the well-being of his country and its citizens as his Movement was once described as the most organized Muslim group in Nigeria.

Allah states “O you who believe! Stand firmly For Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety: and fear Allah, for Allah is well-acquainted with all ye do” (5:8).

The Sheikh is well known for being a peace

lover, for his sincerity, broad mindedness, theoretical and practical teachings of Islam. He is known for forging cordial relations with people of other religions and being an advocate of ethno-religious tolerance. His teachings are based on the principles of Ahlul-bait. Sheikh believes in what Ali ibn Abi Talib (as) said: a man is either your brother in faith or an equal in humanity. As such, he is the champion of Muslim unity, evident from his speeches.

He is known to speak fearlessly against tyranny and oppression, for which he has faced untold hardship in the past four decades. In the compendium of thirteen speeches delivered in Najaf in 1970, Imam Khomeini

stated that the scholars of Islam have a duty to struggle against all attempts by oppressors to establish a monopoly over the sources of wealth or to make illicit use of them. They must not allow the masses to remain hungry and be deprived while rulers usurp the sources of wealth and live in opulence. He also said a clergyman should be such that when the people see him, they should remember the messenger of Allah (S). You have accepted this heavy responsibility and it is you that should guide this people to the end.

The concept of Wilayatul Faqih - governance of the jurist - was built on this basis. Sheikh el-Zakzaky has been firmly and rightly treading on the same path, enduring oppression on himself while creating public awareness. It is imperative to commend those putting hands for justice to prevail across the globe. That was the rationale behind all prophetic missions. Allah states: Verily, We sent our messengers with manifest signs and sent down with them the book and the balance that people may act with justice (2:247). In an often repeated quote, Sheikh Usman Bn Fodio - the great revivalist of Islam in West Africa - said a kingdom can endure with unbelief, but it cannot endure with injustice.

As Muslims, we believe that Allah has prohibited oppression and injustice, and everyone will account for his or her deeds here and hereafter. No doubt, millions of Sheikh's followers and other justice seeking people across the world deserve to be listened. The demand is clear: immediate and unconditional release of Sheikh and global isolation of the Nigerian regime.

The writer is a Nigeria based activist and member of the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN)

U.S. will not leave NATO: Boston professor

By Fatemeh Mohammadipour

President Donald Trump has done a lot of questionable action since he was in office, including issues within the United States - changing members of the cabinet, advisers and dismissal of director - and issues outside the United States, including the systematic withdrawal of international treaties and economic and political tensions with its former allies.

A reporter at Tehran Times newspaper recently interviewed Geoffrey Carliner, Professor of the University of Boston.

Following is the complete text of the interview with Professor Geoffrey Carliner:

■ Nowadays we are witnessing great gaps and differences among G7 member states while SCO member states are moving forward more convergence. Some believe that the orders and the regimes created after World War II are declining and because of this reason the U.S. is not going to pay the costs of regimes like NATO, WTO and different free trade treaties like NAFTA. What do you think of this? Why the U.S. is not ready to pay the costs of the regimes and orders as before?

A: President Trump has shown hostility to leaders of several U.S. allies and disdain for NATO, but support for a continued strong NATO is almost universal among his advisors, Republican and Democratic politicians, and American voters. That does not mean there is no criticism of NATO allies. Past U.S. presidents, including Obama and Bush, have demanded that other NATO members increase their military spending to 2% of GDP, and sometimes pressured them to join U.S. military activities, for instance in Iraq in 2003. But is inconceivable that the U.S. would leave NATO or seriously decrease its commitment to defending European allies.

Trump would like to weaken the WTO, NAFTA, and other U.S. trade agreements, and some but not all of his advisors, some politicians, and many but not most American voters probably agree. American consumers, many American workers, and many American companies have benefitted from greater



international trade over the past 25 years, but some American workers and a few companies have been hurt by trade, especially with developing countries like Mexico and China. So there is considerable opposition in the U.S. to current trade agreements. It is hard to predict the outcome of current trade disputes. Probably not a full trade war, perhaps some symbolic gestures like an EU promise to buy more U.S. soy beans or natural gas (in 5-10 years after LNG terminals are built) or Chinese promises to buy more U.S. airplanes, perhaps reductions or eliminations of specific EU and Chinese tariffs on imports from the U.S., perhaps minor revisions in some of NAFTA's rules. Such symbolic gestures may be enough for Trump to claim victory in these disputes, even though their effect on U.S. trade will be small.

■ While the U.S. president Donald Trump attended the NATO and G7 summits with an aggressive approach toward Washington's allies, he is trying to improve relation with North Korea and Russia with a reconciling approach. Why?

A: It is hard to explain Trump's behavior toward Putin. Perhaps it is because of Russian interference in the 2016 election,

which contributed to Trump's victory. Perhaps it is due to something else in the past that has not become public. Trump's warmth to Putin certainly shocks many Americans, including not only Democrats but also many Republican politicians.

Trump also admires dictators. He intensely dislikes being attacked by the press in the U.S., and envies the pomp of military parades and the public praise that dictators demand from their people. Trump also would like more power than he has in the U.S. political system and envies dictators their much greater power. This envy and admiration by Trump probably explains some of the warmth in his relationships with Putin and Kim Jong Un.

In addition, Trump is eager to reach an agreement with Kim on nuclear weapons that he could claim as a major foreign policy achievement. Trump would like to go down in history as a peace maker and even has dreams of winning a Nobel Peace Prize. It seems very unlikely that North Korea will agree to an agreement that is as strict as the one Iran signed, but even a much weaker deal would allow Trump to make claims of victory that his supporters in the U.S. would

believe. There is a lesson here for Iran. Symbolic gestures are very important for Trump, and showing that he is better than Obama is even more important. If Iran's leaders met with him and agreed to small but symbolic changes in the nuclear deal, Trump could claim that he had negotiated a better deal than Obama, and then might remove U.S. sanctions. What do Iran's leaders lose by meeting with Trump?

Finally, Trump enjoys acting in opposite ways from previous American leaders. If Obama and previous American presidents were hostile to Putin and friendly to leaders of U.S. allies, Trump likes to do the opposite.

■ International community is experiencing a new area in which while the U.S. is retreating from the old orders and regimes, China is trying to impose its own orders and regimes by reviewing ancient Silk Road project. To what extent the developments in the Middle East especially in Syria are affected by international systems structure which is changing?

A: In the long run, China's economic and political power in the world will continue to grow and it will use its power to further its national interests, including in the Middle East. In the short run, however, it is hard to see how increasing Chinese power will affect events in Syria or other Middle Eastern countries. China will not follow U.S. sanctions against Iran, will continue to buy Iranian oil, and perhaps make investments in Iran, but it will not be a major player in the Middle East for quite a while.

■ Reacting to President Trump's remarks calling EU as the U.S. foe, Donald Tusk, president of the European Council asked Trump and Putin not to disturb world order. Do you think that Trump and Putin are going to create a new world order? If your answer is yes, how will the new polarization be in the new order?

A: Trump and Putin are not powerful enough to create a new world order. Although there is support in the U.S. for better relations with Russia, there is almost no support for leaving NATO and joining in an alliance with Russia. Opposition to a new world order with Russia would be overwhelming.

Ayatollah Sheikh Isa Qassim's health is improving day by day: Sheikh Abdullah al-Daqqaq

1 → ■ Al Khalifa regime has lately decided to execute a number of other Bahraini citizens. To what extent do these execution sentences contradict the rule of law, and what was the reaction of international human rights organizations to it?

A: International organizations have issued numerous statements in condemnation of Al Khalifa regime for human rights violations. Al Khalifa has issued executions, but human rights organizations have called for their abolition, because these political sentences were issued in non-legitimate military courts.

Therefore, we call on Al-Khalifa regime to stop implementing these cruel sentences and bring the language of

reason for the establishment of peace in the nation.

■ Al Khalifa seeks membership in the UN Human Rights Council. With the regime's performance against Bahraini activists, can Al Khalifa win a membership?

A: You can't give away what you don't have. How can a human rights violator be a human rights defender and a candidate for membership in the Human Rights Council? The purpose behind this membership is to mislead public. Al Khalifa pretends to respect human rights and claims human rights abuses are merely propaganda. The reality on the ground is the best reason for human rights abuses in Bahrain. About 15,000 people are in Bahrain prisons and,

in addition, we are witnessing the issuance of sentences and extradition sentences, and so on.

■ With the month of Muharram-ul-Haram right around the corner, what is the relationship between the Bahraini people and Imam Hussein (AS) and the pattern of their uprising?

A: The people of Bahrain are the companions of the Ahl al Bayt (AS), and they have learned their revolutionary principles and values from the revolution of Imam Hussein (AS). The people of Bahrain have chosen Sayyid al-Shuhada as their role model, they do not fall under the burden of tyranny and will win the battle with the spirit of Sayyid al-Shuhada.

Indefinite occupation could empower terrorists in Syria

TEHRAN (FNA) — The U.S.-led war on Syria was never about freedom and democracy. Any doubters should ask President Donald Trump who has no desire to "get out" of Syria or "bring U.S. troops home."

According to the State Department, he has just signed a new strategy, which includes new military goals, and eliminates all timelines for removing U.S. occupying troops from Syria.

Without any UN mandate or invitation from Syrian government, U.S. troops are in several parts of Syria, mostly in the Kurdish-held Northeast. An estimated 2,200 U.S. troops are in the country, though official numbers are being withheld from the public. Special Envoy James Jeffrey says they are committed to an "indefinitely extended" stay.

The new goals are substantial too, with the U.S. now focusing on "containing Iran." This is while there are no Iranian troops or military bases in that war-torn country, only a handful of military advisors who are there at the official request of the Syrian government.

Besides, the Pentagon regime officials have long presented the operation in Syria as more or less permanent, and have resisted all talk of pullout, including from President Trump. This mirrors their policy in Iraq, Afghanistan and Yemen as well, where U.S. occupying troops are similarly positioned in unknown numbers on a more or less permanent basis,



all in breach of international law and UN Charter.

Make no mistake. This has never been about fighting terror either. The whole idea is to destabilize and divide up these unfortunate countries, keep them occupied indefinitely, and install puppet regimes that would take direct orders from Washington.

Little wonder the first major step of the new Pentagon push is to prevent the imminent Syrian army operation against Al-Qaeda aligned terrorist groups in Idlib province. Under international law, Syria and its allies Russia and Iran have every right to proceed with their plans to cleanse Idlib of terrorists. The U.S. has no right to stop that from happening. It has no legal justification to prevent the operation. Any U.S. attack on Syrian and Russian forces involved in it goes against UN Charter and international norms.

The United Nations should take this into account that the U.S. and its terror proxies have every intention to stage chemical attacks as false

flag to blame it on the Syrian government. They have done it before in Eastern Ghouta and elsewhere and they are now more than ever determined to stage it in Idlib. If a chemical incident occurs the UN should know who did it because Syria has no chemical weapons and Russia has already provided the world body with the evidence of an imminent false flag operation. At any rate, the U.S. presence in Syria has only made the situation worse. The U.S. occupying forces have no chance to ever turn the situation in Idlib into a profit. It is a mistake by Trump to fall for the siren songs of the Saudis and Zionists who press for this plan. It is he who will have to pay the political price.

The Trump White House won't succeed in using terrorist militias as proxy forces in Idlib to achieve broad foreign policy aims. These are the same goons that attacked U.S. and European targets in the region and beyond. They bombed and killed people in the European

capitals and destabilized the entire planet. They should never be given another chance.

To reverse the growth of these terrorists and to end the protracted war will require liberation of Idlib first, the last terror-held bastion, and a political settlement that is inclusive and addresses demands for Syrian sovereignty and security.

The international community should fear for Idlib, because terrorist groups are likely to grow still stronger the more they are allowed to stay there. The world should also fear for the West, since Western governments' foreign policy priorities remain far removed from promoting the public interest in their choice of wars and allies. In Syria, they made terrible choices and they paid for it. Syria and its allies have what it takes to finish off the job in Idlib. Allowing that to happen is the least the international community could do.

Trump and the War Party want to blow up the region through indefinite occupation of Syria. The world now has good reason to be appalled. They should never be allowed to win against international law, undermining it and paving the ground for appalling developments not just in Syria but across the region. The onus falls on the United Nations and the world community to put on the agenda an international resistance front – and to win diplomatic efforts campaigning on it for Syria, for its people, and for our shared future.

Mogherini is happy, why not!



1 → The EU-U.S. anti-Iran puzzle is about to be completed while Iran remains committed to fulfilling its obligations according to the JCPOA. Under such circumstances, the pleasure of Mogherini and other European officials with the continuation of Iran's unilateral commitment to the nuclear deal is quite understandable!

During Obama's presidency, a new measure was passed by the U.S. Congress. Accordingly, visa-free travel to the United States was prevented for people who have visited Iran or hold Iranian nationality. At that time, the Iranian foreign minister complained about this law, and emphasized that "If the Congress law is implemented as it is, it would definitely be a breach (of JCPOA)". But instead of supporting Iran, Mogherini stood against our country's rational complaint, and stated that this act by American authorities isn't going to be a breach of the nuclear deal.

However, the betrayals of High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy doesn't end there. In the final round of the Vienna nuclear talks, Mogherini was well aware of Iran's Foreign Minister and U.S. Secretary of State's verbal agreement over the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA). However, when ILSA was renewed with the signature of 98 Democrat and Republican senators, Mogherini once again appeared as the White House defending lawyer and closed her eyes on Iran's protest against the U.S. lack of commitment.

Moreover, when the U.S. Treasury Department officially prevented the JCPOA to be actualized, and prevented the normalization of banking and credit relations between our country and other international players, Mogherini, along with the leaders of the three countries of Germany, Britain and France, showed support for this trend, and together they became part of the economic plan which American authorities designed against the Islamic Republic of Iran. Afterwards and during Trump's time, Mogherini's support for the U.S. repeated violations continued as before.


Then the president of the United States came with the idea of "Changing the JCPOA" (in the four fields of inspection of Iranian military sites, the removal of the so-called sunset clauses, limiting Iran's regional power and the inclusion of Iran's missile capability in the JCPOA). This time again, Mogherini chose to ignore her most important obligation regarding the JCPOA, which was "defending the content of the nuclear deal", and along with Macron, Merkel and Theresa May, became part of Trump's game against Iran.

