



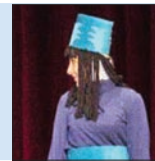
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## 'Hosseini infants' ceremony held nationwide

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© Tehran Times/ Marvan Kamvab

## Iran exports \$2.169b of condensate in 5 months

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iran exported 4.167 million tons of gas condensate worth \$2.169 billion during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (April 21-May 21), the Iranian customs administration data showed. The country's five-month condensate exports fell nearly 40 percent in terms of weight compared to the same period last year, ISNA reported.

The figure also shows a decrease of

22.53 percent in terms of value, the report added.

The country exported 7.139 million tons of gas condensate valued at \$2.8 billion during the last year's five-month period.

Condensate exports accounted for 9 percent and 11.23 percent of the country's total exports in terms of weight and value respectively in comparison with last year's figures of 14.97 percent and 16.49 percent in order.

## Iranian diplomat consults with Europeans on Syria

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Hossein Jaber Ansari, a senior assistant to the Iranian foreign minister, has visited Switzerland, Belgium and France to hold consultations on the Syrian crisis.

In an interview with the IRIB published on Friday, he elaborated on his trips and meetings.

On his visit to Geneva, he said, "This trip was aimed at holding second round of consultations of representatives of the countries that guarantee the Astana talks with the UN secretary general's special envoy on Syrian affairs."

"We decided to hold another round of talks in Geneva in future months," he added. **→2**

## Saudi-led airstrikes kill 15 civilians in Yemen

At least 15 civilians, including one child, have been killed as the Saudi-led coalition resumed its airstrikes on the outskirts of Yemen's port city of Hudaydah despite widespread international criticism over the war's impact on civilians. According to reports by Yemen's Arabic-language al-Masirah television, about 20 civilians were also injured during Wednesday's bombings that were launched after a brief truce since July.

The UN warned Friday that shelling and

airstrikes in Yemen's Hudaydah province have targeted humanitarian workers and infrastructure, threatening its ability to feed 3.5 million "very hungry people."

The World Food Programme (WFP) said it was "extremely concerned about the series of security incidents in Hudaydah city these past few days in and around deconflicted sites critical for the humanitarian response in Yemen", describing the situation as "alarming." **→13**

## Fear of war among Israeli army

By Farzad Farhadi

**TEHRAN** — The Zionists are very worried about the situation of their internal front. However, they have tried to practice military maneuver in case of possible war with Hezbollah, and they have a huge budget of 30 billion shekels for its military to protect its internal front from missile attacks from Gaza or by Hezbollah.

According to Amos Gilad, former head of the Defense Ministry's diplomatic-security, the Israeli military's report on future war scenarios include the deployment of hundreds of thousands of Israelis to cope with hundreds of missiles.

Gilad has warned about war and the threats and said the missiles in the north have targeted Israel, including Tel Aviv, and this requires that the army and security institutions be fully prepared.

The Israeli authorities will do their best to assure victory in any upcoming war with Hezbollah, but according to Zionist media outlets, Israelis do not completely trust their defense systems.

The Merkava tank, spoken of by the Zionists glowingly, was not particularly effective during the previous war. After the war, Zionist commanders were forced to beef up their armored units.

Meanwhile, in recent reports from the Zionist media, the number of troops participating in the Israeli regime's psychotherapy sessions is increasing. The Zionist troops are afraid of war missions which are a nightmare for them. Some soldiers also run away from military service.

Ray al-Yaum newspaper pointing to the weakness of the Zionist Army's armed forces: "Since 1948, the army of the occupation regime

has relied much on the air force in the wars with the Arab armies and in the war of 1967 the battle was won the occupation regime within six days. Tel Aviv's leaders seem to have relied on former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's words when he said the sea is the same sea, and the Arabs are the same Arabs, but the IDF has not moved towards the development of ground forces to cope with new challenges. In particular, Arab movements and military groups have emerged that have presented real challenges to the Zionists.

This media writes: in the military, the air force alone cannot determine the fate of war with groups that are waging a guerrilla war. This brought Israel into a state of psychological shock or fear of land warfare against its enemies given material and human losses. **→7**

## Putin discusses Idlib with Russia's security council

Russian President Vladimir Putin discussed the situation in Syria's rebel-held Idlib with members of Russia's Security Council on Friday, the RIA news agency cited the Kremlin as saying.

Putin told the Security Council he was concerned by militant activity in the last major rebel-held stronghold in Syria, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov was cited as saying.

Meanwhile, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Friday that Moscow would keep bombing militant targets in Syria's Idlib Province if need be, but would also open humanitarian corridors to allow civilians to flee, the Interfax news agency reported.

Lavrov, who was speaking in Berlin, was cited as saying that the Russian air force would strike what he called terrorist weapons-making facilities

as and when it found out about them, but would also encourage local reconciliation deals.

**■ Syria, Jordan in talks to reopen key border crossing**

Syrian and Jordanian officials have started talks to reopen the key border crossing of al-Nassib after a three-year hiatus in a bid to re-establish bilateral trade and help revive the economy of war-torn Syria.

The first round of talks was held on Wednesday, with both countries agreeing to continue negotiations over the practical arrangements, from customs to security, in order to reopen the crossing in southern Syria, an informed source said on Thursday.

"The meetings will continue to put a complete view of all the arrangements linked to reopening

the crossings in the coming period," the source told Reuters.

Al-Nassib border crossing was closed in 2015 following attacks on the Jordanian security forces by foreign-backed terrorists, but the Syrian army managed to retake the vital route last July.

Jordan's Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi said last month that his country wants to open its borders with Syria, but was waiting for a response from Damascus.

Another Jordanian official said the al-Nassib crossing could open by the end of this year.

The Syrian government also hopes that the reopening of the key crossing could help the war-torn country revive its economy and rebuild itself. **→3**



### PERSPECTIVE

**Mohammad Homaeifar**  
Tehran Times journalist

## Bolton attack on ICC: A legal suicide by U.S.

On Sept. 10, John Bolton, the national security advisor to Donald Trump, made a harsh attack against the International Court of Justice (ICC), calling it "illegitimate" and a body that it is "dead" for the U.S.

Established in 2002 under the Rome Statute, the ICC is the world's first permanent court established to prosecute war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

The threat by Bolton comes as the Hague-based body has said the U.S. armed forces and the CIA might have committed war crimes in Afghanistan, and the Palestinian Authority has asked the ICC chief prosecutor to open an investigation into alleged Israeli war crimes, crimes against humanity, and apartheid.

Bolton appeared so boorish that he said the U.S. will impose sanctions against the ICC and, where possible, prosecute its officials if it proceeds with launching investigations. He also threatened to impose the same sanctions on any country that aided the international court in its investigations.

The announcement showed that the Trump administration feels no shame to say that that the U.S. and Israel are exception and above the law.

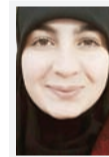
In view of Bolton it is "self-defense" that Israeli snipers kill hundreds of people attending weekly peaceful protests in Gaza.

"We will not allow the ICC or any other organization to constrain Israel's right to self-defense," Bolton said in his speech to the Federalist Society in Washington.

The attack on the ICC is in line with the Trump administration's unilateralism and hatred of international bodies, international law, and the international legal order. The new policy announcement is only one in a chain of shocking and odd behaviors by the Trump administration.

According to the doctrine adopted by the Trump administration, certain countries close to the U.S. should feel free to commit war crimes.

"If the court comes after us, Israel or other U.S. allies, we will not sit quietly," Bolton asserted. **→13**



### ARTICLE

**Sondoss Al Asaad**  
Political analyst from Beirut

## The legacy of Ashura: Resistance and victory

Shiite Muslims around the world mark the holiest lunar months of Muharram and Safar to mourn the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein Ibn Ali.

Imam Hussein is the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (PBU' em), born in 620 A.D. to a family famed for their values of love, honour and peace. His martyrdom anniversary which is, beyond a doubt, considered a defining event in the ideological and resistance movements of Shiite Muslims against corruption and oppression at all times, in all things, and in all places.

During The Battle of Karbala, Yazid; the corrupt, tyrant and illegitimate ruler killed Imam Hussein, the 7th-century revolutionary leader, who has recorded a phenomenal valiant stand for social and political justice. Definitely, the resistance's current victories over the imperialist arrogance illustrate one of Ashura's core issues: the triumphs of the oppressed over the oppressors.

After more than 1400 years, Imam Hussein still has the capability to awaken the oppressed people to heroically resist and to never approve any hegemonic power. Hezbollah Secretary General Sayyed Hasan Nasrallah says, "And that what happened during the Islamic revolution of Iran and the Islamic resistance [Hezbollah], as well as fighting all Takfiri groups. Ashura's logic, spirit and determination are still active and present."

To commemorate Ashura means to acquire knowledge on how to confront despotism and autocracy and how to disable the fundamental goals of the Zionists and the Imperialists. It indoctrinates us that only Resistance manages to prevent those foes from achieving their colonialist goals.

Thomas Carlyle, a Scottish historian and essayist say, "The best lesson which we get from the tragedy of Cerebella is that Husain and his companions were rigid believers in God. They illustrated that the numerical superiority does not count when it comes to the truth and the falsehood. The victory of Husain, despite his minority, marvels me!" **→7**



© Tehran Times/ Mehman Razi

## Funeral ceremony held in Tehran for martyrs

A public funeral ceremony to commemorate 135 fallen soldiers who have been martyred during the Iran-Iraq war (1980-88) was held on Thursday in Tehran.

The fallen soldiers' bodies were found recently by the missing bodies search committee of General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

According to Tasnim news agency some 17 of the martyred soldiers were identified, and their bodies will be delivered to their families.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



‘Forbidding wrong should be directed toward plunderers’

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** – Interim Friday Prayer preacher of Tehran Ayatollah Kazem Sediqqi says that enjoining good and forbidding wrong should be primarily directed toward “political and economic roughnecks” who are plundering and looting the country.

Addressing worshippers in Tehran on Friday, Ayatollah Sediqqi said there’s no use in confronting the weak. “People have seen this and they now think enjoining good and forbidding wrong is a joke,” he said, Fars reported.

“You should start from the top and follow the path of Imam Hussain (AS),” he told authorities. “Imam Hussain (AS) did not confront the people of Kufa, rather, he confronted Yazid.”



IRGC warns all terrorists within radius of 2000 km

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** – The commander of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps has referred to the September 8 missile attack on terrorist positions in the Iraqi Kurdistan region as a warning to all terrorists within the radius of 2000 kilometers.

Major General Mohammad Ali Jafari made the remarks in an interview with the Lebanese TV channel Al-Manar Thursday, asserting, “All those who have forces, bases and equipment within a 2,000 km (1,200 mile) radius should know that our missiles are highly precise.”

He added, “The attack against the terrorists in Iraq’s Kurdistan conveys a message to the enemies, particularly those superpowers who think they can impose their evil plots on Iran and bully us.”



Envoy lauds U.S. senator’s Syria chemical attack remarks

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** – Iranian Ambassador to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Alireza Jahangiri on Thursday applauded a U.S. senator’s remarks that Britain’s Mi6 intelligence is planning a fake chemical weapons attack on Syria’s Idlib and then blame the Damascus government for it.

“U.S. senator: Britain’s #Mi6 is planning a #fake chemical weapons attack on #Syria. This proves what has been said many times in the #OPCW’s meetings. If the world takes such statements seriously, we will not see any disasters like the Iraq war,” Jahangiri tweeted.



Germany eyeing payment system with Iran to save JCPOA

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** – Germany and its European partners are considering setting up a payment system with Iran that allows the continuation of business transactions with the Islamic Republic once U.S. sanctions kick in, an economy ministry spokeswoman said on Friday, Reuters reported.

“As you know, it is a central goal of the EU and the German government to ensure that the processing of transactions is secured,” the spokeswoman said during a regular government news conference. “All options are being considered.”



Treasury secretary ‘resisting’ Trump’s Iran strategy: Post

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** – U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin is “resisting” President Donald Trump’s maximum-pressure strategy on Iran by neglecting to give the president a document he requested several weeks ago, said Josh Rogin in a Washington Post column on Thursday.

Mnuchin and his department are internally opposed to using pressure to force SWIFT, the international system that clears trans-border financial transactions, to banish Iran again, Rogin said, citing three senior administration officials.

In interviews, he added, the officials said Mnuchin has been slow-rolling the decision-making process to delay final consideration by the president.



U.S. aware it will lose war against Iran: commander

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** – Brigadier General Hossein Salami, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps second-in-command, on Friday rejected the possibility of a war between Iran and the U.S., saying Washington knows it will lose in any war against Tehran.

“The option of war against the Islamic Republic of Iran is non-existent because the U.S. has neither the political conditions for a war nor an ally that would side with it,” Salami said, Tasnim reported.

Noting that the American economy cannot support a war against Iran, the general added Iran is closely monitoring the U.S. military behavior.

# Tehran, Kabul explore ways to deepen ties

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** – At a meeting between Iran’s Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi and Afghan President Ashraf Ghani in Kabul on Thursday, Tehran and Kabul pledged to deepen ties in various arenas including water sharing.

Ways to bolster transportation, finance and banking services, expansion of economic and trade cooperation as well as problems caused by the climate change and water scarcity were emphasized in the meeting.

In light of recent crimes committed by the Daesh (ISIL) terrorists in Afghanistan, Araqchi and Ghani stressed the need for greater efforts to combat the takfiri groups.

Before meeting with Ghani, Araqchi sat for talks with Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani.

There Araqchi expressed satisfaction over the progress of talks in five committees between the two countries.

He also said Iran supports a peace process with the leadership and sovereignty of Afghanistan.

Araqchi, in talks with other Afghan officials, exchanged views on issues surrounding mutual interests, regional issues and the latest developments related to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

Araqchi visited Kabul on Tuesday at the head of an Iranian delegation to attend a tripartite assembly involving Iran, Afghanistan and India.

The Indian delegation was led by Foreign Secretary Vijay. Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister Hekmat Khalil Karzai chaired the meeting.

The assembly sharpened the focus on tripartite economic cooperation with a special emphasis on Iran’s strategic Chabahar port.

Chabahar port is being considered a gateway to golden opportunities for trade by India, Iran and Afghanistan with Central Asian countries besides ramping up trade among



Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi (L) meeting with Afghan FM Salahuddin Rabbani in Kabul on Thursday

the three countries. Under an agreement signed between India and Iran in May 2016, India is to equip and operate two berths in Chabahar Port Phase-I with capital investment of \$85.21 million and annual revenue expenditure of \$22.95 million on a 10-year lease.

India is also looking at supporting the development of Chabahar-Zahedan rail line that will aid the transport of goods to the landlocked Afghan. India plans to use the port as a gateway to the International North-South Transport Corridor.

Counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics were amongst other issues raised in the meeting, according to a joint statement.

“The meeting focused on consolidating economic cooperation, including Chabahar, as well as enhancing cooperation on counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics, and continuing support to the peace and reconciliation process that is led and owned by Afghanistan.”

It said the three sides agreed to hold the next round of consultation at an appropriate time in India in 2019.

## Tehran says U.S. must stop breaking international law

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** – The Iranian ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has said the Islamic Republic expects the international community to force the U.S. to put an end to its practice of violating international rights.

“It is expected that the international community does not allow the US to continue with its illegal and unilateral measures and to stop the country’s practice of violating international rights,” Kazem Gharibabadi said on Wednesday as he addressed the September meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors.

He said that the latest report of IAEA Di-

rector General Yukiya Amano that confirmed Iran’s compliance with its commitments under the 2015 nuclear deal with world powers attested to “transparency” of the country’s nuclear program.

“While Iran has been cooperating with the IAEA effectively and based on goodwill, unfortunately we have not fully benefitted from the deal as we should have,” Gharibabadi added, according to msn.com.

Under the nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Iran agreed to scale back its nuclear activities in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions.

The envoy said the U.S. “unilateral and

illegal exit from the nuclear deal and its re-imposition of unilateral and transnational sanctions that had been lifted after the JCPOA conclusion are the blatant violations of UN Security Council Resolution 2231 and the JCPOA ... in defiance of the international community.”

In addition to violating the JCPOA, Gharibabadi also hit out at the U.S. for threatening other countries to either bow to Washington’s policies or face punitive measures.

He said the JCPOA could survive if all parties to the deal fully and sincerely fulfilled their commitments, stressing “the remaining members of the deal need to take practical

and appropriate measures to guarantee Iran benefits from the deal.”

“Security Council Resolution 2231 also urges all UN members and regional and international organizations to adopt measures that are necessary to help implement the nuclear deal and to refrain from taking measures that undermine the implementation of their obligations under the JCPOA,” he stated.

By breaching its international commitments and taking illegal and unilateral measures, the U.S. government not only tarnishes the credibility of the Security Council but also undermines its own image in the world, the Iranian diplomat concluded.

## Iran rejects French concerns, vows to keep fighting terror

Iran has dismissed France’s “concern” about its recent retaliatory missile strikes against terrorists based in Iraq’s semi-autonomous Kurdistan region, pledging to keep neutralizing terror groups that pose a threat to its sovereignty.

“Iran has time and again made it clear by issuing necessary warnings that it will keep clamping down on all shapes of terrorism and violence on its borders and that it will continue implementing this substantive policy,” Iran’s Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said in a press briefing on Thursday.

The remarks came shortly after the French Foreign Ministry said it “strongly condemns” the Sept. 8 missile attack by the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) against targets in northern Iraq.

During the attack, which was carried out in retaliation for cross-border incursions by Iraqi-based terrorists, the IRGC fired no less than seven short-range missiles at a gathering of terrorist commanders, killing a number of them and destroying a militant training base in the process.

The French Foreign Ministry said in a statement that it “reaffirms the importance of respecting Iraq’s sovereignty and reiterates its concern over the development of Iranian missile programs.”



Qassemi slammed France’s refusal to address terrorist attacks against Iran from the Iraqi side of the border in the past and called on Paris to be “more sensible.”

“Terrorism must be condemned regardless of how and where it takes place and without any political reservation,” he said, adding that countries cannot be selective in condemning terrorism.

Referring to a terror attack in July that had killed 11 Iranian guards near the border with Iraq, Qassemi noted that punishing the perpetrators and putting an end to such attacks was “the least that the Iranian nation expected.”

He said Tehran had long warned both Iraqi and Kurdish officials of terrorist activities taking place under their watch and expressed its determination to stop those activities. (Source: Press TV)

## Diplomat: JCPOA to die if others bow to U.S. pressure

**TEHRAN** – The new Iranian ambassador to Japan said on Wednesday that the 2015 nuclear deal will die if other countries bow to U.S. pressure, urging Japan, China, Russia and the European Union to take essential steps to save the deal, officially referred to as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

While expressing his gratitude for Japan’s consistent support for the JCPOA, Morteza Rahmani-Movahed, who assumed the post in July, told a press conference at the Japan National Press Club that he hopes the Japanese government will protect companies and banks to dispel their worries about trade with Iran, The Daily Manila Shimbun reported.

Rahmani-Movahed further urged the Japanese government to take measures to maintain bilateral trade amid mounting U.S. pressure on Tehran.

Following the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA and the reimposition of sanctions against Iran, Japanese companies and commercial banks suspended business with Iran, for fear of U.S. sanctions.

According to the 2015 nuclear deal - signed between Iran, the European Union, the EU trio (German, France, Britain) the U.S., Russia and China – Tehran agreed to put limits on its nuclear activities in



exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions.

The ambassador said the suspension of bank transactions has, in particular, caused a crisis to businesses such as drugs and medical services

The Iranian government hopes to provide support for Japanese importers such as insurance related to crude oil shipments and financial settlements if they hope to continue importing from Iran, he said.

Iran expects the Japanese government to make efforts and provide reassurances for expansion of economic relations by supporting Japanese firms, he added.

He also criticized the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump for its unilateral withdrawal from the nuclear deal in May, saying that the U.S. government cannot be trusted.

## Iran rejects Arab quartet committee’s accusations as ‘delusive’

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** - The anti-Iran accusations raised in the final statement of the Arab quartet’s ministerial meeting is ill-founded, baseless, delusive and offensive, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said on Friday.

In a Wednesday statement published on the Foreign Ministry’s official website, Qassemi said the statement issued on the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks in the U.S., carried out by elements from Arab countries, was a blame-game and fruitless effort to divert the attention of the world’s public opinion away from the U.S. warmongering and years-long support for terrorism and terrorist groups.

The spokesman went on to say that the committee members issued the statement at a time when their destructive war

on Yemen has resulted in an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe.

“The war has not only destroyed basic infrastructure in Yemen but also left millions of innocent people starving, ill and impoverished,” he said.

Under such circumstances, he said, the aggressors, indifferent to their crimes and amid the silence of international groups and bodies, are insisting on their catastrophic mistakes and expanding the extent of this unprecedented crime by the virtue of the support provided by certain extra-regional states.

Qassemi said Tehran has always attached huge importance to the security and stability of its neighbors, and adopted a policy based on mutual trust and respect, seeking a stable

environment along its borders.

The spokesman noted Iran has never put meddling in the internal affairs of other states on its agenda and unlike the claims raised in the statement, the Islamic Republic has stood by the regional states at their request amid terrible situation.

“We maintain that the accusations levelled and the claims raised in the statement are mainly built on unfounded and unrealistic Iranophobic illusions and policies dictated by others to the Arab states,” he said.

He finally advised the Arab League members to abandon such “doomed tactics and approaches” and give constructive responses to the attempts made and initiatives put forward by the Islamic Republic to hold regional dialogue and cooperation.

## Iranian diplomat consults with Europeans on Syria

➔ Pointing to his visit to Brussels, he said that he met with Helga Schmid, secretary general of the European External Action Service, on Wednesday and discussed the Yemeni war.

Commenting on his visit to France, Jaber Ansari said that he held meetings with heads

of the French National Assembly and the Senate’s friendship groups.

He added that he also met with François Senemaud, the special envoy of French President Emmanuel Macron on Syria.

■ ‘Iran prioritizes stability in Syria’ Jaber Ansari said Tehran prioritizes

stabilizing Syria through taking political actions.

He added Iran’s policies are in line with ending crises in the region.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan held

a trilateral summit on Syria in Tehran on September 7. They issued a joint statement reaffirming their respective countries’ determination to continue cooperation until full eradication of terrorist groups in Syria. The three leaders stressed that there could be no military solution to the Syrian conflict.

# Putin discusses Idlib with Russia's security council

## Syria, Jordan in talks to reopen key border crossing, resume bilateral trade

**1 →** Efforts to restore peace and stability to Syria come as government forces have managed to purge terrorists and anti-government militants from most of the country, and are preparing for a full-scale offensive to retake the northwestern Idlib province, the last stronghold of foreign-backed terrorists.

**■ Israel ends its 'humanitarian' aid for Syrians**

As the Syrian army regains full control of the country's southwestern borders with the occupied territories, the Israeli regime has declared the end of what it called "humanitarian" aid it used to offer to Syria's "civilians".

