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## Iran-Iraq trade grew 30% in 5 months

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — The trade between Iran and its western neighbor Iraq has grown 30 per cent during the first five months of the Iranian calendar year (March 21- August 22, 2018), director of Iran-Iraq Chamber of Commerce Yahya Al-e Es'haq told Mehr news agency in an interview published on Monday.

“Considering oil, gas, and energy

exports besides exports of technical and engineering services, Iran exports above \$12 billion of goods per annum to Iraq and the figure can be improved up to \$20 billion,” Al-e Es'haq, the former trade minister, said.

According to Al-e Es'haq, there is a long way for Tehran and Baghdad to go and there are several barriers including some bureaucratic difficulties. **→4**

## Zeinodin caravanserai, a destination for avid time travelers!

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** — For an avid visitor to a centuries-old caravanserai, it's not tough to imagine (or even hear!) the hustle and bustle of merchants bargaining on prices, describing their long lived journey to one another as their camels chew on hay in the corner.

Located in Yazd province, the 16th-century Zeinodin caravanserai is one of such

roadside inns which has lost its original usage and popularity.

Through efforts made by Iran tourism body and the private sector, many of Iran's caravanserais -- including Zeinodin -- have been charmingly renovated and tastefully decorated to be turned into boutique hotels and tourist lodgings and of course to receive better maintenance. **→10**

## Israel, U.S. working against peace: Abbas

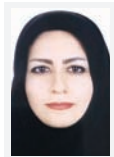
Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas says Israel is working against peace and security by killing and displacing Palestinians and building settlements on occupied land with the support of the “biased” United States.

“Killing, expanding settlement[s], destruction, and the uprooting of the Palestinian population will not bring peace or security,” President Abbas said in a meeting with former Israeli left-wing lawmakers on Sunday, Palestinian news

agency Wafa reported.

“This (Israeli) government's policies and the biased U.S. decisions contradict the international resolutions and are harming the chances of making just peace based on the two-state solution along 1967 borders,” the president said.

Palestinian officials have long sought to establish an independent Palestinian state within the borders that existed before the 1967 war between Israel and three other Arab states. **→13**



## ARTICLE

**Haniyeh Sadat Jafariyeh**  
Tehran Times Journalist

## Capital market unfazed by economic problems

**T**ehran Stock Exchange (TSE)'s main index (TEDPIX) gained 3,058.12 points or 1.97% on Saturday to end trading at 158,119.2. About 4.16 billion shares valued at \$120.88 million changed hands at TSE for the day. The index added 3,000 points to reach 158,000.

On the same day, IFX, the main index of Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market, known also as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), gained 34.32 points or 1.94% to close Saturday trade at 1,805.58. About 1.52 billion securities valued at \$72.39 million were traded at the over-the-counter exchange for the day.

Share trading on Wednesday started with a bang, as TSE made a 6,000-point jump in the first hour of the trading day alone, exceeding 155,000 points by the end of the day to register a historic high. By the end of the trading day, TEDPIX had gained 6,483.46 points or 4.36% to end trading at 155,061.1. IFX ended up 75.28 points or 4.44% to close at 1,771.25 on that day.

The rising trend of TEDPIX began on June 13, which was named 'Golden Wednesday of Stock Market', when TEDPIX gained 2,767 points to stand at 99,146 points. Then on June 17, players in Iran's capital market witnessed a historic record in growth of TEDPIX which gained 3,306 points to hit 102,452 points, something unprecedented in the 50-year history of the country's stock market.

Capital market indices have generally experienced a positive trend since then.

This happened under the conditions that domestic markets are awaiting the new wave of U.S.-led sanctions in November, following being hit by the first round of sanctions posed in early August.

According to the Central Bank of Iran's latest data, liquidity stood at 16.02 quadrillion rials (about \$381.4 billion) during the fourth month of the current Iranian calendar year, Tir, (June 22- July 22), which shows 20.1 percent growth in comparison with the same period in the preceding year.

Meanwhile, the Statistical Center of Iran announced that the inflation rate in the twelve-month period ended on the last day of the fifth Iranian calendar month, Mordad, (August 22) stood at 9.7 percent, showing one percent rise on month. Although many believe the rate is much higher than the announced figure. **→4**

## Trump's political fate is ambiguous

By Hanif Ghaffari

**TEHRAN** — As much as we approach Congressional elections in the United States, Donald Trump's concerns are increasing. These concerns are aggravated by the fact that U.S.-based polls do not benefit Democrats. Trump recently warned of Democrats' victory in the mid-term elections in the U.S. Congress.

However, people like former U.S. President Barack Obama and former Secretary of State John Kerry seem to have been struggling to defeat Republicans in the House of Representatives and the Senate. It should be noted that according to polls in the United States, the probability of Democrats in the House of Representatives is

greater than the Senate.

Currently, Trump's Republican Party controls both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

But Democrats have opened a six-point lead over Republicans ahead of the midterm elections, according to a new poll. As the U.S. gears up for November's ballot, which will see the two parties battle for control of congress, a fresh YouGov survey suggests 44 per cent of voters would opt for a Democrat if the election was held today.

That compares to 38 per cent who would vote Republican, and 14 per cent of respondents who remain undecided. The November midterms will

be a referendum on Trump's impeachment. Billed as the first big referendum on Donald Trump's first two years in office, the midterms have the potential to change the country's political landscape. Democrats have consistently led in the polls since the election of Trump, though the gap appears to have swung wildly in recent months.