We are now in 2018. The president of the United States has formally pulled out of the nuclear deal with Iran, and the JCPOA has actually come to an end. However, Mogherini and other European officials continue to refuse of fulfilling their obligations under the nuclear deal.


What is certain is that EU leaders' tricky game regarding the JCPOA has left us no reason to trust them. It will rather make us to "cut off all the hope" of the United Europe on this path. The recent statements of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, who said we shouldn't rely on European support amid renewed U.S. sanctions, are also to be analyzed in the same vein.

Definitely, the praise and satisfaction of Europeans for Iran's keeping to its nuclear obligations is not a good news for us, but a kind of humiliation of our diplomacy system by Mogherini and other European officials. It is time now for our officials to properly answer the European authorities. Undoubtedly, in the near future, we will no longer see the smile of those like Mogherini for Iran's unilateral commitment to the nuclear deal.

First Announcement



N.I.O.C
1397.2751



National Iranian Drilling Company

Public Calls For Quality Evaluating Of Tender (One Publish-Second Publish)						
Two Stage (Semi Compressive)						
TENDER GUARANTEE		ESTIMATED VALUE	DESCRIPTION	Tenders Portal Reg. No. On http://sets.mporg.ir	TENDER NO. / INDENT NO	No
Euro	Rial	(Rial)				
26,358	1,296,000,000	25,903,200,000	Coring Tools	3,173,959	Indent No.: 43-22-8804748053 TenderNo.: CGP/25-97/020	1

Brief description of subject:
National Iranian Drilling Company (NIDC) address pasdaran Blev., Airport Saqare, Ahwaz, Iran hereby intends to purchase its requirements from qualified and interested tenderers through Two-stage public tender (semi pressed) upon following terms and conditions:

A) Qualitative evaluation of tenderer:
The evaluation is based on article (G) implementing regulations of the law of tenders and also carried out base on worksheets qualitative evaluation inquiry in the tender documents. Minimum acceptable point of quality is 60.

B) Preparation of tender documents:
Purchasing of documents:
In order to receive the tender documents, 510,000 Rials should be paid to account number 4001114004020491 of NIDC in Central Bank of IRAN and providing the original deposit receipt.
Receiving of documents:
Tenderers must be obtain the quality evaluation documents along with tender documents maximum 10 days after the date of second publication in person at the following address: Sector Tenders, Foreign Procurement of Capital Goods dept., end of the workshop No. 8, Karoon Industrial Area, Ahwaz, IRAN.
Tel No.: 061-34142387 or Room #431, coordination office of NIDC, NIOC No. 8 center Building, Yaghma alley, Jomhoori St., Tehran, IRAN, Tel No.: 021-66700249.

Notice:
Only the real or legal persons who apply to purchase and receive tender documents from foreign procurement department in due date will be known as tenderer from tender committee.

C) Delivery of call quality evaluating:
Tenderers shall submit the completed documents including qualification worksheets in form of software in CD/DVD within 14 days from last day of document received deadline to the following address: Hall No.:107, 1th floor, Tender Committee, Building operations, National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN. Tel No.: 061-34148205-6, 061-34148580

D) Tender Guarantee:
Type of guarantee:
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B) The original cash deposit receipt paid to account number 4001114006376636 of National Iranian Drilling Company in Central Bank of IRAN.
Duration of credit guarantee & quotation:
This duration should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum For one time in initial credit amount.
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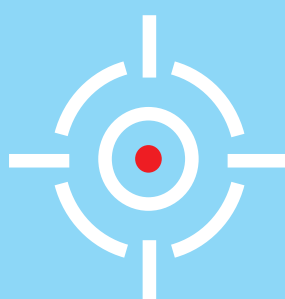
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Can a 16-week lifestyle intervention impact blood pressure?

A study led by researchers in North Carolina reveals that over the course of a 16-week program, lifestyle changes had the biggest impact on high blood pressure.

A new study demonstrates that lifestyle changes can be as effective as medication.

Importantly, those in the study had a reduced need for hypertension medication after the 16 weeks.

The study was presented at the American Heart Association's Joint Hypertension 2018 Scientific Sessions, which outlines new hypertension research each year.

In all, the study involved 129 men and women who were either overweight or obese.

They were all aged 40–80, and all participants had elevated blood pressures.

None of the participants were taking blood pressure medication at the time of the study, but about half met the criteria for hypertension drugs.

■ Diet, exercise, and hypertension

Each participant was randomly assigned one type of intervention. One group changed its diet to the DASH diet, participated in counseling, and underwent supervised exercise three times per week. Another group only changed its diet (again, the DASH diet was used). Another group changed nothing.

The DASH diet is an eating plan specifically designed to improve heart health. It includes eating vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat or fat-free dairy products, fish, poultry, beans, and nuts. Adherents limit foods high in saturated fats, such as fatty meats, full-fat dairy, and tropical oils (including coconut, palm kernel, and palm).

Those in the first group had the most success overall in lowering their blood pressure. They lost an average of 19 pounds over 16 weeks and reduced their blood pressure readings by an average of 16 millimeters of mercury (mm Hg) systolic and 10 mm Hg diastolic.

By contrast, those eating a DASH diet showed a blood pressure decrease of 11 mm Hg systolic and 8 mm Hg diastolic, while those who did not modify their behavior averaged a blood pressure reading decline of 3 mm Hg systolic and 4 mm Hg diastolic.

At baseline, 50 percent of the participants met the criteria to receive hypertensive medication. However, by the end of the study, only 23 percent of those who changed their diet still met criteria, as well as just 15 percent of those who changed both diet and exercise routine.

«Lifestyle modifications, including healthier eating and regular exercise, can greatly decrease the number of patients who need blood pressure-lowering medicine,» states study author Dr. Alan Hinderliter, an associate professor of medicine at University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill.



Lifestyle modifications, including healthier eating and regular exercise, can greatly decrease the number of patients who need blood pressure-lowering medicine

■ The health impact of hypertension

High blood pressure is common. The American Heart Association (AHA) estimate that hypertension affects almost half of adults living in the U.S., and that many of those affected don't know that they have a blood pressure problem.

This is why high blood pressure is known as a «silent killer» — there are very few, if any symptoms.

Hypertension, if left untreated and unchecked, can lead to serious health problems. Untreated high blood pressure can contribute to heart attacks, strokes, heart failure, kidney disease, vision loss, sexual dysfunction, angina, and peripheral artery disease.

It can also damage your blood vessels and prompt low-density lipoprotein (the «bad» cholesterol) to build

up in fissures along artery walls, making the circulatory system work harder while being less efficient.

While this study showed that lifestyle modifications, including diet and exercise, might be able help decrease the need for blood pressure medications, Hinderliter notes that there should be further research before recommendations can be made.

Also, individuals with elevated blood pressure should always follow doctor's orders, and if already taking those medications, continue for as long as it's recommended.

Still, altering diet and adding exercise to a weekly routine is one measure the AHA recommend for those who experience hypertension; it can have a considerable impact on overall health.

(Source: Medical News Today)

New cancer vaccine is 100 percent successful in mouse model

Scientists have developed a new vaccine that — in conjunction with existing therapies — can not only treat aggressive melanoma, but also prevent its recurrence.

Researchers from the Scripps Research Institute in San Diego, CA, recently worked with experts from other institutions to develop a vaccine that would be effective against melanoma (a type of skin cancer) when administered in conjunction with other therapies.

According to Prof. Dale Boger, who co-led the research with Nobel laureate Bruce Beutler, «This co-therapy produced a complete response — a curative response — in the treatment of melanoma.»

These promising results are reported in a study paper now published in the journal PNAS.

■ Experimental approach fully successful

The researchers tested three different therapy options in a mouse model of aggressive melanoma. All of the mice received a type of cancer immunotherapy known as anti-PD-L1, but in addition to this, they also received different vaccine variants.

Prof. Boger and team split the mice into three groups: one group had the cancer vaccine, another group had the vaccine plus a molecule called Diprovocim, and the third group had the cancer vaccine and another adjuvant: a chemical known as alum.

Diprovocim is an adjuvant compound that boosts therapy by reinforcing the immune response. This compound is particularly attractive to researchers developing new therapies, because it is easy to synthesize and modify.

The researchers found that the eight mice that received the vaccine plus Diprovocim treatment in addition to the anti-PD-L1 therapy had a 100 percent survival rate over 54 days.

In comparison, the rodents that received the immunotherapy plus the vaccine only did not survive. Those that received anti-PD-L1 plus the vaccine with alum saw a 25 percent survival rate over the same period.

«It was exciting to see the vaccine working simultaneously with a cancer immunotherapy like anti-PD-L1,» Prof. Boger says.

■ Vaccine also prevents recurrence

This, however, is not the only reason why the researchers were excited. In fact, the experimental vaccine has another positive effect — namely, protecting the body against tumor recurrence.

«Just as a vaccine can train the body to fight off external pathogens, this vaccine trains the immune system to go after the tumor,» says Prof. Boger.

The scientists found that, when they tried to reintroduce melanoma tumors in the mice in the second experimental group, «it wouldn't take,» as Prof. Boger puts it. «The animal is already vaccinated against it,» he explains.

When they conducted more experiments in the laboratory, the researchers were able to establish that Diprovocim boosts the immune response by «prompting» the immune system to produce tumor-infiltrating leukocytes, a type of cell that attacks and eliminates cancer tumors.

The two leading scientists involved in the recent study manage Tollbridge Therapeutics, a medical research company that holds the patent for Diprovocim.

(Source: sgtalk.org)

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

Municipal Museum spotlights Iranian Islamic art



Tile in the shape of a star, eastern Iran, mid-15th century, the Municipal Museum

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** — On Saturday, an exhibition of Islamic art objects, featuring tens of Iranian relics, opened its doors to the public at the Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, known as the Municipal Museum, located in The Hague, the Netherlands.

Titled “Splendor and Bliss – Arts of the Islamic World”, the event has put on show 300 objects with astounding ornamental qualities of Islamic art in the period 900-1900.

The opening ceremony was attended by Iran’s ambassador to the Netherlands Alireza Jahangiri and the Hague Mayor Pauline Krikke, Mehr reported. The exhibition focuses on the ornamental character of Islamic art and on stories of culture, tradition and craft. In addition, writers, cooks and musicians are paying tribute to the nature of the objects in the exhibition in literary texts, recipes and pieces of music inspired by them.

“It’s really inspiring to see these people’s personal and artistic responses to our magnificent collection,” said museum director Benno Tempel, blouinartinfo.com reported.

“They reveal it to be a collection full of bliss and show what fabulous stories lay hidden in the artworks. This highlights a side of Muslim culture that is rarely considered in the public debate: the exuberance and the positive message of Islamic art.”

Since early seventh century onwards, Islamic culture has produced some magnificent art objects throughout its history, some of which found their way to the Far East and Europe.

“Splendor and Bliss — Arts of the Islamic World” runs through March 3, 2019.

Hundreds of Roman gold coins found in basement of old theater

Archaeologists are studying a valuable trove of old Roman coins found on the site of a former theater in northern Italy.

The coins, hundreds of them, date back to the late Roman imperial era and were found in a soapstone jar unearthed in the basement of the Cressoni Theater in Como, north of Milan.

Qing dynasty vase found in attic sells for \$19 million

“We do not yet know in detail the historical and cultural significance of the find,” said Culture Minister Alberto Bonisoli in a press release. “But that area is proving to be a real treasure for our archeology. A discovery that fills me with pride.”

The coins were discovered last week, according to Minis (Source: CNN)



ROUND THE GLOBE

Tikal National Park

Tikal National Park is located in Northern Guatemala’s Peten Province within a large forest region often referred to as the Maya Forest, which extends into neighboring Mexico and Belize.

Embedded within the much larger Maya Biosphere Reserve, exceeding two million hectares and contiguous with additional conservation areas, Tikal National Park is one of the few World Heritage properties inscribed according to both natural and cultural criteria for its extraordinary biodiversity and archaeological importance.

It comprises 57,600 hectares of wetlands, savannah, tropical broadleaf and palm forests with thousands of architectural and artistic remains of the Mayan civilization from the Preclassic Period (600 BC) to the decline and eventual collapse of the urban center around 900 CE.



The diverse ecosystems and habitats harbor a wide spectrum of neotropical fauna and flora. Five cats, including Jaguar and Puma, several species of monkeys and anteaters and more than 300 species of birds are among the notable wildlife. The forests comprise more than 200 tree species and over 2000 higher plants have been recorded across the diverse habitats.

Research has revealed numerous constructions, carved monuments and other evidence bearing witness to highly sophisticated technical, intellectual and artistic achievements that developed from the arrival of the first settlers (800 BC) to the last stages of historic occupation around the year 900.

(Source: UNESCO)

Medical tourist arrivals in Iran doubles in spring

1 → Generally, Iraq and Afghanistan constitute the lion’s share of medical tourists to Iran, he said, adding, “Mashhad, which embraces the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS), and Tehran, host the largest number of medical travelers.”

He explained that the surge, especially in number of Iraqi travelers, is dominantly derived by foreign currency rises in the country.

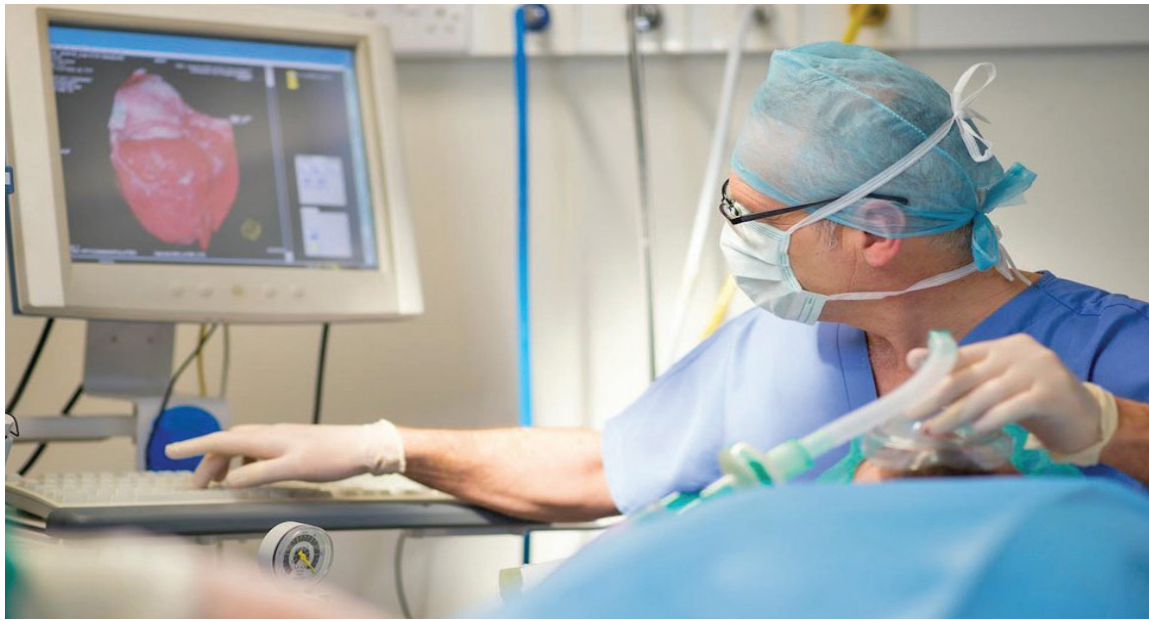
Over the past couple of months Iran’s economy is facing pressure from the re-imposition of U.S.-led sanctions.