What the Israeli army has described as its "humanitarian" assistance to "civilians" in its Thursday statement is indeed the arms and medical support it offered to the Takfiri terrorists in the occupied Golan Heights and elsewhere in Israel. While Israel claims it always sought to stay out of the war in Syria, evidence shows the regime has been overtly and covertly supporting terrorist fighting against the Syrian government. Israel has been providing the Takfiri terrorists in the Golan Heights with a steady flow of funds and medical supplies as part of Tel Aviv's involvement in the bloody conflict.

**■ Marines hold eight days of drills with militants in southern Syria**

Elsewhere, the United States marines have held eight days of unprecedented military exercises with the U.S.-backed militants in southern Syria in an attempt to send a "strong message" to Iran and Russia, a senior military official said.

Colonel Sean Ryan, a U.S. military spokesman, described the drills as "a show of force," saying that the Pentagon had notified Russia through "de-confliction" channels to prevent



"miscommunication or escalate tension".

"The exercise was conducted to reinforce our capabilities and ensure we are ready to respond to any threat to our forces within our area of operations," he noted.

The eight days of drills ended this week at the U.S. military outpost in Tanf, located 24 km to the west from the al-Tanf border crossing between Syria and Iraq in Homs Governorate, said Colonel Muhanad al Talaa, the commander of the U.S.-backed Maghawir al Thawra militant group.

He told Reuters the war games were the first such exercises with live-fire air and ground assault, involving hundreds of the U.S. troops and militants operating against the government of President Bashar al-Assad.

Thawra claimed the drills were meant to

send what he described as "a strong message to Russia and Iran" that the Americans and the militants intended to stay and confront any threats to their presence.

The U.S. presence in Tanf military base is illegal and lacks the permission of the Syrian government. Damascus, Moscow, and Tehran have repeatedly denounced the American military presence in Syria and called on the U.S. to withdraw its marines from the base. However, the U.S. has so far refused to pull its forces out, and even moved to deploy hundreds of more marines in Tanf earlier this month.

The new forces have reportedly joined "special operations troops already based in the garrison" and are going to participate in the drills amid an escalation of U.S.-Russian

tensions in Syria and Russia's military exercises in the Mediterranean.

Meanwhile, the CNN cited several U.S. military officials as saying last Friday that Russia had warned the Pentagon twice in the past weeks that its forces, together with Syrian troops, were prepared to wage an attack on terrorists in the area where dozens of the U.S. troops are stationed - including those in Tanf garrison.

Reacting to Moscow's warnings, the U.S. military officials "bluntly warned Russia and Syria not to go forward with an attack within a 35-mile-wide security zone that the U.S. maintains around Tanf," Task & Purpose further reported.

The U.S. illegally built the military outpost in early 2016 under the pretext of fighting Daesh terrorists, but it has declared a 55 km-radius "de-confliction zone" off-limits to others, providing a safe haven for at least 50,000 militants and their families in the Rukban camp that lies within it.

This is while the U.S. President Donald Trump had previously stated that he wanted American troops out of Syria as soon as possible and has also called for redirecting millions of dollars meant to help rebuild Syria to other military projects.

Russian and Iranian military forces are in Syria at the official request of the Syrian government. This is while the U.S. has involved itself in the Syrian conflict through an overt campaign meant to train and support anti-Damascus terrorists. The government of President Bashar al-Assad has repeatedly denounced the American military presence in the country and called on Washington to end what it has described as an "uninvited aggression" against Syria.

(Source: agencies)

## Russian warships hold drills in Bering Sea in huge military exercise

Russian warships held drills in the Bering Sea which separates Russia from Alaska, part of Moscow's biggest military maneuvers since the fall of the Soviet Union, footage aired by the Ministry of Defense showed on Friday.

The Vostok-2018 (East-2018) drills, which run until Sept. 17, are taking place in Siberia and in waters off Russia's eastern coast, involving 300,000 troops, over 1,000 military aircraft and two naval fleets.

The drills are taking place at a time of heightened tension between the West and Russia, and NATO has said it will monitor the exercise closely, as will the United States which has a strong military presence in the Asia-Pacific region.

President Vladimir Putin inspected the war games on Thursday, vowing in a speech to soldiers to strengthen the



Russian army and supply it with new generation weapons and equipment.

Putin said Russia was a peaceful country ready for cooperation with any state interested in partnership, but that it was a soldier's duty to be ready to defend his country and its allies.

The Ministry of Defense aired footage on Friday of the Northern Fleet's Vice-Admiral Kulakov destroyer and the Alexander Obrakovsky landing ship taking part in a mock-up rescue operation in the Bering Sea.

Other footage showed scores of paratroopers leaping from a plane and descending from helicopters by ropes in the eastern Siberian territory of Zabaikalsk.

The ministry also broadcast clips of missiles being launched from its S-300 long-range surface-to-air missile system and its Buk medium-range missile system.

(Source: Reuters)

## UN renews Libya mission, delays vote indefinitely

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has extended the mandate for the UNSMIL mission in Libya by another year, until September 15, 2019, but did not endorse a December 10 date for elections that were agreed to in a Paris meeting four months ago.

France stuck to its position pushing for elections in Libya by the end of the year on Thursday, a day after Italy and the UN-backed government in Tripoli sowed doubts on the electoral calendar, citing a worsening security situation.

The council unanimously adopted a British-drafted resolution that called for parliamentary and presidential elections to be held "as soon as possible, provided the necessary security, technical, legislative and political conditions are in place".

Four key leaders from Libya had agreed in May to hold the landmark polls on December 10 as part of a French-led plan to stabilize the war-torn North African country, despite ongoing violence and deep divisions.

Former colonial power Italy, however, has consistently maintained the North African country is not ready for elections and offered instead to host a national dialogue conference in Rome later this year.



Jonathan Cohen, the United States Deputy Ambassador to the UN, warned during a council meeting last week that "imposing false deadlines will backfire" and lead to worse divisions inside Libya.

On Wednesday, Prime Minister Fayez Serraj, who had agreed to the plan, said conditions in his country were too unstable to hold elections.

Those comments were echoed by Italy's

Foreign Minister Enzo Moavero Milanesi who was quoted by a state news agency as saying the date should be reconsidered.

"We are in disagreement with the position of the French government, which, as was decided in Paris, says the elections in Libya must be held on December 10," he said.

In response to those doubts, France's foreign ministry said it was convinced of the need for a political solution based on the Paris agreements.

"France will continue with its partners to support the efforts of the Libyan authorities and the United Nations to ensure the continuation of the political process and in particular the conditions for holding elections by the end of the year," spokeswoman Agnes von der Muhl told reporters in a daily briefing.

Italy has close relations with the authorities in Tripoli and is the only Western country to have reopened its embassy in the Libyan capital, home to Serraj's UN-backed transitional government.

France is seen as closer to military Commander Khalifa Haftar, who is aligned with a rival government based in the east.

(Source: agencies)

## Secret doc reveals Israeli military unprepared for war

A "secret" dossier has revealed that the Israeli military is unprepared to engage in new warfare, contradicting previous assertions issued by Tel Aviv to the contrary.

The document prepared by Major General Yitzhak Brick, the ombudsman of the Israeli military, harshly criticized the military's readiness for war, the daily Ha'aretz reported on Friday.

He sent his assessment to Israel's minister for military affairs Avigdor Lieberman and Chief of Staff Gadi Eisenkot and others last week, calling for the formation of an external investigative panel into the forces' preparedness.

Ha'aretz wrote that his demand for an inquiry reflected a deep concern over the state of the ground forces and a growing lack of trust in the Israeli military's ability "to investigate itself and correct what needs to be rectified."

Some Israeli lawmakers expressed shock at the revelation and expressed support for General Brick's call for a probe into the preparedness of the Israeli military.

The dossier "is a harsh report that details the problems stemming from massive cuts of thousands of officers and



noncommissioned officers in recent years, whose shortcomings are felt in dealing with routine [operations] — and will be felt even more so during times of emergency," Knesset (unicameral national legislature of Israel) member MK Moti Yogev said.

The dossier was preceded by two detailed letters to Lieb-

erman as well as others in which General Brick focused mainly on the military's manpower policies, describing a serious crisis that he said could have implications relating to the capabilities of the entire Israeli forces — particularly the ground forces — to fight a war, Ha'aretz added.

In an annual report released in late June, General Brick had cautioned that the Israeli military suffered from an acute shortage of doctors and psychiatrists, as well as the negative effect of cost-cutting measures.

The report had also found fault with the status of the forces' training, training exercises, and the state of the weaponry used by the ground forces.

The assessment contradicts Eisenko who had asserted in a letter earlier sent to the security cabinet and a Knesset panel that Israeli forces were at a high level of readiness for war.

As the person responsible for the readiness of the Israeli military to go to war, he believed that the Israeli forces were prepared and ready "for every mission they were called upon," Eisenko had claimed.

(Source: Press TV)

## Iraqi PM Abadi says not seeking re-election after protests



As Iraq moves closer to forming a new government, the incumbent Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi says he is not seeking to serve a second term in office.

"We respect and obey the instructions of the religious authority Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani. I did not and will not request the post of prime minister in the second term," he said at a news conference in Baghdad on Thursday. Ayatollah Sistani, the country's most senior cleric, said earlier in the week that Iraq needed new faces in the government as protests escalated in the southern oil-rich city of Basra and Baghdad. "Our service for the people will continue until the new government is established," Abadi said on Thursday, calling for peaceful ways to change the government.

Abadi has faced calls to resign after protests in Basra last Friday took an ugly turn when a group of masked assailants raided government buildings and offices of political parties and set them ablaze.

After the protests, Muqtada al-Sadr whose Sairoon (Marching Towards Reform) bloc came first in the parliamentary elections has apparently backed down on his willingness to form an alliance with Abadi. Over the weekend, Sadr's bloc and the faction led by Hadi al-Amiri, the head of Badr Organization which is Iraq's biggest anti-terror paramilitary group, used an emergency meeting held at the parliament to call on Abadi to resign.

The parliament is to elect a new speaker on Saturday, with Amiri saying he would work with Sadr to form a new government.

Protesters in Basra are angry about endemic corruption, collapsing infrastructure, poor public services, high rates of poverty, soaring unemployment, and contamination of potable water.

Abadi said on Thursday a team of advisers would "assure the immediate implementation" of new water pumping, routing, and filtration projects there.

The prime minister paid a visit to Basra Monday at the head of a large delegation, including the ministers of information, defense, interior, health and water resources.

"We came here to cooperate with local residents and to provide them with the services they need. We will not leave Basra until several projects aimed at improving public services are launched," he said.

(Source: Press TV)

## Hopes rise as two Koreas open liaison office on North's side of border

North and South Korea opened a liaison office on the North's side of their heavily militarized border on Friday, setting up a permanent channel of communication as part of a flurry of efforts to end their decades old rivalry.

Steps by North and South Korea to improve their relations are running parallel to a bid by the United States and its allies to press North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs.

The opening of the joint liaison office at Kaesong, just inside the North Korean side of the border, comes days before North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and South Korean President Moon Jae-in are due to hold their third meeting this year.

"The two sides are now able to take a large step toward peace, prosperity and unification of the Korean peninsula by quickly and frankly discussing issues arising from inter-Korean relations," said Ri Son Gwon, the head of North Korea's delegation at the opening ceremony. The two Koreas previously communicated by fax and special telephone lines, which were often severed when their relations took a turn for the worse.

Now they will now be able to "directly discuss issues 24 hours, 365 days", South Korea's Unification Minister Cho Myoung-gyon said at the ceremony. The office will be staffed by up to 20 people each from the two sides with the South Koreans on the second floor and the North Koreans on the fourth floor of the four-story building.

Vice minister-level officials will head their teams at the office and will attend weekly meetings, the South Korean Unification Ministry said. The office is at the site of the Kaesong industrial complex, where for about a decade, South Korean companies ran production lines staffed by North Korean workers at the industrial park. The park, once the most striking symbol of inter-Korean cooperation, has been closed since February 2016 when tension on the peninsula spiked after North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test.

South Korea's Unification Ministry spokesman Baik Tae-hyun said this week it was hoped the liaison office could also help the United States and North Korea in their negotiations.

"We hope that this will also help the progress of denuclearization talks between North Korea and the United States," Baik said.

Moon and Kim, who agreed on a series of steps to improve ties at an April summit, will meet in the North Korean capital of Pyongyang next week, when it is hoped they can help end an impasse between the United States and North Korea.

South Korea had hoped to open the office by August but it was delayed when denuclearization talks between the United States and North Korea stalled after an historic summit between Kim and U.S. President Donald Trump in Singapore in June.

However, Kim sent a message to South Korean envoys last week saying he wanted to achieve denuclearization during Trump's first term.

That followed what Trump described as a "very warm" letter from Kim requesting another meeting, which rekindled hopes for progress.

(Source: Reuters)

STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	155061.1
IFX	1771.26

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	48,870 rials
GBP	54,790 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: isna.ir

COMMODITIES

WTI	\$ 68.91/b
Brent	\$78.30/b
OPEC Basket	\$77.16/b
Gold	\$1,203.80/oz
Silver	\$14.25/oz
Platinum	\$812.15/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

NEWS IN BRIEF



Ex-governor of CBI appointed as presidential advisor

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani appointed the ex-governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), Valiollah Seif, as his special advisor for monetary and banking affairs.

Despite the critics repeatedly lashed out at Seif for his policies, in particular those about foreign currency market during his office at CBI, Rouhani selected him as his advisor in a decree on Thursday, Tasnim news agency reported.

Referring to the proven capabilities of Seif in the monetary and banking domains, Rouhani hoped that he would succeed in this new position.

Struggling to check a steep depreciation of the rial and root out a series of irregularities in Iran's banking system, Seif was replaced by Abdolnaser Hemmati following a cabinet meeting on July 25.



€3.2b paid for importing basic goods

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — The Central Bank of Iran (CBI) has paid €3.2 billion to import basic goods during the past month, according to the central bank governor. "In the past month, 1.8 billion euro has been paid for importing basic goods including oil, meat, rice, medical equipment, etc., while 1.4 billion euro has been supplied by the domestic Forex Management Integrated System [locally known as NIMA] for importing raw materials as well as capital and consumer goods," Abdolnaser Hemmati wrote on his Instagram page. According to the latest announcement of CBI, the bank has paid €5.5 billion for supplying basic goods since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21) till early September.

Such measures have been taken to encounter the recent unprecedented sharp depreciation of rial against the U.S. dollar. The increase in prices of basic goods outstrips people's income, i.e. purchasing power has decreased.

Ukraine in talks with IMF on new standby deal

Ukraine has begun talks with the International Monetary Fund on a new standby deal that would replace the current \$17.5 billion (13.33 billion pounds) assistance programme, the president's parliamentary representative said on Friday.

A fresh standby agreement could give Ukraine breathing space as it has struggled to fulfil some of the conditions of its existing deal and needs to service rising debt payments.

The IMF and Western allies have pumped billions of dollars into the country since the 2014 Maidan uprising and the annexation of Crimea by Russia that pitched Ukraine into crisis.

But the \$17.5 billion package has been effectively frozen since April 2017 amid a slowdown in required economic reforms and efforts to tackle entrenched corruption. Kiev has banked only \$8.7 billion originally made available under the deal and its debt obligations will peak in 2018-2020.

Iryna Lutsenko, the president's parliamentary representative, did not say what the terms of the new agreement might be or when it would start.

She also did not address whether the government would agree to raise natural gas prices, which is a key sticking point in the current deal, but took the negotiations for a standby agreement as a positive signal.

"This means that the IMF appreciated the reforms, the pace, the results of the reforms that we made within the framework of that programme and are ready to provide us with another programme," she said on the sidelines of the Yalta European Strategy (YES) meeting in Kiev.

The IMF wants Ukraine to raise household gas prices, which have been kept artificially low since Soviet times, to market levels. Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman agreed to raise tariffs in 2016 but the plan then stalled.

An IMF mission is now in Ukraine for talks but has so far declined to comment on the prospect of a new standby aid deal.

A source with knowledge of the IMF negotiations told Reuters on Thursday that Kiev would decide by Oct. 1 whether to raise gas prices.

(Source: Reuters)

OPEC puts Iran's Aug. oil output at 3.584m bpd

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iran produced 3.584 million barrels per day (bpd) of oil in August, a 150,000 bpd decrease from 3.734 million bpd in July, according to OPEC's latest monthly report published on September 12 citing secondary sources.

The OPEC's report also put Iran's oil output based on direct communication at 3.806 million

bpd, unchanged compared to July.

Meanwhile, the country's average heavy oil price was \$70.46 in August, down \$0.98 or 1.4 percent from \$71.44 in July.

The report also put average Iranian heavy crude price at \$67.94 since beginning of 2018 up to the report's publishing day.

Iran shipped nearly 2.1 million bpd of crude and condensates in August, Bloomberg reported

Supertankers loaded with Iranian crude headed for China: data

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Two supertankers loaded with crude oil left Iran's biggest export terminal for China on Wednesday, Bloomberg reported citing ship-tracking data.

These are the first cargos heading for the Asian country exports after an 18-day halt.

The Dino I and Dune, which can haul 4 million barrels between them, departed Kharg Island in the northern Persian Gulf within an hour of each other late Wednesday. Before that, the last vessel to make the journey was the supertanker Starla, which left on Aug. 25 carrying two million barrels of crude to Ningbo.

"The pause in shipments probably doesn't mean China



will to bow to pressure from U.S. President Donald Trump -- Beijing is said to have resisted such curbs -- it might indicate that the Asian country's refineries want better terms

U.S. may waive sanctions for Indian-built Iranian port linking to Afghanistan

The U.S. is reportedly considering granting a waiver to the Iranian port of Chabahar that would permit trade there despite the return of U.S. sanctions against trading with Iran.

Chabahar is Iran's southernmost city, its only deep-water port and the anchor of the Chabahar-Hajigak corridor, a road and rail connection between the Indian Ocean and central Afghanistan. India has invested hugely in the port, and it's expected to become the key to mineral extraction in Afghanistan, where the U.S. is struggling to end a two-decade-long war.

India has sunk billions into developing the corridor since 2003, including a \$2 billion agreement penned in January for India to build a railroad between Chabahar and Zahedan, the capital of Sistan-Baluchistan Province 430 miles inland.

But all that has been cast into doubt now, as the U.S.

seeks to cut Iran off from the world once again after U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew his country from the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

We are reviewing [the Chabahar project] in the context, in particular of Afghanistan, and in the spirit that the idea of our sanctions are not to punish partners or to imperil partners, but to bring a price tag for Iran's malign behaviour," Alice Wells, principal deputy assistant secretary of state for South and Central Asia, said Thursday at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), a top American think-tank, the Indian Express reported.

"As we review the issue of Chabahar, it'll be in the context of what it provides for the stabilization of Afghanistan or for the kind of regional connectivity that serves other interests as well. But it's an ongoing process of review," Wells said.

Wells noted that "India is quite sensitive to price fluctua-

for Iranian cargoes," the report added.

China was the largest buyer of Iranian crude last year, accounting for almost a third of Iran's crude and condensate exports.

Iran's exports so far this month slumped to around 1.3 million barrels a day. They were as high as 3 million a day back in 2016, the tanker tracking data show.

The pause in shipments to China has coincided with the return of Iranian oil stored on tankers close to the country's export terminals. There are currently eight tankers holding 14 million barrels of Iranian crude or condensate, a form of light crude extracted from gas fields, anchored in the Persian Gulf.



tuations," an important issue considering the country has a general election scheduled for the spring of 2019.

(Source: The Sputnik)

First Announcement

IN THE NAME OF GOD  
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING  
INTERNATIONAL TENDER NO. 97-06/170

**Tender Holder:**  
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

**Subject of Two-Stage Tender:**  
Purchasing Amplifiers Required for Satellite Signaling according to the tender documents

**Deadline of Receiving Documents:**  
As of publishing second announcement of advertisement latest by the business hour dated on **Sunday September 23, 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 37,484** 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 Tuesday October 23, 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 Saturday October 27, 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 prices claw back on supply concerns, but demand worries drag

Oil on Friday clawed back some of its losses from the previous session, when prices fell the most in a month, with concerns about supply countering worries that emerging market crises and trade disputes could dent demand. Brent crude was up 3 cents at \$78.21 a barrel by 0634 GMT, after falling 2 percent on Thursday. The global benchmark rose on Wednesday to its highest since May 22 at \$80.13.

U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) futures were up 18 cents, or 0.2 percent, at 68.76 a barrel, after dropping 2.5 percent on Thursday.

Brent is heading for a 1.8 percent gain this week, while WTI is on track for a 1.5 percent increase.

"Prices remain well supported as the market continues to fret about ongoing structural supply issues elsewhere," ANZ Research said in a note.

The International Energy Agency on Thursday warned that although the oil market was tightening at the moment and world oil demand would reach 100 million barrels per day (bpd) in the next three months, global economic risks were mounting.

"As we move into 2019, a possible risk to our forecast lies in some key emerging economies,



partly due to currency depreciations versus the U.S. dollar, raising the cost of imported energy," the agency said.

"In addition, there is a risk to growth from an escalation of trade disputes," the Paris-based agency said.

China will not buckle to U.S. demands in any trade negotiations, the major state-run China Daily newspaper said in an editorial on Friday, after Chinese officials welcomed an invitation from Washington for a new round of talks.

U.S. President Trump said on Twitter on Thursday that the United States holds the upper hand in talks.

"We are under no pressure to make a deal with China, they are under pressure to make a deal with us," Trump tweeted.

Supply concerns were stoked by data showing that U.S. crude production fell by 100,000 bpd to 10.9 million barrels per day last week as the industry faces pipeline capacity constraints.

Though weekly output slipped, the United States likely surpassed Russia and Saudi Arabia earlier this year to become the world's largest crude oil producer, based on preliminary estimates from the Energy Information Administration.

Although the EIA does not publish crude production forecasts for Russia and Saudi Arabia in its short term outlook, it expects that U.S. output will continue to exceed Russian and Saudi production for the remaining months of 2018 and through 2019.

The loss of Iranian oil to the market as refiners are cutting or halting purchase ahead of U.S. sanctions in November is also raising concerns about supply.

(Source: Reuters)

## Oil production at risk as violent protests rock Iraq's Basra province

Iraq's oil-rich Basra province is being rocked by renewed violence as summer protests regain momentum, threatening oil facilities and the country's leadership.

Thousands of Iraqis have been taking to the streets daily over the last week, torching government buildings and political party offices in a show of anger against abject living conditions, government corruption and foreign influence.

As home to most of the oil production facilities for OPEC's second-largest producer, Basra in crisis could have a material impact on oil output and prices, analysts say.

It may also see Iraq's Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi pushed from power, creating even more uncertainty for the war-scarred nation and its 15-year old democracy.

"We've seen protests around facilities and threats being made against oil companies. Some companies have taken their foreign workers out," Helima Croft, global head of commodity strategy at RBC Capital Markets, told CNBC.

"Production hasn't been hit yet, but if you were to have one facility go down, you could lose upwards of 700,000 to 800,000 barrels of production, so it's a big story to watch."

The protests, which began in July, kicked off again last week following a raft of hospitalizations due to contaminated



drinking water. In August alone, 17,000 Basra residents were sent to the hospital with colic, diarrhea and symptoms of cholera, according to Basra's director-general of public health.