■ Medical tourism could fetch Iran \$7b annually
Iran has capacity to annually earn \$7 billion in medical and health tourism, though the sector now brings in only one-seventh or even lesser of the sum, Mohammad Jahangiri who presides over a national center for developing health tourism said in May.

A total of 166 hospitals in Iran hold special licenses and meet standards in this field, Jahangiri stated.

Last year, Health Minister Hassan Qazizadeh-Hashemi urged the private sector to boost participation in development of the country’s medical tourism sector.

“The Ministry of Health supports [such a] medical tourism sector that is directed by the private sector based on competitive prices,” the minister said in an address to a medical tourism conference in Tehran.



Tehran to hold loan exhibit from Dutch museum

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** — The National Museum of Iran is set to showcase a loan collection of relics from Drents Museum, Assen, the Netherlands.

“A collection of 300 historical and artistic relics from the Netherlands will go on display at the National Museum of Iran in an exhibit to be open in the months of Mehr [which begins on September 23],” said Ali-Asghar Mounesan, the director of the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization, CHTN reported.

“The works date from the 18th to 20th centuries and the event is named ‘archeology and art in the Netherlands, narrated by Drents Museum.’”

Hosting such exhibitions shows Iran’s determination in expanding cultural ties with other countries, Mounesan added.

Nearly 200 Iranian antique items from the National Museum of Iran is currently on show at the

Drents Museum in an exhibit titled “Iran – Cradle of Civilization”.

The objects date from the Paleolithic era to the time of the Safavid Dynasty (1501–1736), featuring earliest developments of agriculture and livestock farming from the very beginning to cuneiform clay tablets, gold beakers and ornaments, bronze weapons and beautifully painted ceramics associated with successive Iranian kingdoms.

“These treasures have long been hidden from the Western world.

Many of them have never been exhibited in the Netherlands before, and have even never been on show outside Iran before,” according to the Drents Museum website.

The National Museum of Iran hosted a landmark Louvre show from March to July, which is deemed as the first large-scale exhibition by a major Western museum in the country.

Iran to join Oman fair to promote medical tourism

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran will take part in the 8th Oman Health Exhibition & Conference, which will be running from September 24 to 26 at the capital city of Muscat.

Six Iranian exhibitors and businesses from Hormozgan province have been selected to promote medical tourism at the event in a bid to help attract more travelers from the Persian Gulf littoral states, CHTN quoted Ashkan Mokhtari, the provincial tourism chief, as saying on Sunday.

Some 150 exhibitors will attend the exhibit that will cover 6,400 square meters in area, according to the organizers.

A total of 400,000 medical tourists arrived in Iran during the past Iranian calendar year 1396 (ended March 20).

Iran attracts health and medical tourists mainly from Iraq, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, the U.S., European countries as well as the Persian Gulf littoral states.

8th
OMAN HEALTH
EXHIBITION & CONFERENCE

8th International Exhibition of Health, Healthcare and Medical Products, Services and Equipment, Pharmaceuticals, and Medical Tourism Services

24-26 SEPTEMBER 2018

Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre
Muscat, Oman

The Organizer

OMANEXPO
Global Business Platform

A poster for the 8th Oman Health Exhibition & Conference

Backpacker basics: what to arrange before you travel

When planning a big trip, it is worth getting the boring stuff – flights, insurance, visas, money, jabs – out of the way early.

■ Visas

Tourist visas are required for certain destinations, particularly in Asia, which could mean a visit to an embassy in advance, booking online or paying on arrival. A full list of visa requirements can be found on gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice. Prices vary (from £20 to £150 for UK citizens) depending on country of residence, and the country where the visa is bought.

A visa may not be required for certain destinations (most of South America allows UK citizens in without) or for shorter trips – Vietnam allows 15 days, for instance (for longer stays, a £20 e-visa is available online for up to 30 days, or visit a Vietnamese embassy). It is a good idea to take a few copies of your passport, along with some passport photos, which can be useful for border crossings. Applying for a working visa is more complex, more expensive and can take longer.

■ Money

A good average to go by for a RTW trip is about £1,000 a month. Try using a pre-loadable travel card – Caxton, Mastercard or WeSwap are good options, currently. Most don’t charge fees, tend to be cheaper than bureau de change, and can help with budgeting (by transferring money weekly via the app, for instance).

A credit card is also a good idea – Halifax Clarity is a top choice for backpackers, as it doesn’t charge interest on purchases abroad if the balance is paid by the end of the month. There’s no fee for withdrawals, but interest is charged from the day cash is withdrawn, so minimise it by paying it off the same day (via online banking). Debit cards are a fee-heavy option.

■ Insurance

Not all insurers offer cover for long trips, sometimes called gap-year or extended-leave insurance. Comparison sites are a good place to start: check companies such as Alpha, AA, Allianz, Holidaysafe, Hiscox and STA. Basic worldwide cover could start from around 70p a day, but shop around as costlier doesn’t always mean better. Check excesses, activity exemptions and destinations covered. Buy as soon as the trip is booked to cover cancellation or pre-trip sickness, and think about whether separate gadget insurance is necessary.

■ Stay connected

If you have a long phone contract, contact the provider to find out what options are available, as some will let you buy out the contract or lower the tariff. Almost all providers now offer extensive and cheap roaming options, so there will be a list of countries where phone charges are the same as in the UK (check uswitch.com for the latest tariffs, as they change regularly). Buying a sim card on arrival can be good if you plan on being in a country for several months, and includes data-only deals, although this means a new phone number, so it’s often less popular. And WhatsApp is free anywhere in the world.

■ Accommodation

Booking the first few days’ accommodation makes sense, but depending on the length of the trip it is often best to book as you go. Hostelworld and Booking.com apps list hostels, BnBs and guesthouses in most destinations, or homestays can mean getting closer to local life (try Airbnb, Homestay or Couchsurfing).

In Cuba it is also common (outside of Havana) to be greeted as you get off the bus by a line of potential hosts, holding placards advertising their homes. If travelling in a pair, sharing a double room in a hostel can cost the same as two dorm beds and offer extra privacy.

Second Announcement



Permit No. 1397.2713

Invitation For Prequalification

TENDER NO. : **08-38-9440002**

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

Description	UNIT	Quantity.
ROCK BITS, JET TYPE, LESS NOZZLES WITH API REGULAR TOOLJOINT PIN CONNECTION 8-1/2IN. X 4-1/2IN, MOTOR TYPE, HIGH RPM, MIN. RPM: 250. 8-1/2IN I.A.D.C. 5.1.7 M	NO	40

Vendors who intend to participate in the A/M tender are requested to send their resume & ten-dency letter via fax/ mail to the following address not later than 14 days after the second an-nouncement. The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide a bid bond of Euro 10,433 / Rls 500,000,000 in favor of NISOC. Irani-an vendors shall submit their resume Acc. to forms Nos. 01, 02 and 03 which are available at www.shana.ir and www.nisoc.ir

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

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

Public Relations

www.shana.ir

www.nisoc.ir

<http://iets.mporg.ir>

روزنامه : تهران تایمز نوبت اول ۹۷/۶/۱۷ نوبت دوم ۹۷/۶/۲۰

Scientist deploys giant trap to catch plastic littering the Pacific Ocean

A multimillion-dollar floating boom designed to corral plastic debris littering the Pacific Ocean deployed from San Francisco Bay on Saturday as part of a larger high-stakes and ambitious undertaking.

The 2,000-foot-long unmanned structure was the product of about \$20 million in funding from the Ocean Cleanup, a nonprofit that aims to trap up to 150,000 pounds of plastic during the boom's first year at sea. Within five years, with the creation of dozens more booms, the organization hopes to clean half of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch.

The patch, a gyre of trash between California and Hawaii, comprises an estimated 1.8 trillion pieces of scattered detritus, including at least 87,000 tons of plastic.

Over the next several days, the boom will be towed to a site where it will undergo two weeks of testing. If everything goes as planned, the boom will then be brought to the garbage patch, nearly 1,400 miles offshore, where it is expected to arrive by mid-October, said Boyan Slat, 24, the Dutch inventor and entrepreneur who founded Ocean Cleanup.

The cleanup system
The cleanup system is supposed to work like this: After the boom detaches from the



towing vessel, the current is expected to pull it into the shape of a "U." As it drifts along, propelled by the wind and waves, it should trap plastic "like Pac-Man," the foundation said on its website. The captured plastic would then be transported back to land, sorted and recycled.

The boom has an impenetrable skirt that hangs nearly 10 feet below to catch smaller

pieces of plastic. The nonprofit said marine life would be able to pass underneath.

"There's worry that you can't remove the plastic without removing marine life at the same time," said George Leonard, chief scientist at the Ocean Conservancy. "We know from the fishing industry if you put any sort of structure in the open ocean, it acts as a

fish-aggregating device."

It is unclear how well the boom would fare on the open ocean, where it faces high winds, corrosive salt water and other environmental challenges. And then there's the question of whether it is possible to clean half of the garbage patch in just five years.

The big challenges

"I think the big challenge here is not the long-term goal but the short-term goal," Mr. Leonard said on Saturday. "Can it remove plastic at all?"

Mr. Slat, the chief executive of Ocean Cleanup, shared the same worry in a video posted on Facebook.

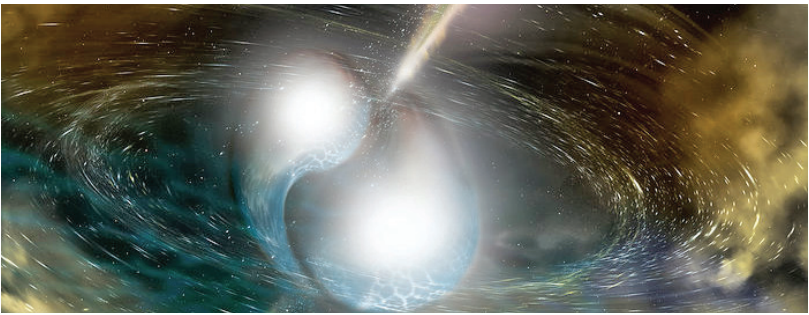
Since the start of Ocean Cleanup in 2013, donors have contributed nearly \$35 million, Mr. Slat said.

Much of that money paid for the boom and helped underwrite research like a study published in the journal Scientific Reports, which quantified the full extent of the garbage patch. Future booms are estimated to cost about \$5.8 million each.

Major sponsors include Marc Benioff, the chief executive of Salesforce.com, and Peter Thiel, the co-founder of PayPal.

(Source: The NYT)

Neutron-star merger shot out a jet with seemingly impossible speed, study reports



The dramatic neutron-star merger that astronomers spotted last year generated a jet of material that seemed to move at four times the speed of light, a new study reports.

"Seemed" is the operative word here, of course; the laws of physics tell us that nothing can travel faster through space than light. So, the superluminal motion was an illusion, which was caused by the jet's (still very fast) speed and the fact that it blasted almost directly at us, researchers said.

"Based on our analysis, this jet most likely is very narrow, at most 5 degrees wide, and was pointed only 20 degrees away from the Earth's direction," study co-author Adam Deller, of the Swinburne University of Technology in Pasadena — used a variety of radio telescopes to study the aftermath of the neutron-star collision, a historic event known as GW170817.

"But to match our observations, the material in the jet also has to be blasting outwards at over 97 percent of the speed of light," he added.

Deller and his colleagues — led by Kunal Mooley, of the NRAO and the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena — used a variety of radio telescopes to study the aftermath of the neutron-star collision, a historic event known as GW170817.

Remnants of massive stars

GW170817 was the first documented collision of two neutron stars, the superdense remnants of massive stars that have died in supernova explosions. GW170817,

which occurred about 130 million light-years from Earth, also opened the era of "multimessenger astronomy": it was the first event ever detected via both gravitational waves (the ripples in space-time first predicted by Albert Einstein a century ago) and electromagnetic radiation.

Scientists think the merger generated a powerful explosion that ejected a shell of material far out into space. Inside this shell, the merged neutron stars created a single black hole, which began sucking up lots of gas and dust. This material formed a fast-spinning disk around the black hole; before long, twin jets began blasting from this disk's poles, research team members said.

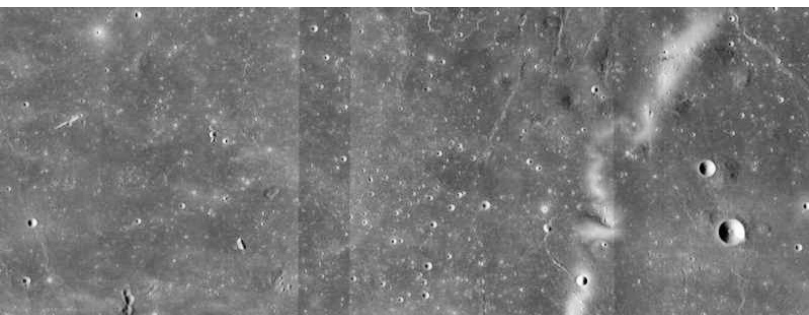
It had been unclear whether these jets broke through the debris shell created by the original explosion. But the observations by Mooley and his team — made 75 days and 230 days after the initial detection of GW170817 — indicate that this did indeed happen.

At first, the jets interacted with the expelled debris to form a sort of cocoon, which moved much more slowly than the jets themselves. But the jets eventually broke free into interstellar space.

"Our interpretation is that the cocoon dominated the radio emission until about 60 days after the merger, and at later times the emission was jet-dominated," study co-author Ore Gottlieb, a theorist at Tel Aviv University in Israel, said in the same statement.

(Source: Scientific American)

Mysterious 'lunar swirls' point to moon's volcanic, magnetic past, new study says



The mystery behind lunar swirls, one of the Solar System's most beautiful optical anomalies, may finally be solved. The solution hints at the dynamism of the moon's ancient past as a place with volcanic activity and an internally generated magnetic field.

The mystery behind lunar swirls, one of the solar system's most beautiful optical anomalies, may finally be solved thanks to a joint Rutgers University and University of California Berkeley study.

The solution hints at the dynamism of the moon's ancient past as a place with volcanic activity and an internally generated magnetic field. It also challenges our picture of the moon's existing geology.

Lunar swirls resemble bright, snaky clouds painted on the moon's dark surface. The most famous, called Reiner Gamma, is about 40 miles long and popular with backyard astronomers.

Localized magnetic fields

Most lunar swirls share their locations with powerful, localized magnetic fields. The bright-and-dark patterns may result when those magnetic fields deflect particles from the solar wind and cause some parts of the lunar surface to weather more slowly.

"But the cause of those magnetic fields, and thus of the swirls themselves, had long been a mystery," said Sonia Tikoo, coauthor of the study recently published in the Journal of Geophysical Research — Planets and an assistant professor in Rutgers University-New Brunswick's Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences. "To solve it, we had to find out what kind of geological feature

could produce these magnetic fields -- and why their magnetism is so powerful."

Working with what is known about the intricate geometry of lunar swirls, and the strengths of the magnetic fields associated with them, the researchers developed mathematical models for the geological "magnets." They found that each swirl must stand above a magnetic object that is narrow and buried close to the moon's surface.

The picture is consistent with lava tubes, long, narrow structures formed by flowing lava during volcanic eruptions; or with lava dikes, vertical sheets of magma injected into the lunar crust.

Moon's environment

But this raised another question: How could lava tubes and dikes be so strongly magnetic? The answer lies in a reaction that may be unique to the moon's environment at the time of those ancient eruptions, over 3 billion years ago.

Past experiments have found that many moon rocks become highly magnetic when heated more than 600 degrees Celsius in an oxygen-free environment. That's because certain minerals break down at high temperatures and release metallic iron. If there happens to be a strong enough magnetic field nearby, the newly formed iron will become magnetized along the direction of that field.

This doesn't normally happen on earth, where free-floating oxygen binds with the iron. And it wouldn't happen today on the moon, where there is no global magnetic field to magnetize the iron.

(Source: Science Daily)

New research throws light on factors associated with the decline of hedgehogs

Results from the first systematic survey of rural hedgehog populations in England and Wales using footprint tracking tunnels has been published in Scientific Reports today.

The research, titled "Reduced occupancy of hedgehogs in rural England and Wales: the influence of habitat and an asymmetric intra-guild predator," investigates the effects of the availability of key habitat types and badger (Meles meles) sett density on native hedgehogs (Erinaceus europaeus).

The results show that while badger sett density is negatively correlated with hedgehog presence, there was evidence of both species co-existing and hedgehogs being positively associated with built habitat (e.g. houses). More worryingly, both hedgehogs and badger setts were not recorded at many of the sites surveyed, suggesting there is a much wider land management issue in our countryside affecting both species.

The research, led by Nottingham Trent University and the University of Reading, and funded by the People's Trust for Endangered Species and the British Hedgehog Preservation Society, surveyed 261 rural sites covering all habitat types (7 land classes from arable farmland to upland sites) across England and Wales between 2014 and 2015 (18 sites in Wales, 243 in England) using footprint tracking tunnels. Many sites were surveyed by volunteers.

Ben Williams, Ph.D. student from the University of Reading, the primary author of this paper, explains: "We found that although hedgehogs were generally widely distributed across England and Wales, they were actually found at a worryingly low number (21 percent) of sites. "We found hedgehogs at 55 sites. We also found that badger setts were present at 49 percent of these sites, demonstrating that badgers and hedgehogs can, and do, coexist, as was the case historically for thousands of years prior to the recent decline in hedgehog numbers."

(Source: phys.org)

Hubble Space Telescope captures mysterious image in Taurus constellation

NASA has released a spectacular image captured by the Hubble Space Telescope that shows a little-known nebula — a vast interstellar cloud of dust and gas — called IRAS 05437+2502 set against a background of bright stars.

The nebula, which is located in the constellation Taurus (the Bull) close to the central plane of the Milky Way, has not been studied in great detail. Much about its nature remains a mystery, although this image will help scientists to learn more about it.

Some nebulae are generated by the gas and dust expelled by the explosions of stars at the end of their lifecycles, known as supernovae, while others form from the gas that is already present in the interstellar medium — the space between stars.

Nebulae, some of which are hundreds of light-years in diameter, are often regions of star formation — hence why they are referred to as "stellar nurseries." The dust and gases — mostly hydrogen and helium — in nebulae can gradually clump together over millions of years due to the effects of gravity.



As these clumps become bigger and bigger, the gravity within them becomes stronger, until they collapse in on themselves. This causes material at the center of the clump to heat up, producing the core of a new star.

IRAS 05437+2502 has a mysterious, crescent-shaped feature, which can be seen in the bottom left of the image. This crescent may have resulted from a high-velocity young star being ejected from a star-forming region at more than 120,000 miles per hour.

The nebula was discovered in 1983 by the Infrared Astronomical Satellite (IRAS) — the first-ever space telescope, operated by the U.S., the Netherlands and the UK, to perform a survey of the entire night sky at infrared wavelengths.

(Source: Newsweek)

This orange turned purple overnight, and scientists can't figure out why

Are oranges called oranges because they're orange? Or is orange called orange because of oranges? Hmm.

Either way, a bizarre phenomenon witnessed in Australia could mean we need to do a big rethink on oranges and associated vernacular, after a specimen of the fruit inexplicably turned purple last week.

On Tuesday, Queensland resident Neti Moffitt was cutting up the orange you see here as a snack for her two-year-old son. At first, everything seemed fine. The fruit looked normal, and there wasn't anything unusual about its smell or taste. Moffitt's son sucked on three of the slices she'd cut up, and the remaining pieces were left on the kitchen counter.

When Moffitt saw the leftover orange slices on the kitchen bench the following morning, they weren't orange any more. They were purple.

"For the rest of the day and overnight they continued to develop this really amazing indigo color," Moffitt told The Sydney Morning Herald.

As you can see in the pictures she took, the exposed flesh of the cut pieces of orange had turned a striking shade of dark purple.

Moffitt says the purple appearance looks like the fruit pieces have been dipped into an ink pad, and the weird transformation wasn't limited to the pieces sitting on the kitchen counter overnight.

"I went rifling through the rubbish bin for the three bits eaten by my son, and sure enough they were more-so purple than the ones left out on the bench," she told ABC News.

(Source: sciencealert.com)

ZAR Macaron Co. Launches Largest Pasta Production Line in Asia

ZAR Macaron Company launched the largest pasta production line in Asia, the Public Relations Dept. of ZAR Research and Industrial Group reported.

Chairman of the Board of Directors of ZAR Research and Industrial Group Morteza Soltani on the sidelines of inauguration of formic pasta production line in ZAR Macaron Company said, "this industrial and production unit was active in the production of pasta with semolina flour."

With the inauguration of formic production line, production capacity of the company increased quantitatively, Soltani opined.

Semolina flour is produced from durum wheat which is rare in the world, he said, adding, "for this reason, produced manufactured in this industrial and production unit is completely organic."

Turning to the existing sanctions and its impact on the activity of ZAR Research and Industrial Group, he said, "we cannot deny of ineffectiveness of sanctions, but we are of the opinion that our company has high potential and can turn any threat into opportunity."

ZAR Research and Industrial group is the first industrial and production line in

the country that has managed to win various credits and honor in the exports field, he maintained.

Chief Executive of Bank Saderat Iran (BSI) Hojjatollah Seyedi was the next speaker who said, "this industrial and production unit is of the units that took giant strides in line with boosting development of the country."

Commissioning this industrial and production unit in the country is a driving force to the banking industry of the country, he said, adding, "since this industrial unit is completing its product value chain in terms of sales and distribution, it is an honor for us



to cooperate with one of worldly renowned producers."

Bank Pasargad Appreciates Medalist Wrestlers in 2018 Asian Games

As sponsor of wrestling in the country, Bank Pasargad in an unprecedented move appreciated the medalist wrestlers (freestyle and Greco-Roman categories) in 2018 Asian Games, held in Jakarta, Indonesia, the Public Relations Dept. of the bank reported.

The award-granting ceremony was held in Abdullah Movahhed House of Wrestling in the presence of president of Iranian Wrestling Federation Rasoul Khadem, Chief Executive of Bank Pasargad Majid Ghassemi, a group of coaches of the Federation, wrestlers and technical committee of the Federation.

President of Iranian Wrestling Federation Rasoul Khadem was the first speaker who appreciated the unflinching efforts of the bank in sponsoring wrestlers and said, "Once again,



I seize this opportunity to express my special thanks to the nonstop support of the bank from Iranian Wrestling Federation."

CEO of Bank Pasargad Dr. Majid Ghassemi was the next speaker who pointed to wrestling status in the country and said, "wrestling is an important part of our national culture and history."

It is a great honor for the bank to support Iran's ancient sports, he said, adding, "when you [wrestlers] hoist Iran's flag in national and international arenas, the bank boasts to itself considerably."

In the end, CEO of the bank Dr. Majid Ghassemi said that his bank will make its utmost efforts to support medalist wrestlers and athletes in coming years."

174 provincial female managers appointed in a year

W O M E N d e s k **TEHRAN** — A number of 174 women were appointed in managerial positions in different levels over the past year, Masoumeh Ebtekar, vice president for women's and family affairs, said here on Wednesday.

Although the number of appointed female managers is a good sign of development, but there is still a large distance to met the target set by the administration of entrusting women with 30 percent of managerial positions, IRNA quoted Ebtekar as saying.

Women make up 9 percent of managers in business and service workshops, statistics released by the Statistical Center of Iran in the calendar year 1394 (March 2015- March 2016) shows.

Female managers hold a maximum 50 percent share of training workshops, the center said, Mehr news agency reported.

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Wheat flour halva

“There are varieties of halva in the Middle East but this one is a Persian-style with saffron, rose water, and cardamom with a soft texture that melts in your mouth. Decorate as desired with almonds and pistachios. Serve it at room temperature.”

Ingredients



- 1 1/2 cups water
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1/4 cup rose water
- 1/3 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1 pinch saffron
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

Directions:

Bring water and sugar to a boil in a small pot, stirring until sugar dissolves into a syrup. Stir rose water, cardamom, and saffron into the syrup. Reduce heat to low; cover to keep syrup hot.

Melt butter in a large saucepan over low heat. Stir in flour until mixture is a smooth paste, about 1 minute. Cook, stirring constantly, until paste turns brown, 10 to 15 minutes.

Remove flour mixture from heat. Whisk in hot syrup gradually until syrup is completely absorbed and mixture is the consistency of a smooth, soft paste, at least 4 minutes.

Spread mixture in a shallow bowl. Cool to room temperature, about 20 minutes.

LEARN ENGLISH

Job Interview

A: Okay, so let's go over everything one more time. I really want you to get this job!

B: I know! It's an amazing **growth opportunity**! They're true **industry leaders**, and it would be so interesting to be part of an organization that is the **undisputed** leader in business process platform development.

A: So, let's see, you did your research on the company, right?

B: Well, I visited their website and **read up** on what they do. They're an IT service company that offers comprehensive business solutions for large corporations. They provide services such as **CRM** development, and they also offer **custom** designed applications.

A: So what would your role in the company?

B: Well, the position is for an account manager. That basically means that I would be the link between our and our development team.

A: Sounds good, and so, why do you want to work with them?

B: Well, as I said they're the industry leaders, they have a really great growth strategy, amazing development opportunities for employees, and it seems like they have strong corporate governance. They're all about helping companies grow and **unleashing** potential. I guess their **core values** and mission really **resonated** with me. Oh, and they offer six weeks' vacation, stock options and bonuses... I'm totally going to cash in on that.

A: You idiot! Don't say that! Do you want this job, or not?

Key vocabulary

growth opportunity: chance to gain new skills

industry leader: being the best in that particular field or industry

undisputed: definitely true, not doubted

read up: read to gain the most recent information on a subject

CRM: processes, services, technology, and people used to attract and keep customers

custom: specially made to the needs of a person or organization

unleash: release; allow something to happen

core values: most important beliefs

resonate: have a special meaning or importance for someone

Supplementary vocabulary

integrated solutions: combine things to and a plan or a way to deal with a problem (esp. in business)

competitive advantage: something that places a company above the competition

optimize: make something as effective as possible

align: join a group in supporting something

platform: a program that tells a computer how to work

(Source: irlanguage.com)



Every action has a reaction. We have one planet; one chance.

Literacy gap between women and men decreasing in Iran

W O M E N d e s k **TEHRAN** — Literacy gap between women and men is decreasing in Iran, reaching to 12 percent compared to 40 percent three decades ago.

According to the latest statistics released by the Statistical Center of Iran, in the Iranian calendar year 1395 (March 2016-March 2017), the number of illiterate women was 5,569,035 while the number of illiterate men was 3,226,518.

However, the number of literate women in the same year was 29,753,843 and the number of literate man stood at 32,912,917.

Although the number of literate people, both men and women are equal at Iranian cities, there is a great gap of illiteracy between men and women in rural areas, head of the Literacy Movement Organization Ali Baqerzadeh has said.

Currently there exists about 1,800,000 illiterate women in Iran, he noted, adding that two thirds of illiterate people are women in the world.

A large number of illiterate children below the age of seventeen are depriving from a literate mother, i.e. there exists a direct and meaningful relation between parent's literacy and children's lack of education, Baqerzadeh explained.

The diagram of under-three-year-old children's mortality rate proves that children's mortality rate has a direct relationship with the education level of mothers, he added.



Tehran hosting 13th women and national production expo

W O M E N d e s k **TEHRAN** — The thirteenth exhibition of women and national production kicked off here on September 6.

The 10-day exhibition aims at supporting women's productions and creating job for women heads of family, said Fatemeh Rakei, head of women's affairs department at Tehran Municipality.