Southern Iraq, despite sitting on 80 percent of the country's oil wealth and being home to its only deepwater port, Um Qasr, has long been a site of severe poverty and discontent. Instead of reaping the benefits of its natural resources, which include 70 percent of Iraq's proven natural gas reserves, Basra suffers high unemployment, frequent electricity shortages, unsafe water and waste facilities and crumbling infrastructure.

Demonstrations during southern Iraq's sweltering summer months have therefore become something of a ritual in recent years, as residents lament decrepit public services and rampant corruption amid daytime temperatures of more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit.

(Source: CNBC)

## U.S. aims to boost LNG sales to Russia-dominated European gas market

The European Union (EU) is becoming increasingly dependent on Russian natural gas supply, Steven Winberg, Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), said at a Senate committee hearing on Thursday, noting that exports of U.S. liquefied natural gas (LNG) can be part of Europe's efforts to diversify its energy supply.

As EU member states cut down on coal-fired power generation to comply with emission goals, they raise their natural gas dependence, but due to insufficient pipeline expansions and supply routes, Europe is becoming increasingly dependent on Russia for its natural gas supply, Winberg said before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources at the U.S. Senate during a hearing to examine the role of U.S. LNG in meeting European energy demand.

Citing the European Commission's Quarterly Report on European Gas Markets, Winberg said that as EU natural gas imports rose by 6 percent annually in Q4 2017, Russia remained the EU's top supplier of natural gas, accounting for 43 percent of natural gas imports, while LNG accounted for 12 percent of imports.

"The United States is strongly committed to providing Europe with access to strategic, diverse, and reliable energy supplies," Winberg said, pointing out that due to the lack of LNG regasification terminals in most central and southeast



European EU states, they can rarely access LNG supplies through the EU's collective natural gas distribution network.

"This inadequate gas interconnection infrastructure between European Union Member States represents a major obstacle preventing LNG from diversifying supply across the EU," the DOE official said.

Concluding his testimony in front of the Senate committee, Winberg said that "Increasing exports of U.S. LNG to our allies in Europe creates great opportunities for our nation to advance this administration's goal of strengthening our allies' energy security."

Meanwhile, Russia's gas giant Gazprom estimates that its deliveries to Europe and Turkey between January and August 2018 rose by 5.6 percent compared to the same period last year, the Chairman of the Management Committee, Alexey Miller, said at the end of August, noting that "Europe's demand for Gazprom's gas has been remarkably high for three years in a row."

(Source: oilprice.com)

## Five factors to watch as Brent oil hits \$80 a barrel

Brent crude surpassed the \$80 a barrel mark this week, close to this year's highs, with traders weighing impending sanctions on Iran's energy sector, lower forecasts for shale production and a big hurricane approaching the U.S. east coast.

"Those of a bullish disposition currently have no shortage of ammunition. Yet they have been given a further helping hand by Mother Nature," said Stephen Brennock at London-based broker PVM.

Brent, the international benchmark, rose to a high of \$80.13 a barrel on Wednesday — the highest since the intraday peak of \$80.50 a barrel in May — before retreating to \$79.15 a barrel on Thursday.

U.S. marker West Texas Intermediate hit a high of \$71.26 a barrel on Wednesday, before edging lower to \$69.42 a barrel on Thursday.

### 1. Iran's oil exports in focus

Crude supplies from Iran are expected to take a hit as U.S. sanctions come into effect in November, tightening the global oil market in spite of calls from U.S. president Donald Trump to international producers to increase output.

"Iran is increasingly becoming the preoccupation of the crude market," said analysts at JBC Energy. An expected squeeze on crude flows was already taking shape, they said, with Iran storing crude onshore as well as on vessels.

Alexander Novak, Russia's energy minister, on Wednesday warned that the sanctions would create "huge uncertainty" for the market, with it still unclear how many big consumers would curb their purchases to meet U.S. demands.

South Korea has already dropped imports to zero. Buyers in India and China, meanwhile, have begun to reduce their purchases even as both countries have said they will not submit to orders by the Trump administration.

Although Saudi Arabia and its partner outside of the cartel, Russia, have said they will lead increases in production to offset any losses from Iran, whose domestic production has been falling, the ramp-up has



been slower than anticipated.

"The price range for Brent of \$70-\$80 a barrel in place since April could be tested," the International Energy Agency said on Thursday. "Things are tightening up."

Trump has been keen to keep crude prices in check ahead of the midterm elections, fearful of any impact on domestic fuel prices. The U.S. has also offered 11m barrels of oil held in strategic reserves for sale on to the market.

### 2. U.S. shale production growth to slow

Crude oil production in the U.S. is expected to grow at a slower than anticipated rate in 2019, which comes at a time that questions are mounting about available global supplies.

U.S. crude output growth is forecast to moderate to 840,000 barrels a day, the U.S. energy department said, down from a previous estimate of more than 1m b/d. drilling in the Permian basin is slowing amid pipeline capacity constraints.

Bullish sentiment was also fuelled by data from the American Petroleum Institute this week that showed an 8.6m barrel drawdown in U.S. crude stockpiles versus forecasts for

an 805,000 barrel decline.

The U.S. energy department on Wednesday also reported a much larger than expected draw in crude stockpiles. Inventories fell by 5.3m barrels compared to a forecast for a fall of 805,000 b/d.

### 3. Hurricane Florence nears U.S. coast

Further propelling prices, is a big hurricane that is approaching the coast of North Carolina or South Carolina, with more than 1.5m people ordered to evacuate their homes.

Amid storm surge warnings, east coast petrol prices are expected to rise temporarily as motorists fill up their tanks in anticipation of the hurricane. But analysts say demand, in fact, could drop if fewer people are driving their cars.

Anxieties that Florence could impact the Colonial Pipeline, which runs through the Carolinas and sends crude products to the north-east, have been dismissed, with analysts saying that it is deep underground and so will probably remain unaffected.

But they are still keeping an eye on the impact of any flooding or power outages at

pumping stations for the pipeline.

Other smaller weather events, including Tropical Storm Isaac, are also being monitored as they may have a bigger impact on the oil and gas sector if they move towards the Gulf of Mexico — a hub for energy production and refining operations.

### 4. Hedge funds bet on rising prices

After months of liquidating long positions, hedge funds are now making further bets on rising oil prices amid concerns the sanctions against Iran could leave the market short of crude.

Net-long positions on Brent crude — the difference between bets on higher and lower prices — rose more than 7 percent in the week ending September 4 to 416,742 futures and options contracts, according to data from ICE Futures Europe.

Net-long positions on West Texas Intermediate, the U.S. marker, increased by 16,634 over the same period to 386,487 contracts, according to the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

### 5. Demand growth uncertainty ahead

One reason why OPEC producers are not rapidly boosting output reflects uncertainty about the outlook for oil consumption given a challenging backdrop for the global economy.

Both the U.S. energy department and OPEC's research arm have trimmed their forecasts for demand growth next year. The Energy Information Administration reduced its 2019 growth forecast by 100,000 barrels a day to 1.47m b/d, while OPEC cut its estimates for a second consecutive month by 20,000 b/d to 1.4m b/d.

"Rising challenges in some emerging and developing economies are skewing the current global economic growth risk forecast to the downside," OPEC said in its monthly oil market report on Wednesday.

It added: "Rising trade tensions, and the consequences of further potential monetary tightening?..?..in combination with rising global debt levels, are additional concerns."

(Source: Financial Times)

## Global oil demand to top 100 million bpd but outlook may cloud

World oil consumption will top 100 million barrels per day (bpd) in the next three months, putting upward pressure on prices, although emerging market crises and trade disputes could dent this demand, the International Energy Agency said on Thursday.

The Paris-based IEA maintained its forecast of strong growth in global oil demand this year of 1.4 million bpd and another 1.5 million bpd in 2019, unchanged from its previous projection.

"Things are tightening up," the agency that advises Western governments on energy policy said in its monthly report. "The price range for Brent of \$70-\$80 per barrel in place since April could be tested."

U.S. sanctions on Iran's energy industry, which come into force in November, have already cut supply back to two-year lows, while falling Venezuelan output and unplanned outages elsewhere will also keep the balance between supply and demand tight, the IEA said.

But it said rising demand could also be checked.

"As we move into 2019, a possible risk to our forecast lies in some key emerging economies, partly due to currency depreciations versus the U.S. dollar raising the cost of imported energy. In addition, there is a risk to growth from an escalation of trade disputes," the agency said.

The United States and China have imposed a series of tariffs on each other's goods since May that have unnerved equity markets, while a rising U.S. dollar has put emerging market currencies under pressure, raising the energy bill for some of the world's largest oil importers.

Demand from nations not in the OECD group of industrialized countries, led by China and India, is expected to rise by 1.1 million bpd to 51.6 million bpd this year and by 1.2 million bpd to 52.8 million bpd next year, the IEA said.

Global demand will hit a high of 100.3 million bpd in the final quarter of this year, before moderating to 99.3 million bpd in the first quarter of next year, the agency said.

"We are entering a very crucial period for the oil market. The situation in Venezuela could deteriorate even faster, strife could return to Libya and the 53 days to Nov. 4 will reveal more decisions taken by countries and companies with respect to Iranian oil purchases," the IEA said, referring to the day U.S. sanctions on Iran take effect.

"It remains to be seen if other producers decide to increase their production," it said

Demand for crude from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries will moderate in 2019 to 31.9 million bpd, from an estimated 32.3 million bpd this year, the IEA said.

Iran, OPEC's third-largest member, is feeling the effect of the sanctions. The IEA said crude output fell in August by 150,000 bpd from July to a 25-month low of 3.63 million bpd, while exports fell by 280,000 bpd to 1.9 million bpd, from a peak of around 2.5 million bpd in May.

(Source: Reuters)

## Europe's renewable energy strategy will destroy forests and harm climate, scientists warn

Leading climate scientists have denounced the EU's decision to push wood as a "renewable" energy source.

They say the move will likely result in both a boost in greenhouse gas emissions across Europe and devastation of some of the world's most ancient forests.

Not only are forests home to much of the planet's biodiversity, they absorb climate-damaging CO2 from the atmosphere and are therefore considered a vital buffer against climate change.

Despite this, earlier this summer European officials decided — against the advice of hundreds of scientists — that wood could be considered a low-carbon fuel, meaning that trees can be cut down directly to burn.

The thinking behind this action, which would double Europe's use of renewable energy by 2030, is that new trees can be planted to replace the forests that have been removed.

However, in a paper published in the journal Nature Communications, scientists have outlined what they see as the flaws in this logic.

Burning forests releases a lot of CO2 into the atmosphere, and it can take many years for the new trees to absorb enough carbon to make up for the quantity that has been released.

The scientists estimate that greenhouse gas emissions could actually increase by up to 10 per cent if wood is widely used as fuel and will lead to many forests around the world being cut down to keep up with European energy demand.

They also suggested that cutting down trees for fuel will encourage other nations to follow suit. Brazil and Indonesia have already pledged to tackle climate change by burning more wood.

"Treating wood as a carbon-neutral fuel is a simple policy decision with complex cascading effects on forest use, energy systems, wood trade and biodiversity worldwide," said Professor Eric Lambin, a researcher at Stanford University and one of the paper's authors.

"Clearly, many of these effects have not received due attention."

Professor Wolfgang Lucht from the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research said: "It makes no sense at all to save trees through recycling and then turn around to burn them for energy."

"There is nothing green, renewable, or environmentally friendly about that. Global forests are not disposable."

In response, Jean-Marc Jossart from trade association Bioenergy Europe said that "bioenergy is not and will not be a cause of deforestation in the EU or elsewhere", pointing to a 32 per cent growth in EU forests over 25 years even while bioenergy consumption has doubled since 2000.

"The rate of replacement of trees is rapid," he added.

"The EU-28's carbon stock in forests keeps on increasing, thanks to sustainable forestry management and reforestation programs. Most importantly, European forests provide resources to plenty of industries and are not managed for energy purposes only."

Even so, the scientists questioned why the EU was focusing on burning wood when it had the capacity to invest in renewable energy systems that posed less threat to the environment.

"Compared with the vast majority of what counts as 'bioenergy by harvesting wood,' solar and wind have large advantages in land use efficiency and lower costs," said Dr Dan Kammen from the University of California, Berkeley.

"The focus on wood is not only counter-productive for climate change but unnecessary."

The announcement comes as a panel of UK scientists revealed a plan to meet the nation's emission targets by planting stretches of forest across the country to act as valuable carbon sinks.

New forests are considered one of the most straightforward techniques available to remove large volumes of CO2 from the atmosphere, a strategy seen as vital if the more ambitious goals set by the international Paris climate agreement are to be met.

(Source: The Independent)

## Allies are doubting how long Trump will stay in power



By James G. Stavridis

The 16th Supreme Allied Commander at NATO

The continuing melt-down in Washington, DC, has profound and challenging domestic implications. But far more dangerously, the obvious chaos throughout the Executive branch — emanating from the President himself — is weakening our allies' faith in America's ability to lead.

The thinking of the President, recently immortalized as “crazy town” in a quote ascribed to White House Chief of Staff John Kelly in Bob Woodward’s meticulously researched new book, Fear, is at present a mystery to the world at large. The release of that book and the near-simultaneous appearance of an anonymous op-ed by a “senior official in the Trump Administration” in the New York Times, which described a serious “resistance” in the Administration, have perplexed our allies, partners and friends — and emboldened our opponents. Disparaging comments about the President attributed to Secretary of Defense James Mattis and Chief of Staff John Kelly are stunning — and despite their denials, the comments appear well-sourced and of a kind with those attributed to former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson.

All of this creates the impression abroad of an executive branch in near freefall. One observer with deep diplomatic and intelligence experience in Washington said to me recently, “I’ve heard of rats departing a sinking ship, but I’ve never seen them drilling holes themselves in the hull.” Over several trips to Asia over the past four months, I was repeatedly asked if our President would serve his entire term and often — with an embarrassed half-smile — if he was “stable.”

In all of the years I have spent as a senior policy maker, and more recently as the Dean of a widely known graduate school of international relations, I have never seen our prestige as a nation at such a nadir. It will take all the best efforts of the President’s international team, as well as the rest of us in contact with global interlocutors, to provide reassurance and ask for patience to our network of allies, partners and friends — and to prevent irreversible damage.

At the center of the concern, of course, is President Donald Trump. In two years as the “leader of the free world,” an increasingly ironic phrase, Trump has managed to personally alienate virtually every key U.S. ally. He has been dismissive and disdainful of major NATO leaders. In the Pacific, U.S. policy has been uneven, beginning with the mistaken withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which would have constructed the largest free-trade zone in history and excluded our key competitor, China. The Middle East has been a relative bright spot for the Administration, and it is popular in both Israel and Saudi Arabia (and in the Persian Gulf broadly) for its tough stance on Iran. But even here, partners are beginning to worry about the President’s domestic woes and longevity.

This makes the November mid-terms a critical metric for foreign observers. A big reversal in the House of Representatives will further undermine the President’s credibility abroad and may magnify the Watergate-like parallels. Foreign leaders will be even less likely to believe the Administration has the longevity and credibility to lead global policy initiatives — from Syria to North Korea. While some international leaders would view the house flipping as “democracy working,” on balance they would see it as a storm warning of more chaotic behavior ahead. More revelations are likely, as more aides depart and seek to salvage their reputations by heaping opprobrium on the President and those remaining behind. This unvirtuous cycle will damage America’s reputation further in the eyes of the world.

Senior officials must do all they can to reassure our allies — and convince our opponents — that the U.S. is steady, in control and capable. This will require much personal contact with counterparts at every political level, from the Vice President through the Cabinet — including senior generals, who should execute exercises that emphasize interoperability and solidarity.

The message should be that, despite the frantic tweets and roiling waters of “crazy town,” the U.S.’s policy actions have remained relatively consistent. We are still attacking the Islamic State (ISIS) aggressively, still confronting China in the South China Sea, still supporting Taiwan and South Korea in Asia, still working closely with Colombia as their peace process unfolds and still deploying troops to the Persian Gulf in support of Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf States, among further examples. Directing skeptics back to the National Security Strategy from 2017, a fairly clear and indeed traditional statement of U.S. policy, will be helpful.

But in the end, such damage control can only help to a point. The top government leaders below the President know what needs to be done to keep the country safe. The question is whether Trump will allow them to bring order, at least in foreign policy, to the chaos coming from the Oval Office.

(Source: Time)

# Let’s plot the Trump coup together

By Wesley Pruden

Impeachment is too slow. Assassination is too messy. A coup d’etat sounds just about right, and it sounds French besides. Come, let us plot together.

The New York Times, marketed under the conceit that it supplies “All the news that’s fit to print,” clearly wants to help with the coup and rid the nation of the man the plotters regard as a blowhard president out to rain on the established order.

The publication in The New York Times of an op-ed essay about how plotters at the White House are determined to block the president’s aims and wishes at every turn, landed in Washington with a great noise. The newspaper won’t say who wrote the account of how the miserable wise men at the White House have even discussed using the 25th Amendment, which sets out how to remove from office a president unable to perform the duties of a president, to rid Washington of this president.

Publishing such dark speculation without saying who the speculator is, is a remarkable departure from the high and holy which newspapers have honored almost since Johannes Gutenberg, the German blacksmith who invented movable type 500 years ago to make newspapers possible.

The capital is currently in a mad rush in three or four directions at once to discover the identity of Anonymous. They’re sure he’s a mister because an editor at the newspaper used, perhaps inadvertently, the pronoun “he” to describe the author. Some people eager to rush to judgment concluded that one of the editors sat down and wrote the op-ed himself, but the op-ed was written in the brisk and straightforward English well beyond the Dick-and-Jane prose style of the editorial page of the Old Gray Lady.

But such speculation is plausible because it wouldn’t be the first time The New York Times has been guilty of playing tricks on the reader. Several years ago, citing “senior industry experts and insiders,” the newspaper set out to “expose” the fracking industry, claiming that energy experts and insiders considered fracking “little more than a Ponzi scheme.”

The “energy analyst” and a “federal analyst” quoted by The New York Times turned out to be an intern at the U.S. Energy Information Agency. Vague terms like analyst, insider,



**The New York Times won’t say who wrote the account of how the miserable wise men at the White House have even discussed using the 25th Amendment, which sets out how to remove from office a president unable to perform the duties of a president, to rid Washington of this president.**

expert and official are words of art much admired by polemicists disguising themselves as reporters and pundits.

Luckily for the plotters (if luck was actually what it was), the op-ed was published just as Bob Woodward is out with his latest book, “Fear,” which further describes the carnival that Trump Cabinet meetings are said to be, with the president making free with vulgar street talk and wild demands to rid the world of villains.

In a discussion of what to do about Bashar Assad, Trump is said to have told James Mattis, the secretary of defense, with an assortment of verbs and adverbs you might hear on a construction site, “Let’s kill him! Let’s go in and kill him! Let’s kill the lot of them!”

Woodward insists he has everything on

tape, and maybe he does. One pundit who shares Woodward’s opinion of himself describes him as “known for his impeccable research and honesty.” But he has used his lively imagination to fill in the blanks, and not all of it sounds very packable.

He once claimed to have interviewed the late William Casey, the director of the CIA, on his deathbed at the end of a long illness. He said he slipped past an iron ring of CIA operatives, nurses and hospital security and finally Mrs. Casey, all determined to let no one disturb him as he lay in a coma. But the intrepid Woodward lets nothing stop the master interrogator on his appointed rounds, and he worked out a code, something like wink your right eye to say yes and flutter your left eyelid for no. He got his scoop.

The bookies in Costa Rica have established betting odds that Vice President Mike Pence is the likely source of The New York Times op-ed, with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Chief of Staff John Kelly at 4 to 1. There’s a sucker born every minute, and the smart money is staying home on this one to watch the coup. I put the odds on that at 2 to 1.

The Costa Rican bookies say they consulted the veep’s speeches in establishing their opening odds, and found that he is fond of the words “lodestar.” When he searched the speeches of others of the administration, “lodestar” came up only in Pence’s speeches. The entrails of goats are said to work well, too.

(Source: The Washington Times)

## ‘Why does everything I do get so overblown?’: Kurz

By Peter Müller & Walter Mayr

In a Der Spiegel interview, Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz, 32, talks about his goals as holder of the rotating European Council presidency, the fight against illegal immigration and his relationship with German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

■ Mr. Chancellor, Austria is the current holder of the rotating European Council presidency. The motto you have chosen for your six-month tenure is “A Europe that Protects.” Who is supposed to be protected from whom?

A: In the coming months, we want to strengthen all those things that embody our Europe. The focus will be on security, order and the collective protection of our external borders. But we also have to work on our competitiveness amid the global competition in order to defend the prosperity we have attained. My generation often takes Europe and its successes for granted.

■ Please answer our question. Who is supposed to be protected from whom?

A: Our prosperity, our economy, our social security and values, and, if you want to narrow the focus to the question of migration, one of my priorities is the protection from human traffickers, who earn their money with refugees and their suffering.

■ What do you hope to achieve on the refugee issue by the end of the year?

A: That the trend reversal we have put in motion will continue. At the last EU summit in June, the heads of state and government agreed for the first time that unlimited admission (of refugees) in Central Europe was not the correct path, and that we need effective protection of our external borders and must expand the amount of assistance provided there. Now, this trend reversal, which has already taken place in our minds, must be implemented in practice.

■ You are proud of the fact that the EU has adopted your restrictive, closed borders approach to migration, aren’t you?

A: All 28 heads of state and government agreed on the resolutions together. But I was certainly among those who were in favor of a policy change early on.

■ You are demanding that refugee ships be prevented from docking in Europe and that the external border protection regime be strengthened. The question as to how refugees should be distributed in Europe is no longer on the agenda?

A: That isn’t entirely accurate. I am saying that it should not be the case that every ship full of migrants is able to dock in Europe. Our goal should be that of destroying the human traffickers’ business model. And it will be destroyed if someone who paid a trafficker to come to Europe isn’t automatically brought to Europe once they are saved at sea.

■ Currently, the Mediterranean countries are arguing among themselves about which EU country should accept each migrant ship carrying a couple of hundred people. The distribution question remains unresolved.

A: I have a different priority. Egypt is already prepared to accept the return of people who launch from Egyptian shores. That is exactly what we must now implement with Libya, Morocco and Tunisia — by way of stronger cooperation with each country’s coast guard, for example. I want to get to the point where the refugee ships don’t even embark on the voyage to Europe.

■ The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has warned about dire humanitarian conditions in Libya. Should Libya be seen as a safe country of origin?



A: When people set out from Libya on the way to Europe and already begin running into trouble in Libyan coastal waters, then it is a good thing when that country’s coast guard saves them and brings them back to Libya.

■ For as long as most North African countries are unwilling to take people back, the decisive question remains: According to what rules will asylum-seekers be distributed across Europe?

A: If it were up to me, those who clearly have no right to asylum should not be allowed into the EU at all but should be sent back to their countries of origin or to transit countries as quickly as possible.

■ The European Commission and the UN Refugee Agency argue in favor of assembling refugees deserving of protection in camps in North Africa before distributing them throughout the EU.