With the theme of "livable city, participatory citizen", the event also follows the goal of creating more pleasure in the city of Tehran and promoting women's role in production, ISNA quoted Rakei as saying.



The event seeks to develop production of different production of Iranian women in the regional countries, Rakei noted adding that the exhibition targets to introduce production of Iranian breadwinner women to the world market.

The benefits gained from trading the production of women will be granted to breadwinner women, she added.

The exhibition of women and national production is held two times a year, one before the beginning of the new [Iranian calendar] year (March 21) and the other before the start of school year (September 23).



Plan on improving health of mothers on agenda

W O M E N d e s k **TEHRAN** — A plan on improving next generation's well-being, improving mothers' health and strengthening the fundamentals of families is to be implemented in different provinces, Fariba Derakhshan-nia, an official with the Welfare Organization has said.

The project seeks to increase the social health level of Iranian families, IRNA quoted Derakhshan-nia as saying.

The plan makes attempts to train mothers physically and psychologically since the pre-pregnancy period till the age of five of their children, she explained, adding that the mothers will receive different psychological and food security packages.

All young women at the age of fertility are invited to participate in the plan to enjoy a healthy child, she stated.

Walking tied to lower risk of heart failure in older women

Older women who exercise may be less likely to develop heart failure, a U.S. study suggests.

Researchers examined data on 137,303 postmenopausal women, ages 50 to 79 (average age, 63). More than one third had high blood pressure, but few had other risk factors for heart disease like diabetes or a current smoking habit.

After an average of 14 years, 2,523 women developed heart failure. Compared to women who didn't exercise at all, those who got at least some physical activity were 11 percent less likely to develop heart failure. Participants with the highest activity levels were 35 percent less likely to develop heart failure.

“Our findings show clearly that higher

amounts of self-reported total physical activity are associated with significantly lower risks of developing overall heart failure and each subtype,” said lead study author Michael LaMonte, a researcher at the University at Buffalo, New York.

In heart failure, the heart muscle is too weak to pump enough blood through the body. Symptoms include fatigue, weight gain from fluid retention, shortness of breath and coughing or wheezing. Medications can help strengthen the heart and minimize fluid buildup.

Among the women who developed heart failure, 451 had a subtype characterized by what's known as reduced ejection fraction, which typically occurs after a heart attack and has a worse prognosis. Compared to

women who didn't exercise, those who got at least a little activity were 19 percent less likely to develop this kind of heart failure. Women who exercised the most were 32 percent less likely to develop this subtype.

Another 734 women with heart failure had a subtype characterized by what's known as preserved ejection fraction. This is more common in older adults and easier to treat. Compared to sedentary women, participants who got a little exercise were 7 percent less likely to develop this kind of heart failure, and women who got the most exercise were 33 percent less likely to develop this subtype.

Walking - the most common leisure activity among older adults - appeared to work just as well as more vigorous workouts,

LaMonte said by email.

“This is a big finding,” LaMonte said. “Most adults are able to perform walking activities throughout the day, and often do so as part of usual activities of daily living without necessarily having planned walking as part of an exercise routine.”

To assess activity levels, researchers examined data from exercise questionnaires completed by all of the women. Then, they scored participants' exercise levels and intensity based on a measure known as metabolic equivalent of task (MET) hours per week.

Women got an average of 13 MET hours per week. Walking was the most common form of exercise, accounting for about 38 percent of participants' physical activity.

(Source: Reuters Health)

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ع

‘The elderly in Tehran doubles national average’

The elderly living in the city of Tehran are twice as many as those living in the whole country, Tehran district 22 mayor Ali Nozarpour has said.

While in general the elderly constitute 9.27 percent of the population, in Tehran they made up 18.7 percent of the city population, YJC quoted Nozarpour as saying on Monday.

“Getting old and decline in physical function should not decrease the elderly participation in cultural and social activities,” he noted.

PREFIX/SUFFIX

“-ive”

■ **Meaning:** inclined to

■ **For example:** Studies show that if screen workers have short but frequent breaks they become much more **productive**.

PHRASAL VERB

Come apart

■ **Meaning:** to split or fall into pieces:

■ **For example:** I picked the magazine up and it came apart in my hands.

IDIOM

Lose your touch

■ **Explanation:** to no longer be skilled in doing something

■ **For example:** He used to be one of the league's elite shooters, but it seems like he's lost his touch.

U.S. decision to close down Palestinian mission in Washington collective punishment: Erekat

By staff & agencies

A high-ranking Palestinian official has censured the recent decision by the administration of the United States President Donald Trump to close the Palestinian mission in Washington, stating that the move amounts to collective punishment against the entire Palestinian nation.

"We have been notified by a U.S. official of their decision to close the Palestinian mission in the U.S. This is yet another affirmation of the Trump administration's policy to collectively punish the Palestinian people, namely by cutting financial support for humanitarian services, health and education," Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Secretary General Saeb Erekat said in a statement on Monday.

He added, "This dangerous escalation shows that the United States is willing to disband the international system in order to protect Israeli crimes and attacks against the land and people of Palestine as well as against peace and security in the region."

Erekat further noted that "the rights of the Palestinian people are not for sale [and] ... we will not give in to U.S. threats and bullying. We will continue our legitimate struggle for freedom, justice, and independence by all possible political and legal means. We continue to call upon the International Criminal Court to launch an immediate investigation into Israeli crimes."

John Bolton will make the announcement in a speech on Monday, where he would also threaten, among other things, to ban ICC (International Criminal Court) members from traveling to the U.S.

The PLO secretary general also called on the international community to react to the U.S. move.

"Lowering the flag of Palestine in Washington DC means much more than a new slap by the Trump administration against peace and justice. It symbolizes the U.S. attacks against the international system as a whole, including the Paris Convention, UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) and the Human Rights Council among others," Erekat pointed out.

■ Closing PLO office in Washington an irresponsible move

Meanwhile, Hanan Ashrawi, a member of the Executive Committee of the PLO, has condemned the U.S. decision to close the Palestinian mission in Washington as an irresponsible move.

"It is ironic that the U.S. is punishing the PLO, the national representative of the Palestinian people and the highest political body that has committed itself to settling the Palestinian issue politically and legally and has engaged in negotiations with successive U.S. administrations for decades," she said in a statement.

"It is also extremely cruel and spiteful to insist on pressing Palestinian people by depriving them of their rights, giving away their lands plus al-Quds as their lawful capital, defunding UNRWA (the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East)



and Palestinian institutions, including East al-Quds hospitals," Ashrawi said.

She stressed, "Such irresponsible moves are clear proof of American collusion with Israel's occupation... They encourage Israel to simply ignore the need for peace on the basis of international law and respect for human rights."

"The U.S. better come to the terms that Palestinians will not surrender and that coercion or unwarranted collective punitive measures will not succeed in bringing the Palestinian leadership or people to their knees. Such policies are a matter of concern worldwide as they attest [to the fact] that the U.S. has joined Israel in blatantly violating the will of the international community and creating conditions for disorder and instability throughout the Middle East region and beyond."

■ Trump administration to close PLO office in Washington, DC

The developments followed as the U.S. will shut the PLO's diplomatic office in Washington, DC, over the Palestinian government's refusal to enter into U.S.-led negotiations with Israel.

According to a draft text of a speech seen by the Wall Street Journal and Reuters, Trump's national security adviser, John Bolton, will also reportedly threaten the International Criminal Court (ICC) with sanctions if it carries out investigations into the U.S. and Israel.

"The United States will always stand with our friend and ally, Israel," Bolton is expected to say in his speech to the Federalist Society, a conservative group, in Washington, DC.

"The Trump administration will not keep the office open when the Palestinians refuse to start direct and meaningful negotiations with Israel."

The speech is also expected to say that the Trump administration "will fight back" if the ICC formally proceeds with opening an investigation into alleged war crimes committed by the U.S. service members and intelligence professionals during the war in Afghanistan.

If such a probe proceeds, the Trump administration will consider banning judges and prosecutors from entering the U.S., put sanctions on any funds they have in the US financial system and prosecute them in the U.S. courts.

"We will not cooperate with the ICC. We will provide no assistance to the ICC. We will

not join the ICC. We will let the ICC die on its own. After all, for all intents and purposes, the ICC is already dead to us," the draft text said.

The action against the PLO, which serves as the main entity representing the Palestinian people, is the latest in a series of measures by the Trump administration against the Palestinian leadership.

Over the past year, Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law and senior adviser, has repeatedly questioned Mahmoud Abbas' commitment to peace and Trump's so-called "ultimate deal".

The Palestinian leadership, which sees East al-Quds (Jerusalem) as the capital of their future state, suspended contacts with the U.S., after Washington recognized al-Quds (Jerusalem) as the capital of Israel late last year.

The Palestinians insist the status of the city is an issue to be negotiated between them and the Israelis.

Officials in the Gaza Strip, which has been administered by Hamas since 2007, have also previously blasted the U.S. for its support to Israel, saying Washington has long lost its regional credibility.

The U.S. gives Israel annual military aid of \$3.1bn. Next year, that figure will increase to \$3.8bn under a 10-year deal agreed by Barack Obama shortly before he stepped down as president.

While the details of Trump's so-called "deal of the century" have not officially been released, leaks have suggested that the Palestinians would initially control the Gaza Strip and less than half of the occupied West Bank, while a Palestinian capital would be created from villages surrounding al-Quds (Jerusalem).

The Israelis would retain security control over the Jordan valley and have total control over Palestinian travel between the West Bank and Gaza, while a corridor will be created between Palestinian territory and al-Quds (Jerusalem) holy sites.

It appears meanwhile that Palestinians would have to surrender the principle of the right of return of Palestinian refugees expelled during the creation of Israel, while the future of illegal Israeli settlements and the final border between Palestine and Israel would be decided at a later date.

Monday's announcement comes just weeks after the U.S. said it would cut more than \$200m in economic aid for the Palestinians.

The U.S. had planned to give the Palestinians \$251m for good governance, health-care, education and funding for civil society in the current 2018 budget year that ends on September 30.

■ Gaza hospitals could close soon due to U.S. cutting funds

Elsewhere, on Sunday, Haaretz reported that the U.S. has also decided to cut more than \$20m in foreign aid meant to support hospitals in East al-Quds (Jerusalem).

According to Haaretz, the hospitals treat Palestinian patients who require cancer and eye treatments.

The Palestinian Health Ministry has also warned that hospitals in Gaza could close within days due to a shortage of fuel and subsequent power outages after the U.S. decided to cut aid to the besieged enclave and the West Bank.

Ministry spokesmen Ashraf al-Qidra said generators are about to shut in major hospitals in Gaza because fuel supplies have run out, complaining that the related parties have so far refused to address the problem.

Last Tuesday, the ministry warned of the collapse of medical services in Gaza hospitals due to the lack of fuel needed to run generators.

Home to nearly two million people, the Gaza Strip has a total of 13 hospitals and 54 primary health care centers that account for roughly 95 percent of all health services in the coastal enclave.

Gaza, which is grappling with an Israeli siege, has struggled with severe electricity shortages since 2006.

The director of a hospital in the occupied East al-Quds (Jerusalem) on Sunday warned that the U.S. decision to cut \$25 million in medical aid to Palestinians would have a "severe effect."

Bassem Abu Libdeh, the director of the Makassed hospital, said the U.S. decision affects 40 percent of costs in the East al-Quds (Jerusalem) Hospital Network, which includes a group of six hospitals.

The United States on Saturday said it would put the money toward "high-priority projects elsewhere," without specifying them.

According to the World Health Organization, the medical centers provide cancer treatment and other critical care for Palestinians to whom such medical assistance is unavailable in the occupied West Bank and the besieged Gaza Strip.

Abu Libdeh questioned the justification behind mixing political issues with medical and humanitarian issues.

According to the hospital's statement, the U.S. aid cuts come as the "hospital is going through a suffocating crisis as a result of the lack of flow of financial aid, and the piling up of debts and funds held back by the Palestinian government."

The Palestinian Foreign Ministry said the latest aid cut would threaten the lives of thousands of Palestinians and the livelihoods of thousands of hospital employees.

"This dangerous and unjustified American escalation has crossed all red lines and is considered a direct aggression against the Palestinian people," the ministry said.

Trump administration to take tough stance against International Criminal Court

The United States on Monday will adopt an aggressive posture against the International Criminal Court (ICC), threatening sanctions against ICC judges if they proceed with an investigation into alleged war crimes committed by Americans in Afghanistan.

President Donald Trump's national security adviser, John Bolton, is to make the announcement in a midday speech to the Federalist Society, a conservative group, in Washington. It will be his first major address since joining the Trump White House.

"The United States will use any means necessary to protect our citizens and those of our allies from unjust prosecution by this illegitimate court," Bolton will say, according to a draft of his speech seen by Reuters.

Bolton will also say that the State Department will announce the closure of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) office in Washington out of concern about Palestinian attempts to prompt an ICC investigation of Israel.

"The United States will always stand with our friend and ally, Israel," says Bolton's draft text.

Bolton's draft speech says the Trump administration "will fight back" if the ICC proceeds with opening an investigation into alleged war crimes committed by the U.S. service members and intelligence professionals during the war in Afghanistan.

If such an inquiry goes ahead, the Trump administration will consider banning judges and prosecutors from entering the United States, put sanctions on any funds they have in the U.S. financial system and prosecute them in American courts.

"We will not cooperate with the ICC. We will provide no assistance to the ICC. We will not join the ICC. We will let the ICC die on its own. After all, for all intents and purposes, the ICC is already dead to us," says Bolton's draft text.

In addition, the United States may negotiate more binding, bilateral agreements to prohibit nations from surrendering Americans to The Hague-based court, says the text.

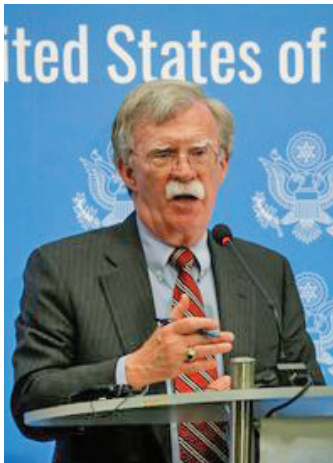
The court's aim is to bring to justice the perpetrators of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

The United States did not ratify the Rome treaty that established the ICC in 2002, with then-President George W. Bush opposed to the court. Bush's successor, President Barack Obama, took some steps to cooperate with it.