A: I have a different position. I think it would be much better for us to bring people to us directly from their countries of origin once we decide to accept them. And that they don’t end up in a North African refugee camp where they have to spend months waiting for a decision to be made about their application.

■ How do you intend to get to the point that migrants no longer embark on the journey north?

A: It is a mistake to believe that the migration question can only be solved through development cooperation. During our council presidency, we want to embark on new, more innovative paths. By the middle of the century, 2 billion people will be living in Africa. As such, we want to strengthen economic cooperation, create channels for private investment and establish vocational training programs for young

people. We hope to take a decisive step forward in December at an EU summit with African countries.

■ How is your current relationship with Italy? When it comes to migration, you hold similar views to Matteo Salvini, head of the far-right party Lega and Italy’s interior minister. But Rome is now threatening to stop paying its EU contributions. What are your thoughts on that?

A: I don’t like such threats. But it is also clear that we cannot abandon those EU member states that are under pressure due to migration. In the last several years, countries like Germany, Austria and Sweden were more strongly affected by the refugee crisis. In the meantime, however, the pressure has become greater elsewhere.

■ Regarding the issue of the future lead candidates for the office of European Commission president, do you think Germany’s Manfred Weber, the CSU politician who recently threw his hat into the ring, is the right person for the job?

A: I know him and have high regard for him. He is a dedicated European who has made a significant contribution to the European Union as a whole.

■ At the informal EU summit on Sept. 20 in Salzburg, Brexit will be the main topic of conversation, not migration. Does that fit with your agenda?

A: I hope that we are able to make some progress on Brexit. The most important challenge during the Austrian council presidency is the orderly preparation of Brexit. Should Britain’s exit be messy, it would result in massive harm to both sides, including us in the EU-27. It would be good if in Salzburg we already had a European Commission proposal for finding an agreement with Britain this fall.

(Source: Spiegel)

# The legacy of Ashura: Resistance and Victory

**1 →** While most of the Western media's focus is on the very bloody ritual of self-flagellation; known as Tatbir, the main aim of Ashura is to refuse humiliation and to fight for every universal righteous causes. Indeed, Tatbir is a wrongful, unlawful and also a fabricated irrational and superstitious tradition. "Become an ornament for us, do not be a disgrace for us," Imam al-Sadiq; the fifth Shiite's Imam States.

Besides, the highest ranking and most widely respected Shiite scholars stress that any ritual which ridicule the religion is impermissible and that this suspicious ritual has not been mentioned anywhere in the religious teachings.

Islam survived, spread and expanded because of sacrifices of this great Imam; buried today in in Iraq's holy city of Karbala, where some 22 million of Shiite Muslims gather to pay homage to Imam Hussein, in the world's biggest annual pilgrimage.

During the ten days of Ashura, Shiite Muslims partake in large congregations where they recite elegies, lament and beat their chest as a cultural tradition. They do not only display their grievance but they distribute food and organise charitable and blood-donation campaigns.

Not long after the death of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the Muslims had slid into political turmoil and corruption as the Umayyad dynasty usurped power and slowly began destroying the moral fabric of society.

Just like his father and brother, Imam Hussein was a leader widely known for his compassion, wisdom and integrity. He rejected to pay Yazid an oath of allegiance in order to gain credibility for his illegal rule.

Out of his moral obligation and principles of social and political justice, Imam Hussein refused to pledge allegiance and legalise



Yazid's corruption and repression, despite it being a risk to his life. He chose to make a phenomenal stand, and launched his mighty uprising, alongside with his family and 72 sincere companions.

Knowing that what was ahead of them was a certain martyrdom; yet they all remained steadfast, loyal to their principles and fought valiantly against the army of Yazid.

Charles Dickens; an English novelist, maintains, "If Husain had fought to quench his worldly desires...then I do not understand why his sister, wife, and children accompanied him. It stands to reason, therefore, that he sacrificed purely for Islam."

Out of fear, that Imam Hussein would gain momentum, Yazid dispatched an army of 30,000 to halt him and his companions in

their track from Medina. Yazid had ordered his army to block, deny access to water, attack and kill them in the desert land of Karbala (in Iraq), on the 10th day of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic calendar; known as The Day of Ashura.

Certainly, Imam Hussein headed to Iraq not to seek power but to reform and reorganise the Islamic Muhammadan state and its universal humanitarian ethics. He fought bravely against the enemy and was attacked from all sides with swords, spears and arrows.

Eventually, a man by the name of Shimir ruthlessly beheaded him on the burning plains of Karbala, fatigued, thirsty and heavily wounded but victorious through his legacy and distinct goals.

The Battle of Karbala, absolutely, has triggered a series of uprisings against tyrannical regimes and imperialist forces through history. Furthermore, the Ashuraian resistances have obviously proven that each hegemonic power would have an eventual demise.

Today, pilgrims, from all across the world, pay tribute to Imam Hussein's courageous stand and regard him as a symbol of resistance who stood for humanitarian values of sacrifice, freedom and dignity.

In the aftermath of The Battle of Karbala, Yazid's army held the Imam's women and children captive and marched them from Iraq to Syria. His sister was the one who safeguarded the uprising's principles to reflect the essential role Islam set for women in any revolutionary movement.

Sayedah Zainab defied Yazid in his own courtyard in her famous sermons, which unnerved even his closest allies, and imposed his heinous massacre and violations.

Undeniably, Hezbollah – the Lebanese resistance – and various other revolutionary movements have been greatly inspired by the outstanding figure of Imam Hussein (PBUH). Along with the axis of resistance, it defeated the U.S.-backed regional powers, who invaded and imposed an unconditional global war on Syria.

Hezbollah's armed strength has grown in the wider region to contend the hostile U.S. administration. It has become a draining movement to vanquish and provoke the imperialist hostility, not only standing up to the Zionist conspiracies but has also morphed into a powerful regional force.

In fact, escalating Hezbollah resistance's involvement in Syria has elevated the movement into an indispensable partner in a high-stakes confrontation, whose principal exponents are the extremist radical Saudis.

## Fear of war among Israeli army

**1 →** In Amos Harel's opinion as one of Israel's leading media experts on military and defense issues writing in Haaretz, the Israeli ground forces still suffer from major problems that make ground warfare a nightmare for the Zionists.

Ray al-Youm added: this Israeli analyst says the Israeli army failed to defeat Hamas entirely. The Israeli Air Force did not have any detailed information on Hamas objectives, and the level of preparedness of the units to carry out the mission to solve the problem of tunnels was weak. The Israeli forces suffered a lack of initiative and strategic thinking.

According to the Zionist analyst, the Israel army's problem is not in its command but in a professional crisis within the ground forces. Gadi Eizenkot, the Chief of General Staff of the Israel Defense Forces has found that the army has not been well focused on its basic missions.

After the defeat in Lebanon and the disappointing military performance, the Israeli army made extensive reforms, but the changes were not sufficiently deep, and the ground forces were still not that prepared. Political circles were skeptical of maneuvering ground forces into the enemy's lands during the war. This was the case in the three wars that the Israeli army launched in Gaza: the Cast Lead 2008, whose main objective was to prove to the enemy and the Israelis that the army had gained its fidelity, the Pillar of Cloud 2012, during which a lot of forces were summoned, and Solid Rock 2014 war that did not go beyond the tunnels 1.5 kilometers deep in the Gaza Strip. Objectives were not sufficiently met in these wars but Gaza was nonetheless devastated.

It is obvious that Zionist troops are afraid of war and



this has become a challenge for the Zionist regime. In spite of the propaganda about equipping the ground forces with new weapons, the reality is that the regime's ground forces

are still ineffective. Despite massive maneuvers and military exercises by the regime aimed at overcoming the many problems, they still are proving difficult obstacles.

## Trump failed in Swedish elections!

By Hanif Ghaffari

**TEHRAN** — Undoubtedly, one of the losers of the recent Swedish election was Donald Trump, President of the United States. Although there is now a tough competition between the two traditional coalitions in Stockholm for the formation of a (coalition or minimalist) government, it should not ignore the most important message of the recent national election in Sweden!

Swedish Democrats (Sverigedemokraterna) won about 18 percent of the vote in this election. The growth of Swedish extreme verdict has worried Swedish supporters of Sweden's social and welfare stability, but Democrat's votes are not enough to be present in the Swedish political equation!

Swedish Democrats intended to become most important political party in the recent election, gaining 25 to 30 percent of the vote, but failed to achieve this goal. Donald Trump is also a follower of the Democrats of Sweden. Trump believed that the SD Party's becoming the most popular party in the country could undermine the foundations of Swedish multicultural society. In this case, one of the main symbols of "multicultural societies" was damaged in Europe. That was precisely what the Trump wanted from the beginning of 2017.

Some time ago (in 2017), Trump referred to a terrorist act in Sweden which basically had not happened! In other words, he resorted to a sort of political and media chantage



**Trump believed that the SD Party's becoming the most popular party in the country could undermine the foundations of Swedish multicultural society.**

as far as Sweden's security situation was concerned. Some analysts believe Trump made the media gaffe unintentionally. But his repeated attempts later on to create the impression that Sweden was gripped by

insecurity showed what he had done was a calculated move.

By making those comments, Trump undoubtedly sought to trigger security crises in Sweden. Not only does Trump not wel-

come multicultural societies in Europe, but he is trying to eliminate this multicultural structure. Trump believes in order to counter immigrants and Muslims, multicultural societies should be targeted.

Sweden is one of the clear examples of a multicultural society in Europe. During the course of the immigration crisis which began in 2015, Sweden played a key role in admitting immigrants. That was not favored by Trump, who basically wants anti-immigration and nationalist groups in Europe to have a free hand. Trump and his associates have arrived at the conclusion that the most effective method to counter this trend is to indirectly support efforts aimed at creating security crises in Sweden. The emergence of security crises in Sweden will reinforce the country's ultra-right camp and Democratic Party. That is why Trump welcomes terrorist moves in Sweden!

One of Trump's aspirations is to see security crises flare up in Sweden, so that the country will no longer be regarded as a nation which is against his anti-immigration policies. Another objective of Trump is to strengthen ultra-right groups in Sweden, which could be analyzed within the context of Trump's backing for national currents in Europe as a whole.

Finally, Trump is not satisfied with the outcome of the Swedish general election. In other words, Trump's hopes for the absolute victory of the far right (SD) in Sweden's general election have been lost.

## The ICC vs. U.S.: Who is the real loser?



**TEHRAN (FNA)** — The International Criminal Court (ICC) has finally moved to investigate U.S. war crimes committed during the 17-year long war in Afghanistan.

This is welcome news as this is what the international civil society expects from the ICC. The U.S. administration has long been using its influence over global bodies to the extent that it sees itself an "exceptional" nation. Now the Hague intends to prove that unlike other international bodies such as the UN Security Council or the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) this is not the case with the ICC, and that even if Washington moves to position itself in direct opposition not just to the investigations, but the court itself, it won't be able to stop justice from being served to the long-suffering people of Afghanistan.

Still, that didn't stop U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton from saying that the U.S. will not only refuse to cooperate with the ICC, but that "for all intents and purposes, the ICC is already dead to us." Bolton is suggesting that the U.S. will block any judges and prosecutors from entering the U.S., freeze any ICC funds in the U.S. financial system, and impose sanctions against the ICC and its officials!

The U.S. has long resisted ICC oversight of its myriad war crimes and misdeeds, and has long insisted that Americans are immune from ICC prosecution. This has tended to work in the past, as the ICC has so far not made any serious moves against any U.S. citizens. Not anymore, as things have changed and justice is no longer a luxury. Under International Law, therefore, the ICC has the power and authority to prosecute Americans committing war crimes not just in Afghanistan, but in Iraq, Syria and Yemen as well.

It is under the same international norms that the International Criminal Court has firmly dismissed the threat of sanctions against it by Bolton in case it probes U.S. war crimes in Afghanistan, declaring that it will continue its work "undeterred."

"The ICC, as a court of law, will continue to do its work undeterred, in accordance with those principles and the overarching idea of the rule of law," the ICC announced in a Tuesday statement, a day after Bolton used bullying rhetoric against the UN-backed tribunal in The Hague.

The international court has further insisted that it is an independent and impartial institution with the backing of 123 nations, and that it would not be intimidated or dissuaded from its global task.

ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda is right to announce that there is a "reasonable basis to believe" war crimes and crimes against humanity have been committed in Afghanistan and that all sides in the 17-year-old conflict would be inspected, including members of the U.S. military and its CIA spying network.

Washington has refused to ratify the Rome Treaty that established the ICC. The U.S. has adopted the so-called American Services-Members "Protection Act" - nicknamed The Hague Invasion Act - which authorizes the use of any means necessary to free any American personnel held by the court. But that's not enough to justify any ICC backpedal from its rightful position.

Further still, the attack by Bolton against the ICC is not only in direct contradiction to the principle of accountability for war crimes, but reinforces the U.S. administration's repugnant policy of exceptionalism, where it demands adherence to International Law by all countries, except itself. The U.S. administration's threat to criminally prosecute and sanction International Criminal Court judges and prosecutors is straight out of an authoritarian playbook. Yet, those who believe that this criminal and autocratic rule of the White House started under Donald Trump need to remember President Obama's statements. But still, this conceited belief in exceptionalism has always been present in the minds and actions of the U.S. presidents ever since late World War II.

Taken together, delivering justice to the victims of America's longest war in history will help to facilitate the peace process in Afghanistan. This is their basic human right and demand and it must be respected by the U.S. which keeps telling us that it cares about international norms and human rights. The ICC should also investigate the Israeli regime's crimes against humanity in occupied Palestine, because like its American patrons, the usurper regime of Israel is not above International Law either.

Per usual, the ongoing U.S.-led war in Afghanistan has only brought death and destruction to the Afghan people. The war has been a disastrous failure and it is going really badly. By prosecuting those who have committed war crimes, the ICC can force the U.S. to change its strategy and show some respect for justice and accountability outside its borders or simply leave Afghanistan. This way, it can also pave the way for national reconciliation and an international effort to end the protracted conflict.

After all, there is no grandiose purpose to having U.S. military forces operating in Afghanistan. People like Bolton who favor an escalation of the war ought to own up to its heavy costs and bloody consequences. Of course, none of this is likely to be the case as long as the U.S. commanders pursue their strategy of bomb and apologize (and in many cases bomb even with no apology), while garrisoning the planet and fighting open-ended wars on not only Afghan but global frontiers.

Instead of fuelling global outrage for their illicit wars and occupations, the warmongers in Washington would be better off and safer, if they come to their senses, cooperate with the ICC and end their failed mission in Afghanistan. Threatening the ICC in a bid to continue war crimes would never bring the White House losers a victory in Afghanistan the same way it hasn't thus far.

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# Cancer: New target found for drug-resistant tumors

Rapamycin and drugs that act like it have a limited effect against many cancers because their tumors are resistant to them. Now, the discovery of a cell growth mechanism could lead to new drugs that overcome this resistance in some cancers.

The mechanism involves a previously unknown protein complex called mammalian target of rapamycin complex 3 (mTORC3).

Scientists at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, TN, came across it by chance when they were doing an experiment.

Their study is the subject of a paper that now features in the journal Science Advances.

"This new complex," explains senior study author Gerard C. Grosveld, who is the chair of the genetics department at the hospital, "has not been on anybody's radar screen, even though mTOR complexes have been studied for the last 25 years."

He and his team describe the finding as a "paradigm shift" in our understanding of an important cell growth mechanism and declare that it offers a "novel target for anticancer drug development."

## Cell growth regulator

The enzyme mammalian (or mechanistic) target of rapamycin (mTOR) plays a key role in the control of crucial cell processes; it regulates growth and keeps it in a state of equilibrium.

Abnormal activation of mTOR appears as a factor in an "increasing number" of diseases; as well as cancer, these include neurodegeneration, type 2 diabetes, and obesity.

In cancer, abnormal mTOR activation promotes tumor growth. Rapamycin, as well as drugs that act like it — known as rapalogs — are designed to stop this by blocking mTOR.

Most rapalogs, however, have limited effect in cancer because tumor cells are resistant to them.

Scientists had already revealed that mTOR exerted its wide influence from within two large protein complexes: mTORC1 and mTORC2.

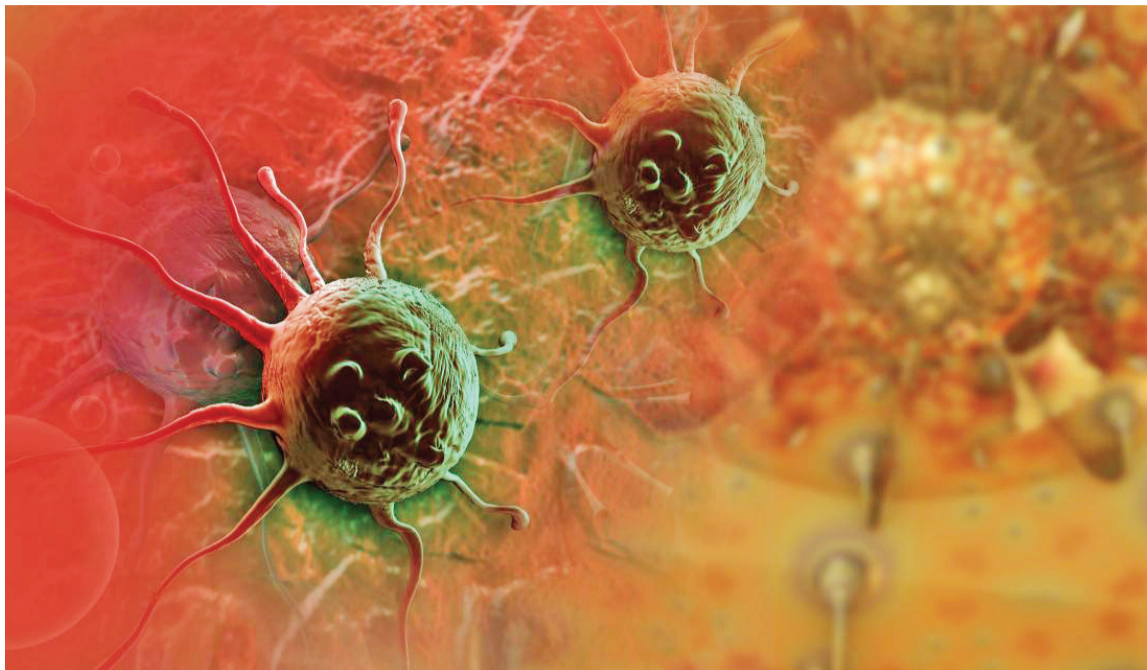
Grosveld and his team, however, recently came across evidence to suggest that there might be a third mTOR protein complex, and that a transcription factor protein called ETV7 assembled it.

The experiment that suggested this also revealed that overactive ETV7 was linked to overactive mTOR.

## ETV7 assembles mTORC3

By searching through several sources of genomic cancer data, the investigators revealed that ETV7 was abnormally overexpressed in a large proportion of cases in several types of cancer.

The team found ETV7 overexpression, for instance, in acute myeloid leukemia, acute lymphoblastic leukemia,



**The researchers now plan to find drugs that block mTORC3 by targeting ETV7. They suggest that combining such a drug with those that target mTORC1 and mTORC2 could make many cancers vulnerable to rapalogs that are otherwise resistant to them.**

"pediatric solid tumors," a type of pediatric brain tumor called medulloblastoma, and liver cancer.

Following this, they carried out cell culture tests and found that ETV7 caused mTOR to become overactive, and that this accelerated cell growth.

The scientists were mystified, however, by the fact that ETV7 did not seem to be doing this as part of the protein complexes mTORC1 or mTORC2.

Eventually, after another set of experiments, they found that ETV7 was orchestrating the assembly of a distinct mTOR protein complex to which they assigned the name mTORC3.

## Removing rapamycin resistance

These experiments confirmed that neither mTORC1 nor mTORC2 contained ETV7 and showed that mTORC3 was completely resistant to rapamycin.

The scientists then demonstrated that deleting ETV7 in tumor cells that were resistant to rapamycin made them vulnerable to the drug.

A final set of tests in mice genetically engineered to develop tumors in their muscles showed that mTORC3 production made the tumors more aggressive and sped up their growth.

The researchers now plan to find drugs that block mTORC3 by targeting ETV7. They suggest that combining such a drug with those that target mTORC1 and mTORC2 could make many cancers vulnerable to rapalogs that are otherwise resistant to them.

"We have developed solid data for the existence of mTORC3, and now, we are seeking to isolate and identify the components of the complex," Gerard C. Grosveld said.

(Source: Medical News Today)

## Inhaled version of blood pressure drug shows promise in treating anxiety, pain

An inhaled form of a high blood pressure medication has potential to treat certain types of anxiety as well as pain, according to a new study by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH).

Anxiety disorders are usually treated with different types of medications, such as antidepressants, and psychotherapy. Amiloride is a medication offering a new approach, as a short-acting nasal spray that could be used to prevent an anxiety attack.

"Inhaled amiloride may prove to have benefits for panic disorder, which is typically characterized by spells of shortness of breath and fear, when people feel anxiety levels rising," says lead author Dr. Marco Battaglia, Associate Chief of Child and Youth Psychiatry and Clinician Scientist in the Campbell Family Mental Health Research Institute at CAMH.

The study was based on understanding the key physiological changes in brain functioning that are linked to anxiety and pain sensitivity. The researchers then tested a molecule, amiloride, which targets this functioning.

Amiloride was inhaled so that it could immediately access the brain. The study showed that it reduced the physical respiratory signs of anxiety and pain in a preclinical model of illness. This therapeutic effect didn't occur when amiloride was administered in the body, as it didn't cross the blood-brain barrier and did not reach the brain.

Results were published in the Journal of Psychopharmacology.

## The role of early life adversity

The study is based on years of research into how a person's early life experiences affect their genes, says Dr. Battaglia. Childhood adversity, such as loss or separation from parents, increases the risk of anxiety disorders and pain, among other health issues.

At a molecular level, these negative life experiences are linked to changes in some genes of the ASIC (acid-sensing-ion-channels) family. While the DNA itself doesn't change, the way it functions is affected.

DNA is converted into working proteins through a process called gene expression. As a result of childhood adversity, some ASIC genes showed increased expression and epigenomic changes. ("Epigenomic" refers to changes in gene regulation that can be inherited by children). Overlapping genetic changes were also seen in blood taken from twins who responded to specific tests designed to provoke panic.

These genetic changes are linked to physical symptoms. Breathing can be affected, due to over-sensitivity to higher carbon dioxide levels in the air. In such situations, a person might hyperventilate and experience growing anxiety. Preclinical and human data are strikingly similar in this regard. "As a treatment, amiloride turned out to be very effective preclinically," says Dr. Battaglia.

The next step in his research is to test whether it eases anxiety symptoms. Dr. Battaglia is now launching a pilot clinical trial, supported through a seed grant from CAMH's new Discovery Fund. Collaborators at the University of Utah are testing the drug's safety.

(Source: Science Daily)

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## France takes Google to court to control content globally

France is headed to the European Court of Justice to establish whether it can force companies such as Google to de-list search results globally.

France's data regulator is seeking clarification on whether material removed under the "right to be forgotten" (RTBF) law should only be removed within France or if it should be de-listed on every Google domain.