"We will consider taking steps in the UN Security Council to constrain the court's sweeping powers, including to ensure that the ICC does not exercise jurisdiction over Americans and the nationals of our allies that have not ratified the Rome Statute," says Bolton's draft text.

Palestinians have reacted with dismay to the U.S. funding cuts, warning that they could lead to more poverty and anger - among factors stoking their decades of conflict with Israel.

(Source: Reuters)



UN human rights chief presses for new body on crimes against Myanmar Rohingya

An independent United Nations team of investigators said in a report last month that there was evidence indicating "genocidal intent" by the military against Rohingya and that crimes against humanity and war crimes appear to have been committed.

The investigators named six generals, including the commander-in-chief, whom they said should face justice.

A year ago, government troops led a brutal crackdown in Myanmar's Rakhine state in response to attacks by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) on 30 Myanmar police posts and a military base. Some 700,000 Rohingya fled the crackdown and most are now living in refugee camps in neighboring Bangladesh.

New United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet, in her first speech to the Human Rights Council since taking office on September 1, said that attacks and persecution appear to continue in Rakhine state. Investigators had also found indications of executions, torture and sexual violence against minorities in Kachin and Shan states, she said.

"The persistence of these patterns of violations underscores the total impunity accorded to the Myanmar security forces," Bachelet told the 47-member Geneva forum which opened a three-week session.

She welcomed a decision by the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) last week that it has jurisdiction over alleged deportations of Rohingya from Myanmar to Bangladesh as a possible crime against humanity.

"This is an immensely important step towards ending impunity, and addressing the enormous suffering of the Rohingya people." "I also welcome efforts by Member States at this Council to establish an independent international mechanism for Myanmar, to collect, consolidate, preserve and analyze evidence of the most serious international crimes, in order to expedite fair and independent trials in national and international courts."

The new mechanism - similar to what has been set up for crimes in Syria - would complement and support the preliminary examination of the ICC prosecutor, she added.

"I urge the Council to pass a resolution and refer the matter to the (UN) General Assembly for its endorsement so that such a mechanism can be established," she said.

(Source: Reuters)



CIA to expand its armed drone program in Africa: NYT

The United States CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) is reportedly expanding its armed drone program in Africa and will start using a military base in the Nigerian desert to carry out raids on areas where the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) and al-Qaeda terrorist outfits are believed to operate.

The New York Times reported on Monday that a secret military base in Dirkou, about 250km south of the Libyan border, will soon begin deploying armed drones in an apparent loosening of Obama-era limits on the U.S. raids outside conventional warzones.

According to the Times, the Pentagon has already carried out five drone raids in Libya this year, including one two weeks ago.

While the drones are currently being flown out of bases in Sicily and Niamey, Niger's capital, armed drones "would almost certainly" be deployed from Dirkou "in the near future".

The Times added that one of its journalists said he saw "gray aircraft - about the size of Predator drones, which are 27 feet long - flying at least three times over six days in early August".

Predator drones, which have claimed countless civilian lives in Afghanistan and Pakistan, can reach a number of West and North African countries, including an area around Lake Chad, where Nigeria's Boko Haram rebellion has spread.

"Unlike small passenger planes that land occasionally at the airport, the drones have no blinking lights signaling their presence," the Times' reporter said.

The paper added that the airport in Dirkou had grown significantly since February to include a new taxiway, walls and security posts.

The U.S. does not have a direct combat



mission in Niger but its military presence has grown in recent years from 100 to 800, and the U.S. is completing construction on a \$100m drone base in the central city of Agadez.

The U.S. views the drones as a cost-efficient way to counter armed groups, but the program has been heavily criticized for many of its operations in non-battlefield settings such as Pakistan, Yemen, Libya, and Somalia.

According to the New America Foundation, the U.S. has carried a total of 414 drone attacks in Pakistan since 2004, with 245 to 303 civilian casualties, and an overall estimation of 2,366 to 3,700 people dead.

In Yemen, there has been a total of 267 drone attacks since 2002, with 111 to 142 civilian casualties, and an overall estimation of 1,330 to 1,716 people dead.

And in Somalia, there have been a total of 92 drone attacks since 2003, with 22 to 37 civilian casualties, and an overall estimation of 666 to 743 people dead.

The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, which tracks the U.S. drone raids and other covert actions operations in several countries, says the U.S. has carried out a minimum of 4,076 attacks in Afghanistan since 2015, with 3,594 to 4,879 people reported killed, including 150 to 313 civilians and 36 to 77 children.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

Second Announcement



N.I.S.O.C

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

Description	UNIT	Quantity.
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3 IN 88.9 OD SCH.80 WT. 7.62 MM WEIGHT 15.27 KG/M	LE	200
4 IN 114.3 MM OD SCH. 80 WT 8.56 MM WEIGHT 22.32	LE	300

Vendors who intend to participate in the A/M tender are requested to send their resume & ten-dency letter via fax/ mail to the following address not later than 14 days after the second an-nouncement. The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide a bid bond of Euro 7,077 / Rls 360,000,000 in favor of NISOC. Iranian vendors shall submit their resume Acc. to forms Nos. 01, 02 and 03 which are available at www.shana.ir and www.nisoc.ir

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<http://iets.mporg.ir>

Former All-Star center Andrew Bynum attempting to make NBA comeback

Former Lakers All-Star Andrew Bynum has hired representation and is scheduling team workouts to attempt a comeback to the NBA, Shams Charania of The Athletic reports.

Bynum is a two-time champion but has not played an NBA game since March 15, 2014. He spent the rest of that season listed as inactive while still on the Pacers roster.

Los Angeles drafted Bynum out of high school with the No. 10 pick in 2005. He is one of five players from the 2005 draft to make an All-Star game along with Chris Paul, Deron Williams, David Lee and Danny Granger.

Bynum, 30, had a large chunk of his career impacted by various knee injuries. He only played in more than 65 games in one season, and he had five seasons where he failed to play more than 50 games, including the 2012-13 season when he missed the entire year after being traded from the Lakers to the 76ers in the four-team deal that sent Dwight Howard to Los Angeles.

After sitting out the entire year while with Philadelphia, Bynum signed with the Cavaliers in the summer of 2013. He started 19 of the 24 games he played with Cleveland and then was traded to the Bulls for Luol Deng. Chicago waived him the day after the trade.

Bynum then signed with the Pacers for the remainder of that season, but only played in two games.

For his career, he averaged 11.5 points and 7.7 rebounds to go with 1.6 blocks per game. In his lone All-Star season of 2011-12 he posted 18.7 points per game, 11.8 rebounds and 1.9 blocks while playing 35.2 minutes per contest and shooting 55.8% from the field. He played in 60 of the 66 games during that lockout-shortened season.

(Source: Sports Illustrated)

Manchester United post job advert looking for transfer specialist

Manchester United are searching for a recruitment guru to give them an edge in the transfer market.

The club are on the look out for an analyst to run the rule over potential additions to Jose Mourinho's squad after a summer during which the United manager appeared underwhelmed by the executive vice-chairman Ed Woodward's transfer business.

The Premier League side are keen to hire a recruitment analyst to "identify players who demonstrate the potential to play for the first team" according to a job advert posted on their official website.

The successful candidate will work in the scouting and recruitment department and play a key role in "decision making in the identification of players with the potential to play for Manchester United."

Woodward has been criticised by some supporters for his handling of the summer window which saw Mourinho add just three players to his squad for a combined £68 million.

It prompted one group of fans to fly a protest banner over Turf Moor during the 2-0 win over Burnley which read "Ed Woodward -- a specialist in failure."

United's scouting and recruitment department has seen coming and goings already this summer.

Former Manchester City scout Romain Poirot has been appointed to head up the club's network in France while Javier Ribalta, who moved to Old Trafford from Juventus to become scouting manager in 2017, left after just 13 months to join Zenit St Petersburg as their sporting director.

Meanwhile, former United goalkeeper Edwin van der Sar has distanced himself from speculation he could return as technical director.

Sources have told ESPN FC that United will look to appoint a technical director to bridge the gap between Woodward and Mourinho but Van der Sar, who played at Old Trafford from 2005 and 2011, says he is happy in his current role as CEO at first club Ajax.

"I saw it a few weeks ago in the press, but that story about United is nonsense," the Dutchman told Ajax Inside.

"I think I have a two-year contract. Ajax is my club and I would like to stay longer. The success we strive for and want to achieve is beautiful."

(Source: ESPN)

Oxlade-Chamberlain 'progressing' with recovery

Liverpool midfielder Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain says he is making progress on his long-term knee injury.

Oxlade-Chamberlain injured his knee during Liverpool's Champions League semifinal with Roma in April and, although he underwent successful surgery shortly afterward, he is expected to miss most if not all of the 2018-19 season.

"It is a very serious injury," the 25-year-old told Sky Sports. "It can happen to any of us at any time and that's obviously something that's never easy to deal with and get over."

"I'm trying to stay positive, that's the sort of character I am. I feel that's the best way to move things forward."

"I'm in good spirits and I'm progressing for sure."

Oxlade-Chamberlain's injury ruled him out of England's 2018 World Cup campaign. The former Arsenal midfielder admitted it was hard to watch from afar as his teammates reached the semifinals in Russia.

"I can't sit here and lie and say it was easy," he said at Wembley during England's UEFA Nations League loss to Spain on Saturday. "It was really difficult."

"Obviously I had a realistic chance to be playing and definitely to be there, so that was obviously not easy."

"But at the same time I went into England fan mode. You can't not get excited."

"As the games were going on and I was seeing a lot of my friends out there doing so well, it was great to see."

"I was so excited for them and I got fully into the spirit. I was gutted at the end when we got so close."

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp said in July "it will be a bonus" if Oxlade-Chamberlain returns to first-team action this season.

(Source: Soccernet)

Djokovic headed for bright finish with U.S. Open win

NEW YORK (Reuters) — For Novak Djokovic, a season that got off to a gloomy start is heading for a brilliant finish after he dismissed Juan Martin Del Potro 6-3 7-6(4) 6-3 to win the U.S. Open on Sunday and earn back-to-back Grand Slam titles.

Working his way back from elbow surgery he underwent following the Australian Open, Djokovic did not expect to feature in the Grand Slam picture this season.

But in the last eight weeks the 31-year-old has resembled the Grand Slam machine that held all four major titles at the same time in 2016, winning three of his last four events including Wimbledon and U.S. Open.

"If you told me in February this year when I got the surgery that I'll win Wimbledon, U.S. Open, and Cincinnati, would be hard to believe," said Djokovic, after pushing his career total to 14 Grand Slams to sit equal third with Pete Sampras on the all-time list. "Life showed me that it takes time for good things, it takes time to really build them, for things to fall into place."

"The last two months have been terrific."

The sixth seed had suffered in the ferocious heat and humidity through the early days of the season's final Grand Slam but dropped only two sets for the tournament and none since the second round. Playing on the same court where Sampras claimed his 14th and final Grand Slam crown, Djokovic has endured more disappointment than joy on Arthur Ashe, winning three titles from eight finals.

All that frustration was washed away when he struck the overhead winner to clinch victory over Del Potro, Djokovic falling to his back, arms and legs spread savoring the moment.

"Pete Sampras is one of the biggest legends ever to play the game," explained Djokovic. "He was my childhood idol."

"There is a lot of significance of me being now shoulder to shoulder in terms of Grand Slam wins with him."

"It's truly incredible when you think about it. I watched him win one of his first Wimbledon championships, and I grew up playing and thinking that one day I'll be able to do what he does. "To actually be here, it's a dream come true."

Djokovic and Del Potro walked onto Arthur Ashe Stadium

Mbappe and Giroud strike as France beat Netherlands

World Cup winners France enjoyed a celebratory homecoming as they paraded their trophy following Nations League victory over the Netherlands.

Backed by a party atmosphere in Paris, France began the brighter and took a deserved lead through Kylian Mbappe.

Despite creating little, the visitors - who failed to qualify for Russia 2018 - found a way back through Ryan Babel.

However, Olivier Giroud's smart finish with 16 minutes remaining was enough to hand Les Bleus the points in Group A1.

France coach Didier Deschamps named the same team that began the world champions' goalless draw with Germany in their opening Nations League fixture on Thursday, with only the injured Hugo Lloris absent from the side that started the World Cup final in Russia.

The hosts began confidently and were gifted the lead on 14 minutes when Quincy Promes' poor header evaded his team-mates - instead allowing Juventus midfielder Blaise Matuidi to find the unmarked Mbappe in the six-yard box.

Mbappe, scorer of four World Cup goals,

almost had his second soon after, narrowly failing to make enough contact with Antoine Griezmann's free-kick to trouble Netherlands goalkeeper Jasper Cillessen.

As the French pressure continued to increase, Cillessen then did well to beat Mbappe to a through ball - and avoid giving away a penalty in the process.

The Netherlands had their first real chance on 66 minutes as Georginio Wijnaldum muscled his way through the French defence, only to drag his shot wide. A minute later they were level as former Liverpool winger Babel beat Benjamin Pavard to right-back Kenny Tete's cross.

Now resurgent, the Dutch side went close to taking the lead soon after as Memphis Depay fired into the side-netting.

But it was Chelsea forward Giroud who settled the game, moving swiftly ahead of Netherlands captain Virgil van Dijk to meet substitute Benjamin Mendy's cross and score his first goal in 11 internationals.

The Netherlands host Germany on Saturday (19:45 BST), before the Germans travel to face France on Tuesday, 16 October.

(Source: BBC)



buzz with the Billie Jean King National Tennis Center still courting over the controversial women's final on Saturday, won by Japan's Naomi Osaka after Serena Williams incurred three code violations. Britain's Alison Hughes, the second woman to umpire a U.S. Open men's singles final, kept a low profile as the two former champions went to work.

The tension and fireworks of the Osaka-Williams clash were left behind during a relatively calm and composed baseline battle between two friends and familiar foes, who had played each other 18 times, with Djokovic holding a commanding 14-4 edge.

While there was joy in victory there was none to be taken from beating a teary Del Potro, who knows the pain of a comeback having undergone four wrist surgeries that caused

him to miss 14 Grand Slams and at one point looked to be derailling his career.

Del Potro's sole Grand Slam title came at the U.S. Open in 2009 and he said it had been an emotional journey back to the Flushing Meadows final.

"I'm very sad for being a loser today but Novak deserved to take the trophy," said Del Potro, who wept into his hands before being comforted by Djokovic.

"I was playing almost at the limit all the time, looking for winners with my forehands, backhands, and I couldn't make it because Novak were there every time."

"The worst part to me is the chances that I couldn't make but then when you see a friend holding the trophy, it's good, too. "I'm glad that Novak is the champion."

Real Madrid could sign Jose Luis Rodriguez in 'the next few days'

Uruguayan defender Jose Luis Rodriguez has said a move to Real Madrid could be completed by this weekend.

Rodriguez, 21, who plays for Danubio in his homeland, also confirmed the European champions were not the only team interested in his services, though he does not know who the other club is as his agent is dealing with the negotiations.

"Before Aug. 31 [when the transfer window closed] there was the opportunity to go [to Real Madrid]," Rordiguez told Sport 890 after being asked when the proposed move to the Bernabeu first came about. "My agent is talking to them now, and in these next few days I should be able to travel and try to close it."

Asked if Real Madrid were the only club who wanted to sign him, he replied: "No, there is another side, but I would be lying if I told you I knew who it was."

Rodriguez -- nicknamed 'El Puma' -- confirmed he will not be playing in Sunday's clash with Boston River.

"I will not be playing in the next match, I think," he said. "We will be looking to travel soon -- possibly before the weekend."

"I trained all week like normal, but not as a starter. The manager knows I won't be starting."

Fellow Uruguayan Federico Valverde is at already with the Real Madrid B team and Rodriguez revealed the pair have spoken about his potential move.

"Yes, I've talked to him," Rodriguez said. "It's very good to have people you know people somewhere you could end up living."

Rodriguez, who will be signing for Real Madrid's Castilla side should the deal go ahead, was also asked whether he would be loaned back to Danubio for the rest of the campaign.

But he could not give a definite answer because nothing has been decided yet -- a situation which is giving him sleepless nights.

"Yes [coming back to Danubio is one options]," he said. "Right now, nothing is concrete so I am very anxious."

"I lost a few a days' sleep while I waited for this to be resolved. I have already got my bags packed -- but only halfway."

(Source: Soccernet)

Williams' U.S. Open treatment divides tennis world

NEW YORK (Reuters) — Serena Williams' behavior in Saturday's U.S. Open final divided the tennis world after she called the chair umpire a "liar" and a "thief" and said he treated her differently than male players during her loss to Naomi Osaka.

Williams, who was seeking a record-equaling 24th Grand Slam singles title on Saturday, was handed a warning for a coaching violation before being deducted a point for smashing her racquet. She then had a heated argument with chair umpire Carlos Ramos, which cost her a game.

The six-times U.S. Open champion, who has since been fined \$17,000 by the United States Tennis Association for the violations, vigorously disputed each during the match.

In the wake of Osaka's first Grand Slam triumph, there were messages of support for Williams as well as those condemning her behavior and agreeing with the umpire's calls.

Tennis great Billie Jean King wrote on Twitter: "When a woman is emotional, she's 'hysterical' and she's penalized for it. When a man does the same, he's 'outspoken' and there are no repercussions. Thank you, @serenawilliams, for calling out this double standard. More voices are needed to do the same."

Yet Australian Margaret Court, whose tally of Grand Slam singles titles is being chased by Williams, had little sympathy for the 36-year-old American former world number one.

"We always had to go by the rules," Court, who dominated tennis during the 1960s and early 1970s, said according to a report in The Australian. "It's sad for the sport when a player tries to become bigger than the rules."

"Because the young player outplayed her in the first set, I think pressure got her more than anything."

■ RACQUET SMASH

The drama started when Ramos handed Williams a coaching violation early in the second set because of hand gestures made from the stands by her coach Patrick Mouratoglou. He later admitted to coaching, which is an offence in the sport, though one rarely called.

When the violation was announced Williams approached Ramos to say she never takes coaching and would rather lose than "cheat to win".

Things seemed to settle down as Williams went on to break Osaka for a 3-1 lead, but she gave the break right back in the next game with a pair of double faults, prompting the former champion to smash her racquet on the court.



That resulted in a second violation, meaning Osaka was awarded the first point of the sixth game.

Williams, who was under the impression the first violation had been rescinded, returned to Ramos to seek an apology for saying she had received coaching earlier.

During a changeover, Williams resumed her argument with the umpire, this time saying he was attacking her character and was a "thief". That triggered a third violation, which resulted in a game penalty that gave Osaka a 5-3 lead.

From there, Williams summoned the tournament referee to the court and said male tennis players were not punished for similar offences.

■ DIFFERENT STANDARD

Tennis great John McEnroe, one of the game's most tempestuous characters in his playing days, said the sport must find a way to allow players to express feelings and inject their personality into the game while adhering to the rules.

Ramos should not have given Williams a violation for breaking her racquet and should have warned her early on about what would happen if she did not move on, he said.

"I've said far worse," McEnroe, a seven-times Grand Slam singles winner, said on ESPN. "She's right about the guys being held to a different standard, there's no question."

However, Richard Ings, a former professional chair umpire who also used to be the ATP Tour Executive Vice-President,

Rules and Competition, felt it was Williams who needed to apologize. Ings once issued a warning, point penalty and a game penalty against McEnroe at the 1987 U.S. Open for obscenities directed at the umpire.

"We should not let her record, as glowing as it is, overshadow the fact that on this day, in this match Williams was wrong," Ings wrote in The Sydney Morning Herald.

"The decisions made by Ramos had nothing to do with sexism or racism. They had everything to do with observing clear breaches of the grand slam code of conduct and then having the courage to call them without fear or favor."

A spokeswoman for Williams did not immediately respond when asked to comment on the remarks from Court and Ings, while the USTA said it does not make chair umpires available to the media.

According to the official Grand Slam rule book, a first infraction gets a warning, a second offence results in a point penalty while a third brings about a game penalty.

The rule book also states that players who receive coaching during a match or intentionally destroy a racquet shall be penalized in accordance with the point penalty schedule.

In the rule book, verbal abuse is defined as "a statement about an official, opponent, sponsor, spectator, or other person that implies dishonesty or is derogatory, insulting or otherwise abusive."

Carlos Queiroz: Uzbekistan are a strong team with Hector Cuper

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran national football team head coach Carlos Queiroz said the friendly match against Uzbekistan will be very useful since the Asian team have changed into a strong team under Hector Cuper.

Team Melli will meet Uzbekistan in Tashkent on Tuesday as preparation for the 2019 AFC Asian Cup.

"We will play against a strong and well organized team who take advantage of good players. I think this will be a great experience for our players in the AFC Asian Cup. It is obvious that under the guidance of Hector Cuper, Uzbekistan are an amazing team," he added.

"We've started preparations for the 2019 AFC Asian Cup. In this match, we will have the opportunity to play with the experienced and the youth players.

Asked him about Sardar Azmoun's retirement from the national duty, Queiroz said, "For some reasons, Sardar left the team at the end of the World Cup, but not for always. When he asked me for advice, I agreed not to call him for a while as he had personal reasons. After a while he will return to the team after solving his problems."

"I would like to emphasize that participation in the World Cup does not help us for the AFC Asian Cup. For the Asian Cup, we need to work hard, to increase the players' passion, and then we can win the championship. South Korea, Japan, and Uzbekistan are also in the Asian Cup for the sake of winning the title. When we work more, we earn more," the former Real Madrid coach stated.

"I have not signed a new contract with the Iranian Football Federation. However, we have reached a deal with the federation. You just have to write it on the paper," he said.



I hope the fans enjoy Uzbekistan and Iran friendly: Masoud Shojaei



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran national football team captain Masoud Shojaei said he hopes the fans enjoy their friendly match against Uzbekistan.

Team Melli will meet Uzbekistan in Tashkent on Tuesday as preparation for the 2019 AFC Asian Cup, where they are in Group D along with Iraq, Vietnam and Yemen.

"First of all, I have to thank Uzbekistan Football Association for their

hospitality. I hope the fans enjoy a beautiful match between two teams," Shojaei said.

Praising Carlos Queiroz as a coach who has helped Iran grow in the world, Shojaei said, "Carlos Queiroz helped us grow. That's why he has been working for our team for the past seven years. We are very grateful for that. We will not let him leave our team," Shojaei added.

Moradi seizes Iran's third silver at Asia-Oceania Open Powerlifting C'ships



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Nader Moradi from Iran claimed a silver medal at the Asia-Oceania Open Powerlifting Championships on Monday.

Moradi lifted 202kg to finish in second place at the men's up to 80kg division.

Gu Xiaofei took China's ninth gold in Kitakyushu after clearing the bar at 227kg. The 29-year-old is hoping to continue improving ahead of Tokyo 2020, where he aims to claim his first Paralympic title

after taking silver at both London 2012 and Rio 2016.

The bronze medal went to Kazakhstan's Nodarzhan Khamrullayev (160kg).

Iran's Yousef Yousefi and Rouhollah Rostami have already won two silver medals in the competition underway in Kitakyushu, Japan.

Competition will continue on Tuesday (11 September) with the women's up to 73kg and 79kg, and the men's up to 88kg and 97kg.

Guus Hiddink appointed coach of Chinese Olympic team

Former Real Madrid and Netherlands coach Guus Hiddink has been tasked with ensuring China qualify for the finals of the 2020 Olympic Games football tournament after being appointed manager of the country's under-21 team on Monday.

Hiddink, 71, becomes the latest big name coach to move to China since the country's president, Xi Jinping, stated his desire for the nation to become a global football power.

He joins fellow European Cup-winning coach Marcello Lippi on the payroll of the CFA, with the Italian World Cup winner preparing the senior team for the finals of the Asian Cup in the United Arab Emirates in January.

Hiddink's appointment was announced on the Chinese FA's official website in a statement that said he will lead the country through to the 2020 Asian Under 23 Championship, which serves as the

continent's final qualifiers for the Olympic Games.

"There is still a lot of work to do," Hiddink said in an interview with Dutch media after watching the team perform in a recent friendly tournament.

"To be honest, there were only four or five players in China who I thought: 'Yes, they are usable.' The rest came physically, tactically, conditionally and technically pretty short."

Hiddink is no stranger to football in the region, having led South Korea to the semifinals of the 2002 World Cup before taking Australia to the round of 16 for the first time four years later in Germany.

His most recent job saw him work as an interim head coach with Premier League side Chelsea.

China have not appeared at the Olympic football finals since 2008 when Beijing hosted the Games and the team were given an automatic berth.



Home advantage key, insists Bashar Resan

Tehran: Persepolis midfielder Bashar Resan has warned Al Duhail that they face a "difficult" task to advance to the AFC Champions League semi-finals ahead of the second leg of the quarter-finals at Azadi Stadium next Monday. Al Duhail travel to the Islamic Republic of Iran with a slender lead after Almoez Ali's first-leg goal was enough to secure a 1-0 victory and a record-equaling ninth successive win in the competition for the Qatari side.

But Persepolis boast a 100 percent record in front of their support having won four from four at Azadi Stadium and the Iranian giants overturned a one-goal deficit in the previous round when a 2-1 home victory saw them edge past the United Arab Emirates' Al Jazira on away goals.

"Al Duhail tried to score more than one goal knowing that the second leg will be difficult in Iran in front of our fans," said Iraq international Resan, who made his first start on the continent this season in the first leg.

"They weren't very dangerous, they just had more possession than us. There is now a second



leg to play in Iran and, obviously, it will be a tough one.

"Hopefully, we will be able to satisfy our fans in Iran and also those who supported us here in Qatar."

Having reached the AFC Champions League

semi-finals for the first time in 2017, Persepolis were making their second successive appearance in the last eight two weeks ago.

But the Tehran side saw key midfielders Vahid Amiri and Farshad Ahmadzadeh as well as defender Sadegh Moharrami depart in the summer months, making their quarter-final task against the tournament's form team all the more difficult.

With places up for grabs in the midfield, though, Resan — who coach Branko Ivancovic has summoned from the bench five times in the competition — was handed a central midfield role and was one of his side's best performers on the night.

"They're a big team and haven't lost in a long time," added Resan. "It was a tough match and Qatari teams are generally difficult to play at their home."

"We had some chances in both halves; we missed two or three good chances. We weren't bad and we can even say that it was a good match — 1-0 was not a bad result for us."

(Source: the-afc)

Iran will help Uzbekistan prepare for Asian Cup: Hector Cuper

TASNIM — Uzbekistan Newly-appointed coach Hector Cuper said Iran national football team will help them to prepare for the 2019 AFC Asian Cup.

Uzbekistan, who have been grouped with Japan, Oman and Turkmenistan in the AFC Asian Cup, will host Iran in Tashkent's Bunyodkor Stadium on Tuesday.

"The friendly match against Iran will be Uzbekistan's second warm-up for the Asian Cup. We will field the new players who were unused substitutes in the match against Syria..." Cuper said in the pre-match news conference.

"Iran are a strong team and they had a good performance in the 2018 World Cup in Russia. They work with Carlos Queiroz for many years," the Argentine coach added.

"Playing with Iran will be a good opportunity for Uzbekistan to prepare for the 2019 AFC Asian Cup. I am waiting for the friendly against Iran," Cuper concluded.



Iran women volleyball team runner-up in Hungary

IRNA — Iran's Women National Volleyball Team became second in Hungary tournament with four wins and one loss.

In the last match, Iran lost to Ukraine's Novator Volleyball Team and finished second.

Mahsa Kadhoda and Maeda Borhani were selected for the dream team. Iran partook in the event to get prepared for Thailand Asian Women's Volleyball Championship Cup which is slated for September 16-23.

Iranian ambassador in Hungary Gholam-Ali Rajabi-Yazdi awarded the medals.

Iranian shooter bags gold at World Shooting Champs

IRNA — Iranian shooter Amir Mohammad Nekounam received a gold medal in three-position rifle at the 52nd World Shooting Championship, which is underway in South Korea.

Hungarian and Chinese rivals snatched silver and bronze medals respectively.

The Iranian squad has so far received three silver medals in mix, air pistol, team and individual categories.

The 52nd World Shooting Championship is underway with the attendance of 1,804 athletes from 90 countries in Changwon, South Korea.

The ISSF World Shooting Championship is one of the five prestigious sports events along with the Summer and Winter Olympics, the FIFA World Cup and a global sports festival for all people in the world.

The 52nd World Shooting Championship is underway in Changwon in 2018 will catch all global citizens' attention as it's the second time for Korea to host the competition since the Seoul World Shooting Championship in 1978.