RTBF was established in 2014 when a man called Mario Costeja complained that searching for his name on Google returned out-of-date material about an unsettled debt and didn't reveal that his debt was settled.

He won his case, and now the RTBF allows ordinary people to demand that Google amends its search results and de-lists links to "inadequate, irrelevant or [...] excessive" information. Although the material itself remains online, it can't be found through searches using the individual's name.

Now, France's data regulator, the Commission Nationale de l'Informatique et des Libertés (CNIL), is seeking to extend this power to allow it to remove links from not just google.fr but all Google domains.

Google and a group of eight international free speech organisations are warning that such an extension could encourage authoritarian states such as China, Russia and Saudi Arabia to similarly attempt to control the global internet.

UK businessman wins first 'right to be forgotten' case  
UK businessman wins first 'right to be forgotten' case  
The man, named only as NT2 in court, wanted a past crime he committed to not come up in search results

Media organisations have also filed a statement regarding the protracted battle between CNIL and Google, arguing that the global application of the RTBF is "incompatible with fundamental rights and freedoms and international law".

(Source: news.sky.com)

## SOCIALLY SAFE

## Tips to create a safe gaming environment for your child



Many games may contain themes, language and images that are unsuitable for your child and vary in their levels of violent or sexual content. You can check the age guidelines and classification of individual games through information available on its website or product box or at the Australian Classification Board.

Useful information about games ratings can also be obtained from the Pan European Game Information (PEGI) and the US Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB).

Review sites can also be a good source of information about age appropriate content – check out the Australian Council on Children and the Media, Kiwi Families (NZ), Common Sense Media (US), Parents' Choice (US) and Ask About Games (UK).

**■ Get involved**  
Talk regularly with your child about their gaming interests and who they play with online. Help them understand the risks of excessive gaming.

Play alongside your child to get a better sense of how they are handling their personal information and who they are communicating with.

**■ Prepare**  
Use available parental controls and establish rules well in advance about gaming use, including time limits, personal information they should not share and designate where they can play. Get your child to use a screen name that doesn't reveal their real name and locate the computer or games console in an open area of your home (or if they are playing on their hand held device get them to do it in the family room).

Agree on strategies for them to switch off, like a timer that signals that game time is nearly over, and the consequences for not switching off.

Install current security software on all devices to protect against viruses, malware and other online threats, and teach your kids not to click on links provided by strangers, like cheat programs to help with game play.

Activate parental controls and settings to restrict access to certain sites and content and to help prevent any excessive spending on in-game and in-app purchases.

**■ Monitor**  
Monitor the time your child spends online and keep a look out for any changes in your child's activity, school or social behaviours. Encourage your child to tell you if they are being cyberbullied or if another user is making them uncomfortable – they can 'block' players or report any threatening or suspicious behaviour to the game's administrators. If you suspect your child is being groomed online by a stranger, you can report this to the Australian Federal Police on the Child exploitation form.

**■ Empower**  
Provide your child with strategies to deal with negative online experiences. Our Young & eSafe site is a good starting point as it helps empower young people to take control of their online experiences. It includes real life stories from young people and expert advice and tips on how to make a positive impact in their online world.

(Source: esafety.gov.au)

# Main ways technology impacts your daily life



We are living in an era of advanced technology, where every part of our daily lives is related to the science of craft in one way or another. There's no doubt that over the years technology has been responsible for creating amazingly useful resources which put all the information we need at our fingertips. The development of technology has led to so many mind-blowing discoveries, better facilities, and better luxuries, but at the same has dramatically changed our daily lives. Various highly-developed gadgets, connected to the Internet, have changed the way we communicate, use humor, study, work, shop, play, and behave.

It's not difficult to recognize just how much of the technology we use on a daily basis — from computers, cell phones, laptops, tablets and TVs to refrigerators and convection ovens that cook food evenly. Here are six ways technology impacts your daily life.

### ■ Improved communication

The continuous advances in technology have led to the appearance of numerous new methods of electronic communication, such as social networking websites, emails, voicemails, and video conferences. These advanced communication tech tools have helped us to eliminate time and distance as obstacles to effective communication. This is beneficial not only to our personal relationships, but also to education and business. Technology has improved cultural education by giving children the opportunity to communicate with other children from different countries and learn about different cultures.

Even though technology is beneficial to communication and allows people to stay in touch, you need to find a balance between the cyber world and real world. These technological advancements might be incredible and important in today's society, but you must be careful to not lose sight of the people who are physically around you. While communicating via social media might be fun and more convenient, it is also harmful to our social skills. Spending quality time with your friends and family to create memorable experiences is especially important for happiness.

### ■ Improved home entertainment

Not that long ago, our entertainment experiences used to live in the moment they happened, exist in our memories and find their way in old-fashioned photographs on wall. Today, that has all changed due to the rapid growth of the Internet, mobile connectivity, and social networks.

One of the biggest changes, for example, was the switch from videotapes to CDs/DVDs. This enabled manufacturers to put more data onto the medium. This meant that there were no risks of the tape coming out of the player and getting damaged that easily, and due to the small size of the DVDs, it also meant that a lot more could be stored in the same amount of space.

Another huge technological advance was the introduction of LCD TV. Compared to today's LCD TVs, the previous television screens were inefficient, with lower definition and poor quality. Today we can not only enjoy improved home entertainment, but different types of home entertainment too: from smart TVs to Xbox units.

### ■ Improved housing and lifestyle

Housing and lifestyle have also been impacted by the modern technology. The majority of the items that you have in your

home today are automated, which makes your life much easier, organized and safer. Thanks in particular to the advanced technological solutions such automated door locks, security cameras and lighting control, our homes are now more secure than ever. Also, thanks to the Internet, we have an easy access to all sorts of information, news, and you're able to shop online any time of the day or night from the comfort of your own home.

### ■ Changed health industry

There's no doubt that technology is the driving force behind the huge improvements in healthcare. The majority of the hospitals today have implemented modern technology in hospitals and surgical rooms, which has significantly reduced the mistakes made by doctors. The increased accessibility of treatment is also one of the most amazing ways that technology has changed health care. Besides the technological advancements in hospitals, there are also many health phone and desktop apps that allow you to easily monitor your weight, heart rate, and other health properties at any time of the day. Needless to say, the Internet is our main source of medical information.

An increasing number of people are now using the Internet to diagnose themselves by

looking for advice from people on the Internet who have experienced the same symptoms. There are also many suggested treatments and remedies on the web, as well as alternative solutions. Technology has also enabled doctors to use text messages, videos, and e-mails to consult colleagues from all over the world, which is especially beneficial to patients and doctors that live in rural and under-developed areas.

### ■ Convenience in education

Technology has impacted every aspect of our lives today, and education is no exception. Technology has changed education in so many ways. First, technology has expanded the access to education and there are huge amounts of information (books, images, videos, audio) that are available through the Internet and that will enable you to empower yourself with knowledge. In addition, online courses are on the rise and most of them are free.

Modern technology has made it simple for students to learn from any place in the world through online education. Also, nowadays students use modern technology in classrooms in order to learn better. For example, students can use iPads to share visual lessons, presentations, and examples with their peers. This has made learning much more convenient and more fun, but most importantly – more effective.

### ■ Convenience of traveling

Modern transportation technology has made it easier for individuals to travel long distances. Since transport is an important part of our lives, technology has been regularly working on making it more efficient and quicker. The first steamship was built in the 1770s, the first steam-powered train was built in 1798, and the modern car was created in 1886, while the first powered, controlled flight is believed to have taken place in 1903.

Today, we just cannot imagine life without well-developed means of transport like cars, trains, buses, and airplanes which have become a basic need. Over the last decade, the automobile industry is experiencing a technological revolution as the electrical vehicles are taking the world by storm.

(Source: tech.co)

## Ways that natural nanotechnology could inspire human design

Though nanotechnology is portrayed as a fairly recent human invention, nature is actually full of nanoscopic architectures. They underpin the essential functions of a variety of life forms, from bacteria to berries, wasps to whales.

In fact, tactful use of the principles of nanoscience can be traced to natural structures that are over 500m-years-old. Below are just five sources of inspiration that scientists could use to create the next generation of human technology.

### ■ Structural colors

The coloration of several types of beetles and butterflies is produced by sets of carefully spaced nanoscopic pillars. Made of sugars such as chitosan, or proteins like keratin, the widths of slits between the pillars are engineered to manipulate light to achieve certain colours or effects like iridescence. One benefit of this strategy is resilience. Pigments tend to bleach with exposure to light, but structural colours are stable for remarkably long periods. A recent study of structural coloration in metallic-blue marble berries, for example, featured specimens collected in 1974, which had maintained their color despite being long dead.

Another advantage is that color can be changed by simply varying the size and shape of the slits, and by filling the pores with liquids or vapors too. In fact, often the first clue to the presence of structural coloration is a vivid color change after the specimen has been soaked in water. Some wing structures are so sensitive to air density in the slits that color changes are seen in response to temperature too.

### ■ Long range visibility

In addition to simply deflecting light at an angle to achieve the appearance of color, some ultra-thin layers of slit panels

completely reverse the direction of the travel of light rays. This deflection and blocking of light can work together to create stunning optical effects such as a single butterfly's wings with half-a-mile visibility, and beetles with brilliant white scales, measuring a slim five micrometers. In fact, these structures are so impressive that they can outperform artificially engineered structures that are 25 times thicker.

### ■ Adhesion

Gecko feet can bind firmly to practically any solid surface in milliseconds, and detach with no apparent effort. This adhesion is purely physical with no chemical interaction between the feet and surface.

The active adhesive layer of the gecko's foot is a branched nanoscopic layer of bristles called "spatulae", which measure about 200 nanometers in length. Several thousand of these spatulae are attached to micron sized "seta". Both are made of very flexible keratin. Though research into the finer details of the spatulae's attachment and detachment mechanism is ongoing, the very fact that they operate with no sticky chemical is an impressive feat of design.

Gecko's feet have other fascinating features too. They are self-cleaning, resistant to self-matting (the seta don't stick to each other) and are detached by default (including from each other). These features have prompted suggestions that in the future, glues, screws and rivets could all be made from a single process, casting keratin or similar material into different moulds.

### ■ Porous strength

The strongest form of any solid is the single crystal state – think diamonds – in which atoms are present in near perfect

order from one end of the object to the other. Things like steel rods, aircraft bodies and car panels are not single crystalline, but polycrystalline, similar in structure to a mosaic of grains. So, in theory, the strength of these materials could be improved by increasing the grain size, or by making the whole structure single crystalline.

Single crystals can be very heavy, but nature has a solution for this in the form of nanostructured pores. The resultant structure – a meso-crystal – is the strongest form of a given solid for its weight category. Sea urchin spines and nacre (mother of pearl) are both made of meso-crystalline forms. These creatures have lightweight shells and yet can reside at great depths where the pressure is high.

In theory, meso-crystalline materials can be manufactured, although using existing processes would require a lot of intricate manipulation. Tiny nanoparticles would have to be spun around until they line up with atomic precision to other parts of the growing mesocrystals, and then they would need to be gelled together around a soft spacer to eventually form a porous network.

### ■ Bacterial navigation

Magnetotactic bacteria possess the extraordinary ability to sense minute magnetic fields, including the Earth's own, using small chains of nanocrystals called magnetosomes. These are grains sized between 30–50 nanometers, made of either magnetite (a form of iron oxide) or, less commonly, greghite (an iron sulphur combo). Several features of magnetosomes work together to produce a foldable "compass needle", many times more sensitive than man-made counterparts.

(Source: phys.org)

## Days 81 to 100: The startup checklist



### ■ Test, measure and iterate your business concept

As Housekeep founder Avin Rabheru explains, in the first 100 days you should "do things that don't scale". Rabheru continues: "Don't worry about problems that have solutions at scale, worry about problems you have right now. We cleaned dozens of houses before we had a website or could even take payment for the cleans!" In essence, prove the concept.

### ■ Develop stories

Pobble founder Jon Smith: "Become a storyteller and practice your pitch at every opportunity, whether this is to investors, future team members, founders, friends, family and even partners! All will need to be convinced of what you are saying

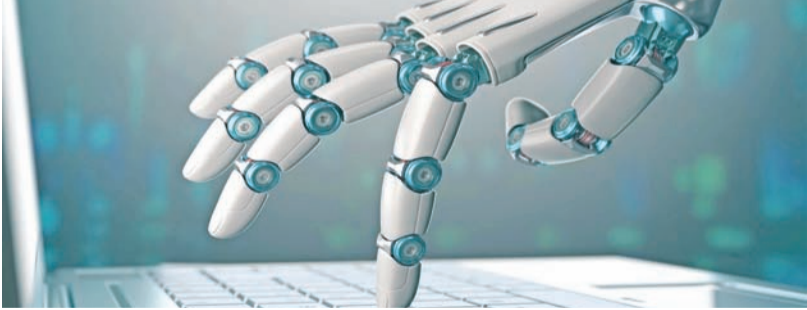
without actual proof!"

### ■ Lastly, make sure you can walk before you run!

RefME's Hatton says you need to focus on being flexible in the first 100 days while carwow's Hind advises you to "set your [business] up in a logical order and leave room for growth as you become more successful". Rebel Kitchen founder Arbib has some final words of wisdom: "Know that you can always pivot or alter plans if your original decision turned out not to be the best or the landscape changes (it often does!), so don't get too attached to a specific idea or concept. If something doesn't work you have to let it go and change your strategy."

(Source: startups.co.uk)

## Cutting-edge tech to promote your startup



Cutting through the noise and reaching your target audience may be difficult, especially with today's competition. To compete, you need to keep up with the most efficient promotion strategies and platforms. Social media, email marketing, influencer marketing, and blogging are some of the most proven channels businesses use to reach and communicate with their audience. Regardless of the communication channel you use, your chance of success boils down to the quality of your content.

Now and then, new tools, platforms, and content strategies arise and give those who are quick to adapt a competitive advantage. With technology, startups can now communicate with their target audience in more ways than ever. Below are five

of the freshest and most useful content tools you can use to promote your startup.

Communicating with your prospects through presentations is one of the most professional and engaging ways for directly promoting your brand. But not all online marketers are capable of producing excellent slide presentations. Most presenters use dull and boring visuals that may prevent the audience from fully understanding the message. With Prezi, you can easily create beautiful and powerful presentations that are sure to captivate your audience's attention.

If you need a presentation fast, you can choose from a library of "prezis" or professionally built presentation templates.

(Source: tech.co)

# The closest exoplanet to Earth could be ‘highly habitable’, scientist claims

Ever since the discovery of the exoplanet — known as Proxima Centauri b — in 2016, people have wondered whether it could be capable of sustaining life.

Now, using computer models similar to those used to study climate change on Earth, researchers have found that, under a wide range of conditions, Proxima Centauri b can sustain enormous areas of liquid water on its surface, potentially raising its prospects for harboring living organisms.

The “major message from our simulations is that there’s a decent chance that the planet would be habitable,” said Anthony Del Genio, a planetary scientist at the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies in New York City. Del Genio is also the lead author of a paper describing the new research, which was published Sept. 5 in the journal *Astrobiology*.

**■ Red-dwarf star**

Proxima Centauri is a small, cool red-dwarf star located just 4.2 light-years from the sun. Despite its proximity, scientists still know very little about Proxima Centauri’s planetary companion, besides that its mass is at least 1.3 times that of Earth and that it goes around its parent star every 11 days. Therefore, Del Genio and his colleagues had to make some reasonable guesses about the exoplanet Proxima Centauri b — namely, that it had an atmosphere and an ocean on its surface — for their work to proceed. Proxima Centauri b orbits in its star’s



habitable zone, meaning it’s at just the right distance to receive enough starlight to keep its surface above the freezing temperature of water. But this zone is extremely close to

the star, space.com, a Live Science sister site, reported. So it’s likely that the planet has become tidally locked due to gravitational forces.

**The “major message from our simulations is that there’s a decent chance that the planet would be habitable,” said Anthony Del Genio, a planetary scientist at the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies in New York City.**

This means that the same side of Proxima Centauri b always faces its parent star, much like how the moon always shows the same side to Earth.

**■ Previous simulations**

Previous simulations published in a 2016 paper in the journal *Astronomy & Astrophysics* modeled a hypothetical atmosphere on Proxima Centauri b and suggested that the star-facing hemisphere of the exoplanet might be baked under an intense glare, while a space-facing ocean would be frozen over. Therefore, only a circle of warm sea might exist on Proxima Centauri b — a scenario Del Genio’s team calls “eyeball Earth.”

But the new simulations were more comprehensive than prior ones; they also included a dynamic, circulating ocean, which was able to transfer heat from one side of the exoplanet to the other very effectively. In the researchers’ findings, the movement of the atmosphere and ocean combined so that “even though the night side never sees any starlight, there’s a band of liquid water that’s sustained around the equatorial region,” Del Genio told Live Science.

He likened this heat circulation to our own planet’s seaside climates. The U.S. East Coast is balmy than it would be otherwise, he said, because the Gulf Stream carries warm water up from the tropics.

(Source: space.com)

## An amazing reaction happens when a plant gets hurt, new research finds



When plants are under attack - say, for instance, by an insect making a tasty leaf meal - their defense systems are raised in other parts. How do they know to do that?

According to new research, plants use the same signaling molecules that animals use in their nervous system. Our green friends don’t have nerves, exactly - but they certainly have something surprisingly similar.

The research involved using fluorescent proteins to mark and watch the signals as they travel in waves through plants in response to a stressor.

“We know there’s this systemic signaling system, and if you wound in one place the rest of the plant triggers its defense responses. But we didn’t know what was behind this system,” explained botanist Simon Gilroy from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

**■ An electrical charge fires**

What they did know is that if a plant gets wounded, an electrical charge fires, propagating across the plant. The unknown part was what triggered that charge and helped propagate it - but that’s not even what the researchers were trying to study.

What they were originally looking at was how plants respond to gravity by studying increases in calcium. So botanist Masatsugu Toyota genetically engineered a mustard plant that would let the researchers observe changes in calcium concentration in real-time.

He introduced a protein that only fluoresces in the presence of calcium. And then the researchers cut a leaf to see if they could detect calcium changes.

In animals, an excited nerve cell releases an amino acid called glutamate, which

triggers a wave of electrically charged calcium ions that propagate to cells farther and farther away from the site.

As you can see from the videos, what happened to the plants is nothing short of incredible. Waves of light flow out from the source of the wound, spreading through the plant at the speed of about a millimeter per second.

It’s a lot slower than animal nerve signals, which can travel up to 120 meters per second (268 mph), but for plants this is super speedy communication.

**■ Defensive hormones**

The researchers discovered that once the wave hits, defensive hormones rise in that region of the plant.

This tells the plant to mount its defenses, such as an increase in noxious chemicals that will make the plant unpalatable to munching insects, or - as is known in the case of grass - the release of smelly volatiles that signal parasitic wasps to come and lay their eggs in insects that might be eating it.

But what was triggering the calcium waves? Just like in animals, the researchers believed it might be glutamate, which is also found in plants. And previous research published in 2013 revealed that plants missing glutamate receptors also did not have an electrical threat response.

So the research team wounded plants without glutamate receptors to see if there was an effect on calcium flow.

“Lo and behold, the mutants that knock out the electrical signaling completely knock out the calcium signaling as well,” Gilroy said.

(Source: sciencealert.com)

## GW may drive 10 percent of amphibian species in the Atlantic Rainforest to extinction



Global warming (GW) could lead to the extinction of up to 10% of frog and toad species endemic to Brazil’s Atlantic Rainforest biome within about the next 50 years. The temperature and precipitation regimes predicted to occur between 2050 and 2070 will be lethal for species that are less well adapted to climate variation and inhabit certain areas of the Atlantic Rainforest.

This is one of the findings of a study that analyzes the present and future distribution of anurans (tailless amphibians, i.e., frogs and toads) in Brazil’s Atlantic Rainforest and Cerrado (savanna) biomes in the context of climate change due to continuous global warming.

A paper on the study has been published in the journal *Ecology and Evolution*. The first author is herpetologist Tiago da Silva Vasconcelos, a researcher at São Paulo State University’s School of Sciences (FC-UNESP) in Bauru, Brazil.

At present, 550 anuran species are known to inhabit the Atlantic Rainforest (80% of them endemic), and 209 are known to be present in the Cerrado. After removing species with fewer than five occurrence records, Vasconcelos worked with spatial distribution data for 350 species in the Atlantic Rainforest and 155 species in the Cerrado.

“In this manner, we were able to identify the Atlantic Rainforest and Cerrado areas with the highest levels of anuran species richness and with unique species composition,” Vasconcelos said. “Having identified these areas, we evaluated the anuran communities in current and future climate scenarios in order to determine which areas offered a favorable climate for each of the 505 species analyzed and

whether the areas would expand or contract by 2050 and 2070 owing to global warming.”

**■ Impact of climate change**

The “first expected impact of climate change on anuran amphibians in the Atlantic Rainforest and Cerrado is the extinction of 42 species due to the complete loss of the areas with favorable climate conditions between 2050 and 2070,” Vasconcelos said.

From the 42 species likely to be extinct, 37 of them are Atlantic Rainforest species (10.6% of the total) and five are Cerrado species. Of these 42 species, only five are currently considered endangered by Brazil’s Environment Ministry.

The spatial distribution data for 350 Atlantic Rainforest species and 155 Cerrado species were analyzed in terms of two community ecology metrics: alpha diversity, defined as local species richness within a specific habitat or ecosystem, and beta diversity, a measure of structural heterogeneity based on the extent to which species composition varies as a function of distance.

According to Vasconcelos, the next step was to generate ecological niche models based on the climate characteristics favorable to each species, using four algorithms: generalized linear models, boosted regression trees, random forests, and support vector machines.

The algorithms generated maps of the Atlantic Rainforest and Cerrado areas in which each species can survive thanks to their similar climates. They were then calibrated with future climate scenarios based on projections available from the WorldClim global climate database.

(Source: eurekalert.org)

## How much plastic pollution will kill a turtle?

We know there is a lot of plastic in the ocean, and that turtles (and other endangered species) are eating it. It is not uncommon to find stranded dead turtles with guts full of plastic.

But we weren’t really sure whether plastic eaten by turtles actually kills them, or if they just happen to have plastic inside them when they die. Another way to look at it would be to ask: how much is too much plastic for turtles?

This is a really important question. Just because there’s a lot of plastic in the ocean, we can’t necessarily presume that animals are dying from eating it. Even if a few animals do, that doesn’t mean that every animal that eats plastic is going to die. If we can estimate how much plastic it takes to kill a turtle, we can start to answer the question of exactly how turtle populations are affected by eating plastic debris.

In our researches, we looked at nearly 1,000 turtles that had died and washed up on beaches around Australia or were found in nets. About 260 of them we examined ourselves; the others were reported to the Queensland Turtle Stranding Database. We carefully investigated why the turtles died, and



for the ones we examined, we counted how many pieces of plastic they had eaten.

**■ Death from eating plastic**

Some turtles died of causes that were nothing to do with plastic. They may have been killed by a boat strike, or become entangled in fishing lines or derelict nets. Turtles have even been known to die after accidentally eating a blue-ringed

octopus. Others definitely died from eating plastic, with the plastic either puncturing or blocking their gut.

Some turtles that were killed by things like boat strikes or fishing nets nevertheless had large amounts of plastic in their guts, despite not having been killed by eating plastic. These turtles allow us to see how much plastic an animal can eat and still be alive and functioning.

The chart below sets out this idea. If an animal drowned in a fishing net, its chance of being killed by plastic is zero — and it falls in the lower left of the graph. If a turtle’s gut was blocked by a plastic bag, its chance of being killed by plastic is 100 percent, and it’s in the upper right.

The animals that were dead with plastic in their gut, but had other possible causes of death have a chance of death due to plastic somewhere between 0 and 100 percent — we just don’t know, and they can fall anywhere in the graph. Once we have all the animals in the plot, then we can ask whether we see an increase in the chance of death due to plastic as the amount of plastic in an animal goes up.

(Source: Newsweek)

## NASA tests foldable umbrella-like heat shield

The technology to reach another planet or moon is only worth so much if you can’t land on it. Every landing has its own challenges, but celestial bodies with an atmosphere are particularly vexing. For decades, the heat shields that protect spacecraft during atmospheric entry have been rigid and heavy, but NASA just tested a flexible “umbrella-like” heat shield that could make deep space missions more practical.

The flexible heat shield is known as the Adaptable Deployable Entry and Placement Technology (ADEPT), and it was developed at NASA’s Ames Research Center in California. NASA’s goal is to make heat shields larger while also reducing weight — it’s an area of spacecraft design long overdue for a change.

Spacecraft are moving at fantastic speeds when they descend to the surface, and that compresses atmospheric gas. The compression causes pressure shock, leading to intense heating in front of the spacecraft as high as 5,400 degrees Fahrenheit (3,000 Celsius).

Even a thin atmosphere like the one on Mars can cause significant heat buildup. Current spacecraft use aeroshells to keep the payload cool as it enters an atmosphere. Aeroshells are usually made of thick phenolic plastic and ablates (peels away) under intense heat to protect the spacecraft. The plastic isn’t flexible and weighs quite a lot. Thus, heat shields can’t be larger than the diameter of the rocket that launched them.

ADEPT could change all that. It’s composed of layers of 3D woven carbon fabric stretched over articulating ribs and struts. Rather than ablating, ADEPT re-radiates absorbed heat with very high efficiency to keep the payload cool.

The test flight on September 12th involved a quick 15-minute sub-orbital flight. The rocket lifted the prototype to an altitude of 60 miles (technically in space) and released it.

(Source: extremetech.com)

## One specific gene mutation helped turn humans into long-distance runners

A gene mutation millions of years ago gave modern humans the ability to run long distances, a new study has found.

This single change in one strand in the DNA completely altered the path of the human species, making forest dwellers into hunter-gatherers who eventually dominated the world.

About 2 to 3 million years ago, a single mutation in the DNA of the early human species triggered a series of changes in the body, including the ability to run long distances without feeling exhausted. This is how humans distinguished themselves from other mammals during the hunter-gatherer phase. Instead of releasing a quick spurt of energy like a cheetah to catch a prey, humans pursue their target until it is too tired to keep running.

The tactic proved to be effective especially when the forests in Africa became savannahs and eventually, the human ancestors started to evolve dramatically. Early hominids, who developed longer and springy legs, bigger feet, strong gluteal muscles, lost their fur and expanded sweat glands that helped make the species great long-distance runners.

The gene in question is called the CMP-Neu5Ac Hydroxylase or CMAH.

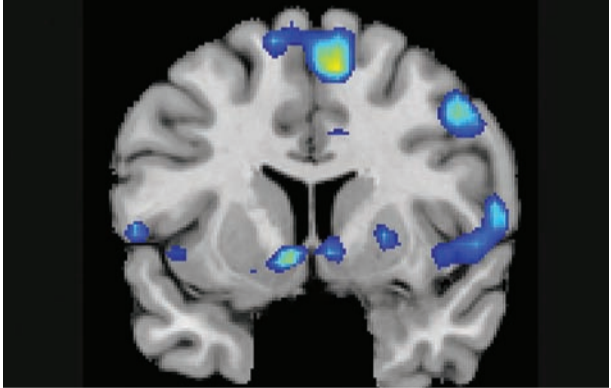
“We evaluated the exercise capacity (of mice lacking the CMAH gene), and noted an increased performance during treadmill testing and after 15 days of voluntary wheel running,” stated graduate student and study author Jon Okerblom.

According to the study, the mice that have broken CMAH, like humans, were able to run 12 percent faster and 20 percent longer than those who have the normal gene. They also have more blood vessels into their leg muscles that contract longer when in motion.

(Source: Tech Times)

## Brain has a noise-canceling circuit, team says

A team of scientists has uncovered the neural processes mice use to ignore their own footsteps, a discovery that offers new insights into how we learn to speak and play music.



The “ability to ignore one’s own footsteps requires the brain to store and recall memories and to make some pretty stellar computations,” explains David Schneider, an assistant professor at New York University’s Center for Neural Science and one of the paper’s lead authors. “These are the building blocks for other, more important sound-generating behaviors, like recognizing the sounds you make when learning how to speak or to play a musical instrument.”

The research, conducted at Duke University’s School of Medicine, centered on an intuition -- that we are usually unaware of the sound of our own footsteps -- as a vehicle for understanding larger neural phenomena: how this behavior reveals the ability to monitor, recognize, and remember the sound of one’s own movements in relation to those of their larger environments.

The “capacity to anticipate and discriminate these movement-related sounds from environmental sounds is critical to normal hearing,” Schneider explains. “But how the brain learns to anticipate the sounds resulting from our movements remains largely unknown.”

To explore this, Schneider and his colleagues, Janani Sundarajan and Richard Mooney at Duke’s School of Medicine, designed an “acoustic virtual reality system” for the mice. Here, the scientists controlled the sounds the mice made walking on a treadmill while monitoring the animals’ neural activity, allowing them to identify the neural circuit mechanisms that learn to suppress movement-related sounds.

Overall, they found a flexibility in neural function -- the mice developed an adjustable “sensory filter” that allowed them to ignore the sounds of their own footsteps. In turn, this allowed them to better detect other sounds arising from their surroundings.

(Source: Science Daily)

## ‘Hosseini infants’ ceremony held nationwide

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** —The Hosseini infants ceremony was held nationwide on Friday in commemoration of Ali al-Asghar, the six-month-old baby boy of Imam Hossein (AS) who was the youngest person killed in the Battle of Karbala.

The conference was held in 2003 for the first time in Tehran, but since then mourners have been congregating every day on the first Friday of the Mourning month of Moharram (September 11-October 11) nationwide and also throughout the world in over 40 countries including Iraq, Pakistan, Bahrain, India, and Turkey.

Normally in order to attend the conference mothers dress their babies in special green and white clothes, which are said to resemble the clothing of Ali al-Asghar. Babies also wear a headband with the name of Ali al-Asghar written on it.

The Battle of Karbala took place on Moharram 10, in the year 61 Hijri year of the Islamic calendar (October 10, 680 AD) in Karbala, in present-day Iraq.

The battle was a military engagement in which a small party led by Imam Hossein (AS) grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was defeated and massacred by an army sent by the Umayyad caliph Yazid. The battle helped secure the position of the Umayyad dynasty, but among Shia Muslims the 10th of Moharram (or also known as Ashura) became an annual holy day of public mourning.

## Enrollment rate in primary education increased to almost 100% in Iran: minister

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — While in 1970s there enrollment rate of the boys and girls in primary education was 70 percent, currently it exceeds 98 percent, Education Minister said on Thursday.

There are elementary schools in almost all areas across the country and there are even elementary schools in some regions with only one student, Mohammad Bat'haei said.

Of course there are a number of out-of-school children, but the numbers show the decline of the number of out-of-children in primary school age.

Enrollment of boys and girls in primary education is almost equal in the country. Fars news agency quoted him as saying.

According to the Our World data website primary school education today is focused on establishing the fundamental literacy and numeracy skills among children, as well as developing their understanding of the world. These skills are increasingly necessary for life in the modern world, and are essential to the functioning of developed economies. For this reason, primary education is compulsory and provided by the state in almost all countries around the world.

The second United Nations Millennium Development Goal was to “ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.” This goal was missed but significant progress has been made. In 1970, 28% of primary-school-age children in the world were not attending school, today this share has decline to 9% -- equivalent to 60 million children not in primary education.

## LEARN ENGLISH

### Job Interview

A: Thanks for coming in today, did you have any trouble finding us? Please take a seat.

B: Thank you.

A: So, let's get started; tell me a bit about your **educational background**.

B: Sure! Well, I graduated **with honors** from Chesterton University with a **major** in Business Administration, with a **specialization** in Information Management, and I minored in psychology. I chose this **course of study** for two reasons: I wanted to gain some practical, marketable skills, which the information management **track** provided, and I also feel that interpersonal skills are essential for professional success, **hence** the **minor** in psychology.

A: Interesting. And, your **postgraduate** studies?

B: Well, I am really passionate about consumer behavior, so I **pursued** a master's in that area. I also **strive** to keep my professional skills current, so I continuously attend seminars and conferences related management and customer service.

A: Very good. Now, tell me a little bit about your work experience. I see here that you previously worked at Oracle.

B: Yeah, I worked as their customer support manager, which brought me a **breadth** of experience in both client care, and process management. I supervised and coordinated the customer support team as well as implemented new strategies to achieve better customer satisfaction.

A: Interesting...

B: Yes, in this position I was able to make some pretty **significant contributions** to the overall success of the company. With the different initiatives that we implemented, we lowered our churn rate to about five percent, which had a direct impact on revenue.

■ **Key vocabulary**  
**educational background:** the history of the education you've had  
**with honors:** with special recognition for receiving very high marks  
**major:** the main field of study in an undergraduate degree  
**specialization:** a limited area of study  
**course of study:** the combination of courses taken in a degree program  
**track:** course of study  
**hence:** for that reason  
**minor:** to have a secondary area of study in an undergraduate program  
**postgraduate:** masters or Ph.D.; education above the bachelor's degree level  
**pursue:** try to do something over a longer period of time  
**strive:** try hard to do some- thing  
**breadth:** a wide range or scope of something  
**significant:** important and large enough to have a noticeable effect  
**contribution:** adding or giving something

■ **Supplementary vocabulary**  
**tertiary education:** university education  
**take initiative:** take the chance to do something before others do  
**distinguish:** make something different in a special way  
**attribute:** a good quality or feature that someone has  
**scrutinize:** examine something in a careful and critical way  
(Source: [irlanguage.com](http://irlanguage.com))

# Iran, Germany to collaborate on 24 research projects

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** —German Research Foundation (in German Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft or DFG) will collaborate with Iran on conducting 24 research projects, IRNA news agency reported on Friday.

The DFG is the self-governing organization for science and research in Germany. It serves all branches of science and the humanities. Its membership consists of German research universities, non-university research institutions, scientific associations and the Academies of Science and the Humanities.

**University of Tehran, Amirkabir University of Technology, Isfahan University of Technology, University of Hamburg, Dresden University of Technology, and Free University of Berlin have jointly collaborated on research projects on fossil fuels, Persian literature, etc.**

The DFG receives the large majority of its funds from the federal government and the states, which are represented in all grants committees. The main task of the DFG is to select the best projects by researchers at universities and research institutions on a competitive basis and to finance these projects.

Deputy science minster for international affairs, Hossein Salar-Amoli, said on Friday that University of Tehran, Amirkabir University of Technology, Isfahan University of Technology, University of Hamburg, Dresden University of

## Iran on the way to increase children’s road safety

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — While many parents are already using car seats for children in the front or rear seat of any cars in Iran it has not become a law yet.

However, mentioning the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011–2020 Traffic Police Chief Taqi Mehri explained that traffic police is planning on enforcing a law, mandating the use of car seats for children, in the country.

According to the World Health Organization the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes that road safety is a prerequisite to ensuring healthy lives, promoting well-being and making cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. The Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011–2020, officially proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in March 2010, seeks to save millions of lives by building road safety management capacity; improving the safety of road infrastructure; further developing the safety of vehicles; enhancing the behavior of road users; and improving post-crash response. Guided by the Global Plan, the Decade of Action offers a framework for policy, practice and advocacy to help countries achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mehri went on to say that using car seats has become a culture among the public gradually but there must be a law regulating its use in order to cut the deaths caused by road crashes among children.



“Approximately 7 percent of the deaths attributed to traffic-related accidents occur among children every year,” ISNA news agency quoted Mehri as saying on Friday.

He further explained that children must use a car seat until they are 10, however, he noted that the age requirements, guidelines for correct installation of the car seats depending on the age of the children, and the amount of fine in case of violating the law will be explained in details later.

“The law is yet to be implemented and for now we just recommend parents to use car seats,” he said, stating that, “the widespread use of car seats would guarantee children's right in the society.”

By law, children must use the child car seat for every single journey, no matter how short in many parts of the world. Parents themselves must set a good example by wearing their seat belts.

## Nearly third of Earth’s surface must be protected to prevent mass extinction

Two leading scientists have issued a call for massive swathes of the planet's land and sea to be protected from human interference in order to avert mass extinction.

Current levels of protection “do not even come close to required levels”, they said, urging world leaders to come to a new arrangement by which at least 30 per cent of the planet's surface is formally protected by 2030.

Chief scientist of the National Geographic Society Jonathan Baillie and Chinese Academy of Sciences biologist Ya-Ping Zhang made their views clear in an editorial published in the journal Science.

They said the new target was the absolute minimum that ought to be conserved, and ideally this figure should rise to 50 per cent by the middle of the century.

“This will be extremely challenging, but it is possible,” they said.

“Anything less will likely result in a major extinction crisis

and jeopardize the health and wellbeing of future generations.”

Most current scientific estimates have the amount of space needed to safeguard the world's animals and plants at between 25 and 75 per cent of land and oceans.

There is an enormous amount of uncertainty due in no small part to incomplete knowledge about the number of species on the planet and the roles they play in ecosystems. Nevertheless, the scientists dismissed current protection of 3.6 per cent of the oceans and 14.7 per cent of land as way off the necessary targets.

Researchers have warned of a “biological annihilation” as many of the world’s creatures are wiped out due to human impacts like pollution and climate change.

A recent study by BirdLife International revealed that several birds species, including the spix’s macaw, have gone extinct in the wild in recent years.

In the UK experts have warned that many of the nation’s



A group of students are throwing their caps in the air in celebrating their graduation in front of Amirkabir University of Technology.

Technology, and Free University of Berlin have jointly collaborated on research projects on fossil fuels, Persian literature, etc.

Amirkabir University of Technology and University of Tehran each with 7 and 5 projects respectively are ranked among the first Iranian universities in terms of running joint projects with German universities, Salar-Amoli said.

An academic delegation has travelled from Germany to Iran and is scheduled to visit universities in Tehran, Mashhad, Tabriz, and Isfahan, he noted.

## Lake Urmia full restoration deferred pending budget allocation

**ENVIRONMENT** **TEHRAN** — Limited budget could put back Lake Urmia, a wetland located in northwest Iran, restoration projects, Masoud Tajrishi deputy environment chief and an official with the lake restoration program has said.

The lake, shared between West Azarbaijan and East Azarbaijan provinces, used to be the largest salt-water lake in the Middle East. It was a home to many migratory and indigenous animals including flamingos, pelicans, egrets and ducks and attracted hundreds of tourist every year who had taken a trip to take advantage of the therapeutic properties of the lake.

However, the lake started to shrink in 1990s. The drastic decrease of the lake water level over the past 20 years has seriously affected the lake's wildlife and human ecology.

The volume of water which measured at 30 billion cubic meters dramatically decreased to half a billion cubic meters in 2013 and again rose to 2.5 billion cubic meters in 2017 and accordingly lake surface area of 5,000 square kilometers in 1997 shrunk to one tenth of that to 500 square kilometers in 2013.

As per the data published on Iran Environment and Wildlife Watch website on April 8, the lake is stretching over some 2,200 square kilometers and the volume of water is measured at some 2 billion cubic meters.

“Thankfully we have succeeded in stabilizing the lake conditions, but we haven’t received the budget to fully restore the lake,”



Tajrishi regretted.

In order to restore the lake some 8 trillion rials budget (nearly \$190 million) was approved in the year 1395 (March 2016-March 2017) only half of which was actually received, he said, adding that, last year (March 2017-March 2018) no budget was allocated to the lake restoration projects.

In general the government has so far allotted some 20 trillion rials (nearly \$475 million) since the establishment of the Lake Urmia Restoration Program in August 2013, ISNA quoted him as saying on Friday.

Out of 13 projects of water treatment and water transfer to the lake only two are being implemented, he concluded.

In order to maintain the lake ecological balance the lake surface area should increase to twice its current size to almost 4,300 square kilometers and the volume of water should be at 14.5 billion cubic meters.

best known species, including garden birds and hedgehogs, are facing alarming declines.

Of the areas that are currently designated as special protected zones, many are so-called paper parks that are not properly managed or are subject to intense human pressure.

A study published in May revealed that a third of the land in the world's wildlife sanctuaries and national parks – a total area of 2.3 million square miles – faces destruction due to human activities such as road building and urbanisation.

In 2010 at the Nagoya Conference of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the world's governments agreed to aim for 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas and 17 per cent of land protected within a decade.

When leaders meet again in 2020 in Beijing, the scientists say that “given the evidence to date and the implications of an underestimate” they must make their next target far more ambitious.

(Source: *The Independent*)

## ENGLISH IN USE

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## ‘Iran’s renewable water resources decreased by 25% in 5 decades’

Renewable water resources has drastically decreased to less than 100 billion cubic meters from 132 bcm over the past 50 years, environmental official Mohammad Mojabi has said.

Mentioning persistent water shortage in the country Mojabi explained that while renewable water resources measured at 132 billion cubic meters 50 years ago it decreased to 116 billion cubic meters and even now over the past 5 years it diminished to less than 100 billion cubic meters.

The reports indicate that mean precipitation has dropped from 250 millimeters to 205 millimeters over the same period, ISNA quoted Mojabi as saying on Friday.

## PREFIX/SUFFIX

### “tele-“

■ **Meaning:** at a distance

■ **For example:** In 1913 there were 11,000 post and **telecommunications** offices, of which only 3,000 were in rural localities.

## PHRASAL VERB

### Do up

■ **Meaning:** to fasten something, or to be fastened in a particular way

■ **For example:** Do up your coat or you'll get cold.

## IDIOM

### Go cold turkey

■ **Explanation:** to suddenly quit or stop addictive or dangerous behavior such as smoking or drinking alcohol

■ **For example:** I was eating way too much junk. Finally, I just went cold turkey and stopped buying anything but healthy food.

# Saudi-led airstrikes kill 15 civilians in Yemen

Situation in Yemen's Hudaydah 'alarming', aid at risk: UN

➔ The UN agency warned that "the conflict [is] threatening the continuity of humanitarian assistance to the city and surrounding areas where needs are among the highest in the country."

Alongside the threat of combat, civilians also face severe shortages of food, water and medicine in Hudaydah province, according to the UN.

In August, WFP said it had provided emergency food assistance to some 700,000 of the around 900,000 people in the province considered to be at severe risk.

Agency spokesman Herve Verhoosel decried that a number of security incidences had been reported since Wednesday, including at the Red Sea Mill Silos, which mill a quarter of the agency's monthly wheat requirements in Yemen.

"The ongoing clashes could jeopardize the shipments of 46,000 tons of wheat expected to arrive to Hudaydah within the next ten days," Verhoosel told reporters in Geneva.

Clashes near the mill "could impact our ability to feed up to 3.5 million very hungry people in northern and central Yemen for one month," he warned.

He said that a mortar shell launched by an unidentified armed group had also hit a WFP warehouse in Hudaydah city "holding enough food to assist 19,200 very hungry people."

## ■ Saudis plan attack on Hudaydah food store

Saudi Arabia and its allies are positioned to attack food storage facilities in Yemeni port town of al-Hudaydah, the Houthi Ansarullah Movement has warned.

The warning came as the Saudi-led coalition this week intensified its military campaign to take over the strategic port.

Mohammed Ali al-Houthi, the chairman of the Supreme Revolutionary Committee of Yemen, revealed in a Twitter post on



Thursday that Riyadh had plans to attack food storage facilities and silos across Hudaydah - which is the main conduit for food supplies into the war-torn country - under the false pretext that they were being used to store weapons.

He also warned that the coalition was going to target Hudaydah's populated areas with "blind strikes."

Houthi said the decision came amid a media campaign by the aggressors to justify their atrocities in the city.

The warnings followed the resumption of relentless attacks by Saudi Arabia and its allies, including the United Arab Emirates, against Yemen after UN-brokered talks between warring parties failed in Geneva last week.

The talks were aborted after the UN failed to meet conditions set by Yemen's Ansarullah movement that included transferring Yemenis who had been wounded as a result of the

Saudi-led war to hospitals and also providing guarantees over the safety of the Yemeni delegation attending the talks.

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

On Wednesday night, Saudi-led aircraft ended the truce by bombing Hudaydah's Kilo 16 district, killing at least 15 people and injuring dozens more.

Saudi Arabia and its regional allies launched the devastating military campaign against Yemen in March 2015, with the aim of reinstating former president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi and crushing the Houthi movement.

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

More than 2,200 others have died of cholera, and the crisis has triggered what

the United Nations has described as the world's worst humanitarian disaster.

The Saudi-led offensive to wrest control of Hudaydah began in June, with the aim of stopping continued missile strikes by Yemen's army and the Houthis.

Despite effectively putting Hudaydah under an extensive aerial and maritime siege, the Saudis insist that the only way to stop what they call a flow of arms and missile parts to the group is by taking the whole city under control.

However, the offensive has been far from successful. In fact, the extent of civilian casualties has put the coalition under growing international pressure to end the onslaught.

The battle has even prompted reactions from the US and the UK, who have been providing Riyadh with unconditional arms and intelligence support over the course of the war.

## ■ Spain, U.S. Confirm Support for Riyadh After Civilian Massacres

The Spanish government walked back its cancellation on Thursday of the sale of 400 laser-guided bombs to Saudi Arabia, which has been devastating Yemen's infrastructure and killing civilians in an effort to oust the Houthi government.

Meanwhile, the U.S. affirmed its support for the Saudi-led coalition on Wednesday within hours of a bombing that left more than a dozen dead.

Since Saudi Arabia drew international outrage after killing more than 40 children in a bombing attack on a bus in Yemen on August 9, some demonstrable, if small, steps have been taken by a number of governments to weaken the monarchy's blows to the war-ravaged nation, which is gripped by one of the worst humanitarian catastrophes in modern history.

(Source: agencies)

# Venezuela's Maduro seeks to broker deals with 'big sister' China

China says willing to provide Venezuela with what help it can

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has hailed China as a "big sister" during his visit to the East Asian economic powerhouse, seeking to boost bilateral ties amid economic crisis at home.

Maduro said after landing in Beijing on Friday that he had come with "great expectations" to further deepen strategic ties with his country's key lender.