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■ Managing Director: Ali Asgari

■ Editor-in-Chief: Mohammad Ghaderi

» Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895
editor@tehrantimes.com

» Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Ali Mo'alleem Damghani steps down as director at IAA

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** -- Ali Mo'alleem Damghani stepped down as director at the Iranian Academy of Arts (IAA) after his term expired on Sunday, the IAA announced. Alireza Esmaeili, an IAA deputy director, has been selected as acting director of the academy. Mo'alleem Damghani has held the position since 2009.



Narjes Mohammadi hangs illustrations in Spain

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian illustrator Narjes Mohammadi is displaying her latest collection “Bird Woman” at Espacio Errante in Granada, Spain. The collection is composed of paintings and illustrations on a woman who seeks to get rid of all mental restrictions. The exhibit will be running until October 31.

“The Nun” delivers best opening in “Conjuring” series with heavenly \$53.5 million

LOS ANGELES (Variety) — “The Nun” had a divine opening weekend atop the North American box office. Warner Bros. dominated for the fifth weekend in a row as the latest installment in the “Conjuring” series launched with \$53.5 million in 3,876 locations. That easily marks the best debut in the series, crushing 2013’s “The Conjuring,” which previously held the record with \$41.8 million. It’s also the second-best September debut behind Warner Bros. “It.” Overseas, “The Nun” generated a mighty \$77.5 million for a global start of \$131 million. Corin Hardy’s horror flick — starring Demian Bichir and Taissa Farmiga — broke a number of franchise records this weekend. It had the largest Thursday showing out of the five movies (\$5.4 million), as well as the biggest opening day (\$22.3 million). Imax screens accounted for \$4.5 million of “The Nun’s” debut.

The first four movies in Warner Bros. “Conjuring” franchise — “The Conjuring,” “Annabelle,” “The Conjuring 2,” and “Annabelle: Creation” — have generated over \$1.1 billion globally.



“We knew heading into the weekend that anticipation for ‘The Nun’ was extremely high across multiple demos, but these results surpassed all our expectations,” Jeff Goldstein, Warner Bros. head of domestic distribution, said. “We anticipate strong word of mouth to carry the film well into the fall, and expect more than a few Nuns showing up on doorsteps and at parties this Halloween!”

Cast member Demian Bichir participates in a panel discussion of “The Bridge” during FX Networks’ portion of the 2014 Television Critics Association Cable Summer Press Tour in Beverly Hills, California July 21, 2014. (Reuters/Kevork Djansezian)

No. 2 with “Crazy Rich Asians,” which earned an impressive \$13.5 million in its fourth weekend — a decline of 38 percent. Jon M. Chu’s rom-com has now earned \$136 million in North America.

Among newcomers, STX’s “Peppermint” opened on par with projections. Jennifer Garner’s R-rated action thriller secured third place with \$13.2 million when it debuted in 2,890 locations.

The final new entry of the weekend, faith-based drama “God Bless the Broken Road,” bowed with a dismal \$1.5 million on 1,272 screens. The movie is loosely based on the hit Rascal Flatts song and stars “American Idol” alum Jordyn Sparks, Robin Givens, Lindsay Pulsipher, and former NFL player LaDainian Tomlinson.

Rounding out the top five with impressive holdovers is Warner Bros. shark thriller “The Meg” and Sony’s “Searching.” “The Meg” earned another \$6.1 million for a domestic tally of \$131.6 million. Meanwhile, “Searching” brought in \$4.5 million, taking its North American total to \$14.3 million.

Tom Cruise’s “Mission: Impossible - Fallout” crossed a major milestone this weekend, topping \$700 million globally. It has now surpassed “Mission: Impossible - Ghost Protocol” (\$649.7 million) as the highest grossing installment in the franchise.

At the specialty box office, Magnolia’s documentary “Kusama - Infinity” opened in just two locations, where it brought in \$30,400. That translates to an impressive \$15,200 per screen.

The first weekend in September is down from last year by 28.3 percent, according to comScore, but that’s to be expected after “It” came along to smash expectations with its massive \$123 million debut. Still, the box office is up a healthy 9.5 percent compared to 2017.

Iranian Oscars born as Cinema Cinema Academy lunches annual awards

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — The Cinema Cinema Academy, Iran’s first private film academy based in Tehran, has launched the Mehrgiah annual awards, which can be considered to be the Iranian equivalent of the Oscars.

The first edition of the awards was held at Tehran’s Enqelab Hotel on Sunday evening. “Love caused such a gathering to be organized,” the 67-year-old filmmaker Kianush Ayyari, who is the founder and director of the academy, said at the beginning of the awards ceremony.

“This celebration has been organized independently in order to show its love for cinema,” he added.

The organizers have named the award “Mehrgiah” (mandrake), which is considered to be a mythical plant and the symbol of fertility, love and unity in Iranian culture. The award made of bronze represents a mandrake with five leaves placed on a rock-shaped stand.

The first of the new honor was presented to the U.S.-based Iranian director Amir Naderi, who could not attend the ceremony.

In his brief speech about Naderi, documentarian Mohammadreza Aslani praised Naderi for his great steady progress and said, “Amir Nader can be a well-established role model for the young generation of Iranian filmmakers.”

Veteran writer Mahmud Dowlatabadi called Naderi energetic and praised him for his diligence. “He has come from the depths of society and I like his films,” he added. The Mehrgiah for best film was awarded

to “Subdued” by director Hamid Nematollah who was also named best director for the film.

“Amir Naderi had said that five persons would be filmmakers following his ‘The Runner’,” said Nematollah and added, “It is a great honor for me that I am one of the five.”

Comedy actor Reza Attran was named as the Leading Figure of the Year, which was selected by journalists’ votes.

The award for best screenplay went to “No Date, No Signature” co-written by Vahid Jalilvand and Ali Zarnegar.

Jalilvand who is also the director of the film said, “I dedicate this award and the souls of other awards that have been won to Davud Kianian who is not allowed to produce a work. It’s a pity that the country, and especially our children, is deprived of his theatrical performances.”

Navid Mohammadzadeh was picked as best actor for his role in “No Date, No Signature” and Leila Hatami won the award for best actress for her role in “Subdued”.

Ehsan Biglari received the award for best first-director film for “My Brother, Khosro”.

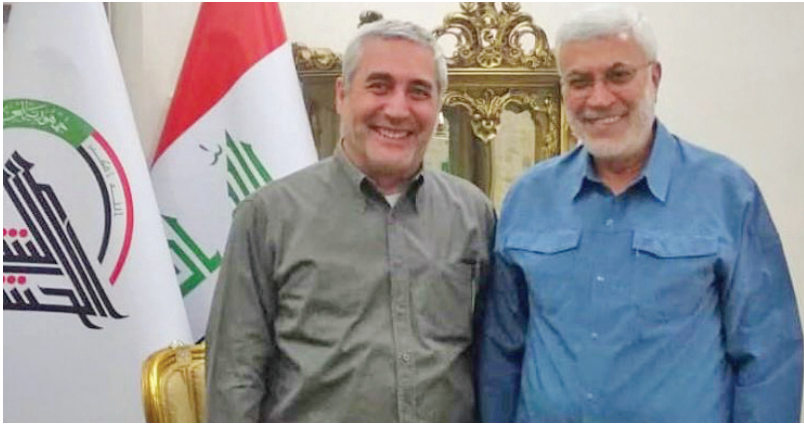
“Finding Farideh” co-directed by Azadeh Musavi and Kurosh Atai won the award for best documentary and “Animal” co-directed by the Ark brothers, Bahman and Bahram, was crowned best short film.

Over 100 films produced over the past year were judged by a jury of 60 cineastes and films critics, who are from the members of the academy.



Comedy actor Reza Attran accepts the Mehrgiah for the Leading Figure of the Year during the Cinema Cinema Academy Awards at Tehran’s Enqelab Hotel on September 9, 2018. (Fars/Armin Karami)

“Damascus Time” director Hatamikia meets Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis in Iraq



Director Ebrahim Hatamikia (L) and a Hashd al-Shaabi Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis pose in an undated photo. (Fars)

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — “Damascus Time” director Ebrahim Hatamikia met Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, a high-ranking commander of the Popular Mobilization Units — Hash al-Shaabi, in Iraq and both sat to watch the movie about the Daesh terrorists, the Persian service of MNA reported on Monday. “The film is highly successful in depicting an accurate and documented image of the Daesh atrocities and their seditious actions,” Al-Muhandis told Hatamikia after watching the movie. “I hope making resistance-themed and anti-

Daesh films continues in the region,” he added.

Hatamikia is in Iraq to promote his latest drama “Damascus Time” in the country, which has fought the Daesh terrorists over the past few years.

The film is about an Iranian pilot and his copilot son who are captured by Daesh forces in Syria while they are in the country to deliver a cargo of humanitarian relief supplies to people in a war-torn region.

Earlier in February, Hatamikia won the Crystal Simorgh for best director at the 36th Fajr Film Festival in Tehran for the film.

Iranian ensemble Arghavaneh honored at Bulgaria World Folk festival



Iranian ensembles pose during the closing ceremony of the World Folk in Burgas, Bulgaria on September 2, 2018.

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — The Iranian ensemble Arghavaneh has won the bronze award at the World Folk, an international folk music championship, which took place in the Bulgarian city of Burgas.

Bandleader Mostafa Ahmadi received the Bronze Orpheus and a bronze medal of the championship from jury member Valko Lyubenov at the closing ceremony on September 3, the organizers announced.

In addition, Khosh Honar, another Iranian ensemble that is led by Aidin Bayat,

was honored with the Plaque of City Hall Obzor and a certificate.

The 6-year-old Sarina Aqdam from Khosh Honar also received a diploma and a teddy bear. She was the youngest participant in the championship.

The Russian group Shondiban led by Elena Vorobyova won the Golden Orpheus, the grand prix of the event and the Georgia dance ensemble Mkhedruli led by Badri Tsetskhladze received the Silver Orpheus.

The festival ran from August 23 to September 2 in the Bulgarian city of Burgas.

DeLorean film drives back to the futuristic ‘70s to close Venice festival

VENICE, Italy (Reuters) — The DeLorean sports car entered movie legend as the time machine in the “Back to the Future” films and returns to the big screen in “Driven”, a comedy thriller about the downfall of its creator, which closed the Venice Film Festival on Saturday.

John DeLorean, who designed muscle cars for General Motors before striking out on his own with the futuristic, gull-winged sports car that bore his own name, has gone down in history for his company’s spectacular collapse.

“Driven” recounts his last desperate effort to save it, getting involved in a cocaine smuggling deal that turned out to be an FBI sting, set up with the help of neighbor Jim Hoffman, a star-turn for Jason Sudeikis, best known for “Horrible Bosses” and “We’re the Millers”.

Director Nick Hamm grew up in Northern Ireland where the British government had lured DeLorean to build his factory in a bid to bring economic prosperity to a depressed area riven by deadly sectarian violence.

“If you’re going to take people on a story of entrapment, coke deals, models, cars - fast cars in a retro ‘70s world - do it in a humorous way,” Hamm told Reuters in an interview, adding that he had taken inspiration from ‘70s-period movies such as “Boogie Nights” and “American Hustle”.

Played by Lee Pace, star of ABC fantasy comedy series “Pushing Daisies”, DeLorean comes over as a huckster, selling a hollow version of the American Dream, something Hamm said had contemporary relevance in a world where “buffoonery is somehow celebrated”.



A DeLorean model is seen on the red carpet for screening of the closing film “Driven”, Out of Competition in the 75th Venice International Film Festival, Venice, Italy, September 8, 2018-. (Reuters/Tony Gentile)

“Somehow the egotist, the entertaining politician, the one that has the greatest, quickest, fastest line, the one that is best on television, is somehow the best one for you in your life,” he said.

“This is a movie that shows you that these people are not what they (say they) are, and if you’re sucker enough to fall for that then more fool you.”

Filmed in Puerto Rico “because it looks like California in 1970s”, the movie was almost derailed by Hurricane Maria which devastated the island last year.

“We didn’t know whether we, physically, could actually go back,” Hamm said.

“But we had a massive local crew, probably 400 or 500 people that, if we didn’t go back, wouldn’t get a paycheck. So really there’s no option. In the end you go back, you make the movie to the best of your ability, you give people a paycheck and you build an infrastructure or an industry.”

Female-led “Widows” reinvents the heist film

TORONTO (Reuters) — “Widows” is billed as a heist movie, but its showcase of female strength and initiative seems to speak directly to the reinvigorated movement for female empowerment.

The film, set in Chicago and starring Oscar winner Viola Davis, follows four women left in debt by their criminal husbands who decide to turn to robbery to get back on their feet.

It chronicles their journey from wives who were primarily supported by their husbands but who overcome the trauma from past abuse and neglect to develop creative ways to survive.

“It wasn’t any gimmicky heist movie. It was women empowering themselves in their lives and confronting each other and having to work together,” Davis said at the Toronto Film Festival where “Widows” had its world premiere this weekend.

“What better metaphor is there for women today?” she added.

The women are also played by Michelle Rodriguez, Cynthia Erivo and Elizabeth Debicki in a multi-ethnic cast directed by Briton Steve McQueen, whose powerful historical race drama “12 Years a Slave” won best picture at the 2014 Oscars.

“It’s a film about women, about women learning who they are and becoming independent. It’s about empowerment, it’s a film about corruption and racism and violence, and it’s a heist film,” Debicki said.

McQueen said he was inspired to make the film after watching the 1980’s British television series of the same name when he was a teenager. The



Co-Screenwriter Gillian Flynn arrives for the world premiere of “Widows” at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) in Toronto, Canada, September 8, 2018. (Reuters/Mark Blinch)

movie’s arrival at a time when women are demanding more representation and respect in Hollywood and beyond is mere coincidence, he said.

“It just sort of spoke to me as a 13-year-old black boy in London,” McQueen said. There were “these four women who were being sort of judged in the way that they can achieve, and judged by their appearance rather than their character.”

“Widows”, which also stars Liam Neeson, Colin Farrell, Daniel Kaluuya and Robert Duvall, won strong reviews and is already creating Oscar buzz as Hollywood’s long awards season gets underway.

“The men are fighting for scraps. The women are fighting for their souls,” said Farrell, who plays the deeply flawed and conflicted politician Tom Mulligan.

“Widows” will be released in North American movie theaters on Nov. 16.