The 55-year-old leftist leader said his visit would give a "big push" to energy investments, trade and the "successful financial relationship" between the two countries.

Maduro, who last visited China in March 2017, is scheduled to meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping later in the day.

"China is our big sister. I will be very happy when I meet with our brother Xi Jinping on Friday," he noted.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry said the two leaders were expected to discuss ties and "issues of common concern," as well as overseeing the signing of economic deals.

"Recently, the Venezuelan government has actively promoted economic and financial reform with a good social response," the ministry said, adding that "this visit by President Maduro is beneficial to both sides' mutual trust, to push forward cooperation, to expand ties between the two countries and to promote Venezuela's development."

In a televised address before leaving Venezuela, Maduro said the trip was "very necessary, very opportune and full of great expectations."

"We are leaving under better conditions, having activated a program of economic recovery, growth and prosperity. We are going to improve, broaden and deepen relations with this great world power," he said.

Before Maduro's arrival, Venezuelan Vice President Delcy Rodriguez held a meeting with Chinese officials from the China Development Bank and China National Petroleum Corp (CNPC), which is a major investor in oil and gas exploration in the Latin American country.

China has loaned some \$50 billion to OPEC member Venezuela in the past decade, with Caracas repaying the debt in several installments with oil shipments. Caracas still owes \$20 billion to Beijing.

China has reportedly agreed to pay Caracas a new \$5 billion loan with a six-month extension to the grace period to service its debt.

Venezuela, which sits atop the world's largest oil reserves, has been struggling with a worsening economic situation during the past years.

About 2.3 million Venezuelans have left the country since the economic crisis erupted in 2015 — more than 500,000 only this year — mostly for Brazil, Chile, Colombia,



Ecuador, and Peru.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has announced that inflation in Venezuela could top one million percent by the end of this year.

President Maduro has blamed a US-led economic war for the crisis, saying Washington is plotting to topple his socialist government.

(Source: agencies)

# At least 37 killed in multiple attacks across Afghanistan

At least 37 people have been killed in night-time attacks across four provinces of Afghanistan, officials said.

Twenty-nine police officers and members of the Afghan national army were killed in Taliban attacks in the western province of Farah, the head of the provincial council, Farid Bakhtwar, said.

Taliban terrorists attacked several check posts on the outskirts of Farah city late on Thursday, as well as in three other districts, leaving at least

six others wounded, according to the official.

In the northern province of Samangan, gunmen attacked a security outpost in Dara Suf district, triggering an hours-long gun battle.

Local officials said that at least six members of the security forces were killed, including police officials.

Earlier this month, 14 people were killed and six injured in Taliban attacks on police checkpoints in the same district.

Meanwhile, civilians have again been

caught up in the fighting, with officials reporting two people killed by Taliban fighters in Jalrez district in the central Maidan Wardak province.

Both victims were government employees from the neighboring province of Bamyan, provincial council members Sardar Bakhtyari and Khawani Sultani said.

The Taliban have seized several districts across the country in recent years and carry out near-daily attacks targeting Afghan

security forces.

In August, Taliban fighters launched an assault on the city of Ghazni in an attack that lasted five days. More than 150 civilians were killed and wounded during the assault.

The attack was widely seen as a show of force by the Taliban ahead of possible peace talks with the United States, which has been at war in Afghanistan for nearly 17 years.

(Source: agencies)

# Erdogan: Turkey came under 'economic attack'

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has blamed an economic "attack" for the country's currency crisis.

In a speech to officials from the ruling Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi/AKP) in Ankara on Friday, Erdogan said Turkey had "faced a heinous attack targeting the Turkish economy after a series of negative statements from the U.S. about our country were used as an excuse".

He described the sudden fall in the value of the lira last month, when the currency reached more than seven against the dollar, as an "economic assassination attempt".

The lira traded flat on Friday before Erdogan's remarks, holding the gains it made against the United States dollar on Thursday after Turkey's central bank increased interest rates and the government banned the use of foreign currencies in the country's property market.

The dual developments on Thursday pushed the lira as high as 6.08 against the dollar and it traded flat on Friday morning, standing at 6.03 to the dollar at 07:28 GMT.

The Turkish central bank raised interest rates to 24 percent on Thursday, the biggest increase since Erdogan came to power in 2003, in an attempt to boost the struggling currency and control inflation.

In his speech on Friday, Erdogan said Turkey would see the result of central bank's independence after it lifted interest rates, adding that his patience with interest rates



had limits. He also called on Turks to convert their savings to lira and trust in the national currency.

The lira has lost around 40 percent of its value this year amid growing international concern over the health of the Turkish economy and a damaging diplomatic dispute with the U.S.

Thursday's move by the central bank came hours after Erdogan, a self-described "enemy of interest rates", stated his opposition to any lifting of the rate and blamed the central bank for inflation and high borrowing costs.

The inflation rate in Turkey rose to nearly 18 percent last month. In a separate development, Erdogan issued a decree that contracts in the country's property market

must be made in lira.

The announcement in the government's official gazette stated that current agreements in foreign currencies must be changed to lira in 30 days, putting an end to deals in dollars and euros.

The ban is the latest attempt by the government to boost the Turkish currency and discourage Turkish individuals and businesses from using the dollar in international trade and investment transactions. Erdogan has recently called on Turks to exchange their foreign currencies for lira.

Earlier this month, the Turkish president told a business forum in Kyrgyzstan that the U.S. had behaved like "wild wolves" and "using the dollar only damages us".

"We need to gradually end the monopoly of the dollar once and for all by using local and national currency among us," he said.

Turkey is involved in a diplomatic standoff with the U.S. over the detention of an American evangelical pastor. Andrew Brunson is being held under house arrest in Turkey after he was charged with espionage and terrorism-related offences.

Last month, the U.S. imposed sanctions on two Turkish government ministers and also imposed tariffs on imports of Turkish steel and aluminum in a bid to pressure Turkey to release Brunson.

(Source: agencies)

# German spy scandal exposes deep divisions in Merkel government

A scandal over migrants being chased through the streets has exposed a rift between Angela Merkel and Germany's security establishment that is dividing her coalition and hindering efforts to contain the fall-out from her "open door" refugee policy.

The crisis blew up when Hans-Georg Maassen, chief of the BFV intelligence agency, said he was not convinced far-right extremists had attacked migrants in the eastern city of Chemnitz last month and a video said to show the violence may be fake.

That put Maassen at odds with Merkel, who said the pictures "very clearly revealed hate" which could not be tolerated.

"For a more decisive chancellor, this would have been enough to fire him," said Carsten Nickel at political consultancy Teneo Intelligence, adding that support for Maassen from Merkel's conservative Bavarian allies was staying her hand.

Now, Merkel is caught between her Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union (CSU), which backs Maassen, and her other coalition partner, the left-leaning Social Democrats (SPD), who say he has lost credibility and must go.

The upshot is that the chancellor looks weak, her coalition is in crisis and she is less able to deal with pressing issues such as Brexit, European Union reform and trade problems with the United States.

"The migration issue will certainly continue to haunt Merkel until the end of her term," said Nickel.

The Maassen row has its roots in Merkel's 2015 decision to open Germany's borders to refugees fleeing war in the Middle East. More than one million came in total.

"Maassen is not an isolated case. Maassen is part of the security community," said Robin Alexander, author of 'Die Getriebenen, or 'Those Driven by Events', an account of how Merkel and her lieutenants handled the refugee crisis.

"For this security community, autumn 2015 was a disaster - not just for Maassen, but for all of them," he added. "There is a deep alienation of the whole security community from the chancellor, and that was not the case in Germany previously."

## ■ Frustrated spies

The rift opened up in October 2015, when Merkel put her chief of staff, Peter Altmaier, in charge of Germany's response to the refugee crisis, with Emily Haber - a diplomat - acting as point person in the Interior Ministry.

That chain of command effectively shut out the security services, which couldn't get face time with Merkel.

"That totally frustrated these people ... they were horrified," said Alexander. In private, Maassen complained about the difficulty of keeping tabs on the refugees and assessing whether they posed a security risk.

His cause got a boost with the 2017 election, when the anti-immigration Alternative for Germany (AfD) surged into parliament for the first time and Merkel had to reshuffle her government.

CSU leader Horst Seehofer, who had called Merkel's handling of the refugee crisis a "reign of injustice", was made interior minister. He gave Maassen political cover to push his security agenda, which he duly did.

In an interview with Reuters in January, Maassen, 55, called for a review of laws restricting the surveillance of minors to guard against the children of Islamist fighters returning to Germany as "sleepers agents" who could carry out attacks.

Maassen also clashed with other more circumspect government officials when he said Russia was the likely culprit behind cyber attacks on Germany.

## ■ Spoke too soon

Then came Chemnitz. This time, Maassen publicly questioned the authenticity of the video before his agency had finished its work on the incident.

"The bottom line is that he spoke before the agency finished its assessment," said one source familiar with the issue.

In a Sept. 10 letter to the Interior Ministry, seen by Reuters, in which he explained his comments on Chemnitz, Maassen said he wanted to shed light on events after the state premier of Saxony, where the city is located, denied migrants had been hounded.

But the letter failed to draw a line under a scandal that has also revived questions about Maassen's ties to the far-right AfD.

A former leader of the AfD's youth wing, Franziska Schreiber, wrote in a book she published this year - "Inside AfD: The report of a drop-out" - that Maassen had advised ex-AfD leader Frauke Petry on how the party could avoid being put under surveillance by his agency. He has denied giving such counsel.

Fresh allegations arose on Thursday, when the BFV was forced to deny a report by public broadcaster ARD that Maassen had told an AfD lawmaker about parts of a report from his agency before it was published.

But Maassen has the backing of Seehofer, who said the intelligence chief "gave a convincing explanation of his actions" to a committee of lawmakers on Wednesday.

The SPD nonetheless called a crisis meeting of governing party leaders on Thursday.

(Source: Reuters)

# Bolton attack on ICC: A legal suicide by U.S.

➔ "Other U.S. allies" that Bolton refers to are no countries except Saudi Arabia and the UAE which are committing war crimes in Yemen and the most concrete example of their crime was the targeting of a school bus on August 9 with a 227 kilogram laser-guided MK 82 bomb made by Lockheed Martin.

The remaining U.S. allies, especially those in Europe even if they can still be considered Washington's allies, have been involved in no war in the recent decades which their action could be subject to investigation by the ICC.

David Scheffer, who established the ICC on behalf of the U.S. and served as the country's ambassador-at-large for war crimes issues, said, "The Bolton speech today isolates the United States from international criminal justice and severely undermines our leadership in bringing perpetrators of atrocity crimes to justice elsewhere in the world."

Liz Evenson, associate international justice director at Human Rights Watch, told AFP news agency that Bolton had shown "callous disregard for victims of atrocity crimes" and that the U.S. was "more concerned with coddling serial rights abusers... than supporting impartial justice".

The illegal and rash policies by the Trump administration, ranging from its rebuke to international treaties like the Paris climate agreement, its withdrawal from the binding Iran nuclear pact, moving its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in an open violation of the rights of Palestinians and its recent harsh attacks on the ICC signal nothing less than legal and political suicide by Washington and its consequent isolation in the world.

## Panel advises Wada to uphold Russia anti-doping agency ban

The World Anti-Doping Agency’s compliance review committee has recommended that Russia’s anti-doping agency (Rusada) remains suspended. The independent panel was set up in 2015 and increased its role in 2016 in response to Russia’s doping scandal. Wada will vote whether to reinstate Rusada on 20 September. In a letter seen by BBC Sport, the committee says Russia falls short on two demands set out by Wada in August 2017. Earlier on Thursday a group of UK athletes demanded the ban remains until Rusada overhauls its anti-doping systems. Russia’s readmission would be “a catastrophe for clean sport”, says the UK Anti-Doping Athlete Commission. It warns that “athletes will no longer have faith in the system” if Russia is allowed back. Rusada has been suspended since 2015 after it was accused of covering up drug abuse - including while the country hosted the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics - in a report by lawyer Richard McLaren. The UK Anti-Doping Athlete Commission says Russia is yet to comply with all the conditions of Wada’s roadmap to compliance. “To ignore these conditions, ignores the wishes of the athletes you are there to protect,” it added in an open letter to Wada president Sir Craig Reedie. “It will undermine trust in the essence of fair play on which sport is formed.”

Olympic track cycling champion Callum Skinner and skeleton bronze medalist Laura Deas are part of the group. Three-time Olympic champion Andrew Triggs Hodge and fellow rower Sarah Winckless, Paralympic powerlifter silver medalist Ali Jawad and backstroke world champion Liam Tancock are also members. Russian anti-doping director Yuri Ganus said earlier this month that he was pessimistic about his country’s chances of being reinstated.

(Source: BBC)

## ‘Talking about football is different to the job’ - Klopp

Jurgen Klopp has responded to Gary Neville’s claims Liverpool should ‘kick the Champions League into touch’ this season. Neville, the former Manchester United defender, said in an interview with The Times that focusing on their league commitments would strengthen Liverpool’s chances of winning their first championship since 1990. Despite reaching the Champions League final last season, Neville said Klopp should forget about this year’s edition of the competition as falling out of European football would guarantee the Anfield club a number of free weeks in the second half of the campaign. Klopp was asked about Neville’s comments in his press conference ahead of Liverpool’s Premier League clash against Spurs, in which the Reds are hoping to make it five wins from five at the start of the season. “Gary should come over and tell me exactly how that would work,” Klopp said. “I don’t want to be too critical because I don’t know exactly how he said it but sitting in an office and talking about football is completely different to doing the job, to be honest. “But it’s an opinion. What did he say about Manchester United in that case? The club he’s more interested in. Nothing?”

(Source: Talk Sport)

## Messi’s worst moment with Argentina

Lionel Messi experienced his worst moment in an Argentina shirt when he lost a second consecutive final in the 2016 Copa America, on penalties to Chile. Elvio Paolorosso, Gerardo Martino’s fitness coach, described the No.10’s tough moment in the immediate aftermath of the painful defeat. “The dressing room after the Copa America was very painful, but the worst was to come,” he said. “At 2 in the morning, more or less, I went to the store room and found Leo [Messi] completely alone, crying like a kid who lost his mother,” Paolorosso admitted. “He was distraught and nobody could console him. I gave him a hug and we had a little whine together. “I had Messi in Barcelona and Argentina and all I have for him are words of gratitude. He always cooperated well and even noticed if the pitch was hard or soft,” he finished.

(Source: Marca)

## Mourinho does not fake emotions - Lukaku

Jose Mourinho is “real” and does not fake his emotions like other managers in the Premier League, says Manchester United striker Romelu Lukaku. United boss Mourinho demanded respect from the media after an angry news conference following a 3-0 defeat by Tottenham at Old Trafford in August. But Lukaku says the Portuguese is a family man, makes the players laugh and fights for them, and deserves respect. “People know a side from him which is he’s a winner,” said Lukaku. “But what I like about him is he’s not going to fake his emotions. When he’s mad, you know he is mad. When he’s happy, you see he is happy. “I don’t understand why people don’t like the realness about him. When he’s mad at me I know he is mad at me, and I try to do what he wants so he is happy again.” In an interview with Dion Dublin on Football Focus [Saturday at 12:00 BST on BBC One], the Belgium forward also talks about learning from former France and Arsenal striker Thierry Henry and ex-Chelsea forward Didier Drogba, his relationship with ex-Everton manager Ronald Koeman and wanting to finish his career with no regrets. “Sometimes footballers, we get soft a little bit,” added Lukaku. “If I listen to players from back in the day and now, a manager cannot say what he wants to a player because you feel attacked. “My relationship with him is cool. He makes me laugh, he makes the players laugh, he’s a real family guy. He fights for his players, but he’s real. When you’re not happy, you don’t need to fake your emotions.

(Source: Mirror)

# Guardiola’s world: Cruyff, the best Real Madrid and how the Premier League sells itself

Real Madrid may have won four of the past five Champions Leagues, but Pep Guardiola believes that the team of the late 1980s and early 1990s of Emilio Butragueno was the best one in the capital city club’s history. Even though they didn’t win the European Cup, he loved their way of playing. “The Quinta del Buitre Real Madrid side were, with all due respect, the best I have seen,” he said in an interview with Jorge Valdano on Movistar. Guardiola, though, did point out that Johan Cruyff always praised his own Barcelona players and the current Manchester City coach spoke about the day when Real Madrid lost the league title on the final day, when Valdano’s Tenerife side beat them. “Cruyff always told us that we were better and before the Tenerife game he told us he was sure Real Madrid would lose,” the Catalan said.

Speaking further about Cruyff, Guardiola was full of praise for the Dutch legend. “He had this presence, with his Ray Ban glasses,” he said. “I always thought that many of the things he said he didn’t believe, but he made you think that things were that way. “He didn’t have preparation methods and he trusted others to take decide how to train, but he did have a playing method. “He didn’t move onto plan B, as he instead made plan A stronger. “Everything was new. “Since he was always in good shape, he didn’t explain things to you as he just showed you. “Cruyff didn’t convince me, he made me fall in love.” He discussed a number of other topics, clubs and players, one of which was Roberto



Baggio. “Roberto Baggio is one of the most incredible players I’ve played with,” Guardiola said. “He’d had two operations on his knees and was half-lame, but he was always were I thought he should be. “I can’t imagine what he’d have been like had he been fully fine and surrounded by good players.”

Guardiola and Baggio coincided at Brescia at the very beginning of the 21st century. Nowadays, Guardiola is impressing in the Premier League on the sidelines and he spoke about the English top division too. “The Premier League seems better than it is because of the way it’s sold and the way they broadcast the product,” he said, before speaking about the English press.

“After having been in Barcelona, everything is more bearable. “The badness and cruelty that there is in the press in Spain doesn’t exist in England or Germany.” Guardiola is currently in his third season at Manchester City and looking to retain the Premier League title.

(Source: Marca)

## Mourinho blasts pundits with barrage of Rashford statistics



Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho blasted his critics with a barrage of statistics on Friday to defend the amount of playing time given to England striker Marcus Rashford over the past two years. Some pundits have expressed concern that the 20-year-old, who has scored twice for his country in the last two internationals, is not starting in the Premier League with Romelu Lukaku United’s regular target man. The youngster has played 122 minutes in the top flight so far this season, with one start, and is banned for Saturday’s game at Watford after being sent off in the last game at Burnley. Mourinho said he wanted to set the record straight even if ‘obsessed’ people, who had “a problem with some compulsive lies”, would criticise him anyway. “I can imagine on Sunday I am going to be criticised for not playing Marcus but is not my fault, he’s suspended,” said the Portuguese, before embarking on an extended monologue to set out the numbers for those who were “a bit confused”. “In 2016-17: Marcus Rashford played 32 Premier League matches, 11 Europa League matches, including the final, three FA Cup matches, six League Cup matches, including the final, and the Community Shield,” he said. “He had 53 appearances, but if you want

to take the minutes of play, he played 3,068 minutes and if you want to divide that by 90 minutes of the matches, he played 34.2 matches of 90 minutes in ‘16-17. “In 2017-18, he played 35 matches in the Premier League, eight in the Champions League, five in the FA Cup including the final, three League Cup matches and the European Super Cup final. “He played a total of 52 matches with 2,676 minutes, if you divide that by 90 it gives 29.7 matches. So with me, in two seasons, he had 105 appearances, 5,744 minutes, 63.7 matches of 90 minutes, including five finals.” Mourinho said Rashford could not be compared to other young England players like Liverpool’s Dominic Solanke, Chelsea’s Ruben Loftus-Cheek and Everton’s Dominic Calvert-Lewin when it came to minutes played. Rashford, he said, had played “an incredible number of appearances and minutes” at the highest level in the best possible competitions. “Since I was here, he was never one day out of selection because of my decision, only if injured or suspended,” he added. “(It) is very important Manchester United supporters know the truth, that’s why I’m going so specific about these numbers.”

(Source: Reuters)

## Men not treated more leniently, says Murray



Britain’s Jamie Murray has rejected claims of men being treated more leniently than women by umpires. Serena Williams was docked a game by Portuguese official Carlos Ramos for verbal abuse during her US Open final defeat against Naomi Osaka last week. The American claimed it was “sexist” and her view was endorsed by former champion Billie-Jean King, who said there was a “double standard”. Murray said it was “a bit far-fetched” to say men are treated differently. Williams was seeking to equal Margaret Court’s record of 24 Grand Slam singles titles and was facing 20-year-old Osaka at Flushing Meadows in her first major final. The 36-year-old had already had a point penalty for smashing her racquet and a code violation for coaching when she was penalised further for calling Ramos a “thief” and a “liar” in New York. Speaking on the eve of Great Britain’s Davis Cup match with Uzbekistan in Glasgow, US Open mixed doubles champion Murray told BBC Sport: “I think the umpire did what was within his rights. “Coaching is common, a lot of people are doing it, some people aren’t getting called for it. To get called in a Grand Slam

final was perhaps a bit tight, but I think the reaction was pretty overboard. “I’ve seen a lot of people get called for coaching before, and you might have a grumble and stuff, but you get on with it.” Ramos will umpire Croatia v USA in the Davis Cup this weekend. Speaking before the tie, US captain Jim Courier told the AP news agency: “It’s been polarised and in some ways politicised. But we have no doubt that Carlos was just enforcing the rules as he sees them.” American player Steve Johnson added: “Look, I don’t want this to come out the wrong way, but he enforced rules that have been enforced on me over the years. “I’ve never been called for coaching, but the racquet abuse, the verbal abuse, that’s just part of the sport. I think a lot of it maybe got over-amplified because it was the finals of the US Open.” Women’s governing body the WTA supported Williams and chief executive Steve Simon said the umpire showed her a different level of tolerance over her outbursts than if she had been a man. The International Tennis Federation, meanwhile, defended 47-year-old Ramos and said he acted “at all times with professionalism and integrity.”

(Source: BBC)

## Ferrari plan for long-term with Leclerc signing - Arrivabene

Ferrari team principal Maurizio Arrivabene has said the decision to replace the experience of Kimi Raikkonen with the raw talent of Charles Leclerc for next season was made with the long-term future of the team in mind. Leclerc has impressed in his first Formula One season at the modest Sauber team and the 20-year-old Ferrari academy graduate from Monaco was announced earlier this week as quadruple world champion Sebastian Vettel’s team mate from 2019. Speaking to reporters at the Singapore Grand Prix on Friday, Arrivabene stressed he was the driving force behind the decision to hire Leclerc, feeling that Raikkonen’s subsequent move in the opposite direction had worked best for all concerned. “When you make choices like this, that are related to the driver, you don’t only have to make a short-term commitment but a long-term one,” Arrivabene said. “We are not only looking ahead to next year, we are looking into the future, that being the future of the team.



“This was a decision taken by me, discussed with the top management and taking into consideration many, many factors. It has nothing to do with the respect I have for Kimi as both a human being and as a driver,” he added of the 38-year-old Finn.

“If you have to make a choice about the future of the team then I think we made the right one for us and for Kimi, who we appreciate for everything he has done for us and wish him the best for the future.” Arrivabene added that while the step up for Leclerc, the reigning Formula Two world champion, was a major one, Ferrari would not be demanding too much from the driver in the early stages of his career at the Maranello-based outfit. “The first mistake would be to put much too much pressure on the shoulders of this guy... that could be potentially a huge mistake,” Arrivabene said. “Charles signed his first contract at the Ferrari academy in November 2015. In that contract, we designed a future for him in Formula One, making sure we made adjustments at the academy to ensure drivers would eventually make the step up. “All the other teams are doing this so its good for Formula One to be taking these steps to build towards the future.”

(Source: Eurosports)

# Thomas Bach welcomes Iran's NOC President Salehi Amiri

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Reza Salehi Amiri, President of Iran's National Olympic Committee (NOC), was warmly received by International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach at the IOC headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland.

In the meeting, Bach praised the rise of women's sport in Iran and expressed delight at the involvement of young people in sports.

Bach also pointed to his trip to Iran. "In my home, I have four photos from Isfahan that remind me of Iran's culture and civilization."

The IOC President further said that the meeting would help authorities make better decisions about common issues between the two committees. "We can improve our understanding of each other's conditions as well."

The German president of IOC expressed hope in Iran's future movement in sports, saying, "Sports have had positive impact on your society in recent years. Our goal is to promote knowledge and enthusiasm among the younger generation in your society."

Praising female athletes in Iran in recent years, Bach added, "With the support of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Iranian women are allowed to take part in the international competitions. Your women played a key role in Iran's accomplishment at the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta, Indonesia."

On the U.S. sanctions regime on Iran, Bach reassured that the IOC would stand by the nation of Iran as "the philosophy of sport is the promotion of world peace."

"We will not support those who want to harm Iran and will stay loyal to the goal of Olympic Movement in order to support national committees," he stated.

In his closing remarks, Bach held out hope to meet Iranian President Hassan Rouhani.



## Iranian footballer Gholamnejad dies of heart attack

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Former Iran national football team midfielder Majid Gholamnejad passed away on Friday after suffering a heart attack.

Gholamnejad died at the age of 35. No more details have been revealed.

He started his playing career at Iranian top-flight football team Saipa in 2004.

Gholamnejad also played in Pas Hamedan and Esteghlal.

He was called up to the Iran national football team in 2008 by Ali Daei and debuted for Team Melli against Bahrain,



coming off as a substitute in the 61st minute.

Gholamnejad made 17 appearances for Iran national football team and scored one goal against Singapore.

"My thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of Majid," Daei said.

Saipa and Esteghlal clubs as well Iran Football Federation expressed sympathy with the family of Gholamnejad.

The Tehran Times staff offer heartfelt condolences to his bereaved family.

## Iran beat Bulgaria at FIVB World Championship

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iran earned their second win in a row at the 2018 FIVB Men's World Championship Thursday night.

The Iranian team defeated the hosts 3-1 (25-22, 25-20, 22-25, 25-19) and got level on points with world champions Poland at the top of Pool D.

"We enjoyed the game and Bulgaria played well. I thank my players for the patience they showed and of course for the win against a very well prepared and experienced team like Bulgaria.

We tried to control the game in all sets, but

the crowd reflected on us and probably that was the reason for losing the third set," Iran coach Igor Kolakovic said in the post-match news conference.

Team Melli had started the campaign with a 3-0 victory over Puerto Rico on Wednesday. Mohammadjavad Manavinezhad led the winners in scoring with 21. Mohammad Mousavi and Amir Ghafour each added 11.

Todor Skrimov was top scorer for Bulgaria with 17 but only one in the final set as he played through an ankle injury.

Iran will face Cuba on Saturday.



## Iran beat Philippines at FIBA World Cup 2019 Asian Qualifiers

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iran repelled a spirited Philippines to open their account in the second round of the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2019 Asian Qualifiers with a big triumph, 81-73 at the Azadi Hall in Tehran, capital of Iran.

Things were tight between the Iranians and Filipinos all throughout the game, which featured a staggering 20 lead changes.

Christian Standhardinger carried the fight early for the Philippines with 19 points in the first half, while Sajjad Mashayekhi also impressed with 13 points in the first two periods, fiba.com reported.

In the second half, though, veteran Samad Nikkhah Bahrami took over, scoring, assisting and making one big play after another to help the home team put some distance between themselves and the new-look Team Pilipinas, which featured just two returnees from the previous window's Philippine team.

By game's end, Iran's size and depth

proved to be too much for the Filipinos, who were without key players Andray Blatche, Jayson Castro, Terrence Romeo and June Mar Fajardo. Team Pilipinas were led by Standhardinger, who finished with 30 points, 12 rebounds, 2 assists and 2 steals while shooting 10-of-14 from the field. He was the only Filipino in double-digit scoring. As for the victors, Bahrami tallied 21 points, 8 boards and 4 assists, while Mashayekhi filled the stat-sheet with 19 points, 4 rebounds, 4 assists and 3 steals to his name. Iran sparingly use the injured Hamed Haddadi, but Meisam Mirzaei, Rouzbeh Arghavan and Mohammad Hassanzadeh all did a good job of patrolling the paint in his stead.

This was Iran's sixth win in seven games, while the Philippines absorbed their third defeat against four victors.

Iran fly to Tokyo next to play Japan, while the Philippines return home to host Qatar on 17 September.



## Boudiaf boost for Al Duhail against Persepolis

Karim Boudiaf impressed in Qatar's 3-0 win over Palestine in an international friendly on Tuesday and that is good news for Al Duhail ahead of their 2018 AFC Champions League quarter-final return leg against Islamic Republic of Iran's Persepolis on Monday.

Midfielder Boudiaf missed the first leg, which Al Duhail won 1-0, and the skipper's return from knee surgery is just what the Qatar club need in what is sure to be a massive test for them in the imposing Azadi Stadium.

Al Duhail are chasing an AFC Champions League record of 10 consecutive wins but in Persepolis, they will face a side who have a perfect record of four home wins in the Continent's premier club tournament this season.

The Azadi Stadium will be at its roaring



best as Persepolis attempt to overturn the first leg deficit, something which they did in the Round of 16 against Al Jazira of the

United Arab Emirates, winning the return leg 2-1 after having lost the first tie 3-2 to advance on away goals.

While Al Duhail coped with Boudiaf's absence in the first leg against Persepolis, his imposing presence will further add stability to a side who have impressed throughout the season.

Boudiaf, who suffered the knee injury in Al Duhail's Sheikh Jassim Cup loss to Al Rayyan on August 2, has played a pivotal role in his team's surge in the 2018 AFC Champions League with three goals to his name.

Boudiaf netted twice in the 3-1 win over Zobahan and scored the second of Al Duhail's three goals in a narrow 3-2 triumph against Al Wahda on Matchday Two.

Almoez Ali's header gave Al Duhail the win over Persepolis in the first leg and with Boudiaf back, coach Nabil Maaloul will be optimistic his team will leave Azadi Stadium on Monday as winners and record setters.

(Source: the-afc)

## Reza Alipour wins gold at IFSC Climbing World Championships



**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Reza Alipour from Iran claimed a gold medal at the IFSC Climbing World Championships in Innsbruck, Austria on Thursday.

The Iranian climber took the gold with a time of 5.630, beating his French rival Bassa Mawem.

The bronze medal went to Russian climber Stanislav Kokorin who beat Chinese QiXin Zhong.

Alipour has defined himself as the Usain Bolt of speed climbing.

The competition has drawn 531 athletes from 57 countries. With climbing to make its Olympic debut in 2020, the world championships for the first time is having an Olympic-format combined competition, in which athletes vie for an all-around title in lead climbing, speed climbing and bouldering.

The championships run through Sept. 16.

## Iran inline hockey tops Asia

**MNA** — Defeating Japan 6-1 in the final, Iran's men national team of inline hockey claimed the championship title at the 18th Asian Roller Skating Championship on Thursday.

Iranian men's national team of inline hockey defeated their Japanese rivals in the final match at the 18th Asian Roller Skating Championship and grabbed the gold medal of the tournament for the first time.

The 18th Asian Roller Skating Championship kicked off on September 07, 2018 in Namwon city of South Korea and came to an end on Thursday September 12.

The Iranian squad defeated the Japanese roller hockey skaters 6-1 on Thursday to secure the top berth in Asia.

In the games before the final, they had defeated South Korea and Singapore and drew with the Chinese Taipei.

The women squad of Iran settled for the bronze medal in the competition.

Around 1,000 skaters from 19 countries across the world took part in the championship.

## Zob Ahan knocked out of Hazfi Cup

**TASNIM** — Zob Ahan football team suffered a home loss against Padideh of Mashhad in Round of 32 of Iran's Hazfi Cup on Thursday.

In the match held in Isfahan's Fooladshahr Stadium, Zob Ahan lost to Padideh 2-1 and bade farewell to the competition.

Abouzaf Safarzadeh gave Zob Ahan the early lead just two minutes into the match but Saeid Sadeghi equalized the match in the 33rd minute.

Sadeghi silenced the stadium in the injury time with an amazing volley.

Saipa also defeated Iran's second tier football team Sardar Bukan 2-1.

The Hazfi Cup is the Iranian football knockout cup competition, run by the Iranian Football Federation.

Esteghlal is title-holder and the most decorated team with seven titles.

## Shahrzad Mozafar appointed Kuwait Women's Futsal coach

**IRNA** — Ex-Iran's women's futsal team head coach has been named new head coach of Kuwait women's futsal team.

In a session held in Kuwait Football Association's headquarters, Mozafar penned a two-year contract in the presence of vice-president of the Women Football Committee of Kuwait Fatima Hayat.

President of Kuwait Football Association (KFA) Sheikh Ahmad Yusuf Al-Sabah also attended Mozafar's introduction.

Under leadership of Mozafar, Iran won AFC Women's Futsal Championship twice, in 2015 and 2018.

## Amir Ghafour joins Italian Volleyball Club Monza

**TASNIM** — Iran international opposite spiker Amir Ghfour joined Vero Volley Monza on Thursday.

The 27-year-old player replaced injured Buchegger in the Italian club.

"I'm really excited about this new adventure in the top Italian series. It's a great honor playing for an ambitious team like Vero Volley Monza," Ghafour said.

"I joined my new club with a lot of experiences I've earned in recent years with my national team in the different competitions. I cannot wait to start working with my new team," he added.

Ghafour accompanies Iran in the 2018 FIVB World Championship in Varna, Bulgaria.

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## WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES

### Photo

■ A collection of photos depicting scenes of mourning ceremonies for the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS) and his companions in Iran will be put on display in an exhibition at Laleh Gallery from September 21 to October 9.

The collection contains photos from Mehdi Rajabi, Farzad Safdari, Amir Kabiri, Hossein Nazari, Behnam Yasini and dozens of other photographers.

The gallery can be found on Fatemi St., near Laleh Park.



■ An exhibition of photos by Amir-Hossein Biparva is currently underway at O Gallery.

The exhibition named "Total Geometry" runs until September 26 at the gallery located at 44 Khosro Alley, off Ostad Nejatollahi St.



■ Photos by Mehrli Razzaqmanesh are on display in an exhibition at AG Gallery.

The exhibit titled "References" will continue until November 2 at the gallery located at 3 Peshyan St., off Moqaddas Ardebili St., in the Zafarani neighborhood.



### Painting

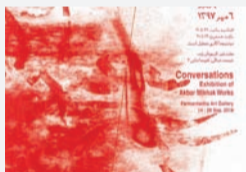
■ A selection of paintings by Mones Oqabian is currently underway in an exhibition at Sheis Gallery.

The exhibit runs until September 18 at the gallery located at Shirzad Alley, near Daneshju Park.



■ Farmanfarma Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Akbar Mikhak.

The showcase named "Conversations" will run until September 28 at the gallery located at the Second Araabi St., North Kheradmand St. in the Karim Khan neighborhood.



■ An exhibition of paintings by a group of artists is currently underway Idea Gallery.

The photos are from Saamaan Mohammadpur, Setareh Soleimani, Sahar Amini, Nasim Kiani, Kiana Salamat and several other artists, and the exhibit will run until September 19 at the gallery located at 26, 18th St. off Sanai St., Karim Khan Ave.



### Illustration

■ An exhibition titled "Borders of the Imagination" is displaying illustrations by Farnaz Mansuri, Zahra Ganji, Mitra Zafari, Samaneh Salavati and several other artists at Aria Gallery.

The exhibit will run until September 28 at the gallery located at No. 10 Zarrin Alley, near Beheshti St., Vali-e Asr Ave.



### Drawing

■ Drawings by Nilufar Kasbi are on display in an exhibition named "To DeLimit" at Tarrahan Azad Gallery.

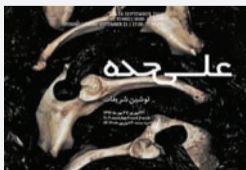
The exhibit runs until September 25 at the gallery located at 5 Salmas Square, off Fatemi St.



### Installation

■ Sets of installation by Nushin Sahrfat are currently on view in an exhibit at Saye Gallery.

The exhibition titled "Separate" runs until September 26 at the gallery located at No. 21, 13th Alley, Sanai St. of Karim Khan Ave.



### Watercolor

■ Watercolors by Yervand Nahapetian and Manuchehr Sarraam are on display in an exhibition at Naqsh-e Jahan Gallery.

The exhibition runs until October 9 at the gallery located at 9 Ayatollah Mahmudi St. in the Niavaran neighborhood.



Prayer Times » Noon:13:00

Evening: 19:30

Dawn: 5:23 (tomorrow)

Sunrise: 6:47 (tomorrow)

SEPTEMBER 15, 2018

ART & CULTURE

# IIDCYA screens films by pioneers of children's cinema

**A R T** TEHRAN — The Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA) has launched a program during which a lineup of films by pioneers of Iranian children's cinema, including Abbas Kiarostami and Nureddin Zarrinkelk, will be screened.

The weeklong program, which began on Tuesday, has been arranged to celebrate the National Day of Cinema, the IIDCYA announced on Thursday.

The lineup contains 30 short films by the directors who began their careers by making films at the institute.

Films by Amir Naderi, Farshid Mesqali, Ali-Akbar Sadeqi and Masud Kimiai are also scheduled to be screened during the program.

"The IIDCYA's activities in cinema began during the 1970s and the institute was a starting line for many filmmakers who then achieved national and international fame," IIDCYA Film and Theater Department director Alireza Saremi said.

"Short films have been selected to be screened during the program, because short films rarely get a chance to be screened in the country," he added.



Majid Nirumand acts in a scene from Amir Naderi's drama "The Runner" produced at the IIDCYA.

## Seven troupes from Iran to go on stage at Armenia HIGH FEST

**A R T** TEHRAN — Seven plays by Iranian troupes will be competing in the HIGH FEST International Performing Arts Festival, which will be held in Yerevan, Armenia from September 5 to October 5.

Director Vahid Khosravi's group will perform "My Dolls" and director Reza Rafinasab will stage "Dey 5, Tir 12, Esfand 26", Albert Beigjani, a member of the festival's selecting board, told the Persian service of MNA on Friday.

Beigjani will direct "Marshmallows" based on Shel Silverstein's children's story "Lafcadio: The Lion Who Shot Back".

Oynar, a troupe led by director Mehdi Salehyar from the northwestern Iranian city of Tabriz, is scheduled to



Elham Padid acts in a scene from "Haurvatat".

perform "Sugalin".

"October 17" will be directed by Sarvenaz Nankoli and "Haurvatat" about global peace will be staged by Meisam Sadra and Ali Hamidian.

"Parrot and the Merchant", a story from Molana Jalal ad-Din Rumi's Masnavi-ye Manavi, has also been picked to be staged by director Heidar Rezaei.

Beigjani said that the festival also plans to pay tribute to Iranian-Armenian actor Levon Haftvan who died of a heart attack in March. A number of his films will be screened and an exhibition of his film's stills will be organized.

Troupes coming from 17 countries, including Switzerland, Russia, Germany and Spain, will be giving 35 performances during the festival.

## "60=1" named best short at Indian festival

**A R T** TEHRAN — Iranian filmmaker Iman Davari's film has won the best film award for his "60=1" in the international section of the 3rd Acharya Tulsi Short Film Festival in India, the organizers

have announced.

Davari depicts birth, growth, hope, love and death in the 67-second film.

"Something Important" by Pakistani filmmaker Jabran Zafar received the second best short award at the festival,

which took place in Bikaner on September 1 and 2.

"On Life's Shore" by Can Yalman from Turkey was named best documentary while "Little Thing" by Or Kanto was selected as best animated film.



A poster for "60=1" directed by Iman Davari

## A lady vanishes: In China, a movie star disappears amid culture crackdown

**BEIJING/SHANGHAI (Reuters)** — Fan Bingbing, an A-list Chinese movie star who has appeared in the "X-Men" and "Iron Man" film franchises, has more than 62 million followers online in China and fronted campaigns for Montblanc watches and De Beers diamonds, has disappeared.

The star's vanishing act - she dropped off the radar in June when reports started to swirl that she was involved in a probe into tax evasion in the film industry - has sparked wild speculation in China about her fate, including reports the actress had been detained.

Reuters was unable to contact Fan. Calls to her agent went unanswered. When asked about Fan, a spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry replied: "Do you think this is a question of diplomacy?" The Beijing Public Security Bureau declined to comment.

The real-life drama has been playing out at a time when Beijing is tightening the reins on popular culture, looking to stamp out behavior seen as going against the ruling Communist Party's ideological line and co-opting movie stars, pop bands and online celebrities to endorse socialist values.

"It is written in our new movie promotion law that entertainers need to pursue both professional excellence and moral integrity," said Si Ruoyu, a researcher at the

School of Journalism and Communication at China's prestigious Tsinghua University.

"In the unbridled growth of the industry in the past few years, we might have overlooked the need for positive energy, so the government's intervention is reasonable."

Fan Bingbing is the most prominent example. The actress, 36, is China's equivalent of Hollywood star Jennifer Lawrence. She topped Forbes' China celebrity rich list last year with earnings of 300 million yuan (\$43.78 million).

A Chinese TV anchor in May was widely reported to have posted tax-dodging pay agreements online known as "yin-yang" contracts - one setting out the real agreed payment terms and a second with a lower figure for the tax authorities - that appeared to implicate Fan.

Hong Kong's South China Morning Post reported that Fan's studio denied she had ever signed separate contracts for a single job. China's tax bureau said in June it was launching a tax evasion investigation into the film and television industry.

### ■ Culture clean-up

But the culture clean-up is more widespread, snaring video games, online bloggers and rap artists. Critics say it threatens to stifle creativity in some sectors, and is hitting the bottom lines of firms

such as tech and gaming giant Tencent.

State-run media have begun using phrases such as "tainted artists", with official bodies pledging to ban stars who behave badly, including drug taking, gambling or visiting prostitutes.

An open letter earlier this month from members of the Beijing Trade Association for Performances said the body would "purify" the city's entertainment and performance sector and guide artists towards "core socialist values".

"Celebrities are seen as a weapon in the Party's ideological battle, which is fought across all sectors all the time," said Jonathan Sullivan, director of China Programmes at the University of Nottingham.

China has long sought to control the creative arts, from censoring movies to literature. However, a boom in online media has prompted a new push to cleanse the arts world, as President Xi Jinping looks to tighten his grip over a huge and diverse cultural scene popular with China's youth.

That drive has created a dragnet that has swept over the creative arts, leaving few unaffected.

Fangu, a grunge band from Beijing, which has toured across China, said it had hit an issue with its name, which translates literally as "anti-bone", though means

something closer to "rebellious spirit".

The band was forced to change its name this week ahead of a concert in Shanghai.

"The relevant bodies do not allow the word 'anti' so we have to change the name temporarily," Qi Tian, an assistant to the band, told Reuters.

Video game makers have had to tweak their offerings to add patriotic Chinese elements. Others have simply seen approvals withheld. Big media platforms have been rapped for not censoring their content enough and some have had to take sites offline.

A report this month from a state university and circulated in official media, ranked Chinese stars in order of their social responsibility, including their moral conduct - underscoring an increasingly puritanical focus on good behavior.

Fan came in last place with zero points.

The ongoing shake-up is also hitting China's burgeoning movie and entertainment industry hard. Share prices of related companies tanked after the government probe was announced and many are conducting self-checks on their tax situations.

Claire Dong, partner and attorney at Beijing-based Tiantai law firm, said there has been a surge of consulting requests since Fan got into hot water.

## Hollywood stars Stone, Hill turn to TV in Netflix's "Maniac"

**LONDON (Reuters)** — Actors Emma Stone and Jonah Hill join the list of Hollywood stars turning to television with Netflix's "Maniac", a dark comedy mini-series looking at human connection.

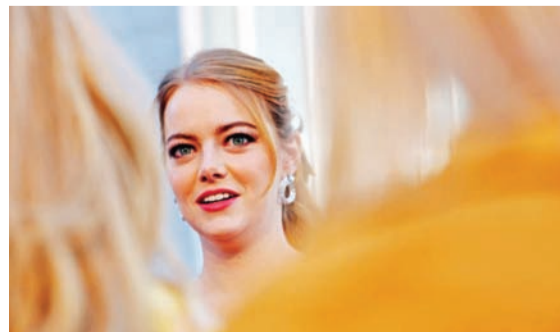
Oscar winner Stone and "The Wolf on Wolf Street" star Hill play Annie and Owen, two strangers with personal problems who take part in a pharmaceutical drug trial.

A trailer shows the two characters in multiple, sometimes fantastical, settings during the experiment where they are told by the doctor leading the trial that "pain can be destroyed, the mind can be solved".

"It seemed like a great opportunity to dive into this world that was sort of different from ours but talking about a lot of the themes that we deal with today in modern society," Stone told Reuters at the show's red carpet premiere on Thursday.

"Disconnection from each other and trying to fix problems in a certain way and realizing that human connection really is a balm for all of us."

The show, which premieres on the streaming service on Sept. 21, is directed by Cary Fukunaga, known for "Beasts of No Nation" and his work on the series "True Detective".



Actor Emma Stone attends the world premiere of the Netflix mini-series "Maniac", in London, Britain September 13, 2018. (Reuters/Eddie Keogh)

"The biggest challenge of the show is that it reinvents itself each episode, that puts a lot of pressure on everybody," writer Patrick Somerville said. "We just had to make new worlds over and over again."

Stone and Hill, who worked together on 2007 comedy "Superbad", both starred in television shows earlier in their careers, but "Maniac" proved a different project for both actors, who are also executive producers on the series.

"I thought that it would be an exciting challenge to get to explore a character, in this case five characters, over five, six hours," Stone said.

"That's not something I've gotten to really do very much of. I did some TV at the beginning but never in this long form of 10 episodes... It was a really fun process."

The actors are the latest major stars picking leading roles on the small screen. Recent examples include Amy Adams in HBO's "Sharp Objects" and Julia Roberts in Amazon Studios' upcoming "Homecoming".

"Everybody is turning to TV and the stuff that they're producing it's... critically-acclaimed, winning Emmys so it's proving to be incredibly fruitful for them," Alex Ritman, UK correspondent for The Hollywood Reporter said.

"And off the back of that... being a big name on TV is beneficial to your film career. I don't think we live in a world where you're one or the other anymore."