In January, Democrats led Republicans in a generic ballot by a huge 12 per cent. By April the lead was down to just 4 per cent, according to an ABC News and Washington Post poll. Currently, men favour the Republican Party over the Democrats by one percentage point, whereas women prefer the Democratic Party by a margin of 11 per cent. **→7**

## Ban on Muharram procession in Kashmir mockery of religious freedom

By Syed Zafar Mehdi

**TEHRAN** — Muharram is the month of bereavement and remembrance. Every year, around this time, massive processions are taken out across the world to pay glowing tribute to the martyrs of Karbala. Reciting soul-stirring elegies and hymns, mourners wear black dresses and beat their chests in a spirit of devotion. They carry replicas of Imam Hussain's mausoleum in Karbala and parade the streets.

In some countries, though, its appeal cuts across religious and ideological lines, because Imam Hussain belongs to everyone. His resistance against the forces of evil is something everyone can relate to.

Muslims of the world commonly observe and commemorate Hussain's sacrifice each year, remembering his redemptive suffering for the greater good of humankind. Even 1400 years

on, these annual commemorations have not lost their significance.

In many countries, the annual Muharram commemorations have been effectively used as a psychological weapon and mechanism to mobilize masses against evil, injustice and repression.

Karbala strengthens our ability and resolve to rise up against autocracy, despotism and treachery. Hussain's (as) uprising teaches us that notwithstanding the inadequacy of power, if your cause is just, victory will be yours.

However, not everything is hunky-dory. Muharram processions continue to be attacked in countries like Afghanistan and Pakistan by those who sympathize with Yazid and his modern-day avatars. In some places like Kashmir, there is a ban on Muharram processions imposed by authorities.

In Kashmir, the government's ban on Muharram processions (Muharram 8 and 10) in

Srinagar city is in place since 1990, when the armed rebellion against Indian rule gained momentum. Despite the clampdown and curfew-like restrictions imposed by authorities, thousands of mourners carry out peaceful processions every year and are subjected to brutal police action.

Religious processions are being taken out in Kashmir since 1527 when Sultan Muhammad Shah was the ruler. Shia Muslims, a religious minority, with the support and cooperation of Sunni Muslims, used to take out two major processions in Srinagar city.

In 1977, on the request of the then Chief Minister Shiekh Muhammad Abdullah, it was decided to take out a joint procession. However, in 1989, the then governor of J&K imposed ban on the procession as part of sweeping measures to deal with the political unrest that time. The ban remains in place till date. **→6**

## Majma-Pela: Traditional Muharram food offerings in northern Iran

Majma-Pela, literally meaning cooked rice served in big round tray, is a traditional food offering known as Nazri being observed in northern Iran during the month of Muharram.

Based on this centuries-old tradition, each family, depending on their financial state, would prepare some food of their own choice for 4 to 5 people, take it to Tekyeh (a place where Shia Muslims gather for observing Muharram ritual) in a big tray to feed the mourners of Imam Hossein (AS).

Nazri is considered holy for anyone who eats it or makes it. It is given free as a way of completing an offering made to God in honor of Imam Hossein (AS) who was martyred in the battle of Karbala in 680 AD.



© Tehran Times/ Majid Nilou



## ARTICLE

**Syed Zafar Mehdi**  
Journalist  
from New Delhi

## Karbala to Kashmir: Brief history of 'Azadari'

**I**t's that time of year again when the campaigners of truth and justice, cutting across ethno-sectarian and ideological lines, rally to pay homage to the 'master of the martyrs', a 7th century revolutionary historical figure who redefined the ideas of resistance and resilience on the desert plains of Karbala (Iraq) 1400 years ago.

The uprising and martyrdom of Imam Hussain (as), the beloved grandson of Prophet Mohammad (pbuh), in 61 hijri (680 AD) arguably has no parallel in the annals of history. To invoke poet Sir Mohammad Iqbal (ra), “he watered the dry garden of freedom with the surging wave of his blood, uprooted the despotism and awakened the slumbering Muslim nation”.

In the battle of Karbala, blood triumphed over the sword. Hussain (as) and 71 companions were up against Yazid and his 30,000 strong army. He (as) had made it clear that a person like him cannot pledge allegiance to a person like Yazid.

Through these annual Muharram commemorations, the people of conscience reaffirm their pledge to the sacrosanct principles exemplified by Hussain (as) in Karbala. It strengthens their resolve to speak truth to power, like Hussain (as) did in Karbala and his sister Zainab (sa) did in the aftermath of Karbala. Its message is timeless and resonates even today, with tremendous clarity, inspiring truth-seekers and the advocates of human rights across the world. In Ziyarat e Ashura, we beseech Allah to “provide us an opportunity to fight for justice...” That's the legacy of Karbala.

The tradition of azadari in Shia school of thought, commemoration of the events related to Karbala, which is essentially a universal protest of oppressed against oppression, began soon after the tragedy of Karbala when the members of Holy Prophet's (pbuh) household, including Sayyeda Zainab (sa), Sayyeda Umme Kulsoom (sa) and Imam Zainul Abideen (as), were released from Yazid's prison in Damascus and sent back to Medina.

What is the significance of azadari? In the words of Imam Jafar Sadiq (as), it is the means of keeping alive the movement started by Imam Hussain (as) in Karbala. This movement has gripped the hearts and minds of people for more than fourteen centuries. **→6**



## MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



### Velayati: Russia, China are Iran's major partners

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Senior Iranian politician Ali Akbar Velayati has provided an analysis of the Islamic Republic's policy of orientation towards the East, saying Russia and China are Iran's major political and economic partners in countering the U.S. hegemony, Tasnim reported.

Addressing a Tehran conference on "Looking the East" on Monday, Velayati said the contemporary East is no more like the ideological East that used to exist decades ago, noting that the communist Kremlin has collapsed and a democratic Russia has emerged.

Stressing the need for Iran's "strategic view" about the East, Velayati said the entire world has now the same outlook.

Asked about the U.S. economic war against Iran, he said what matters most at the moment is the sale of oil, referring to China and India as Iran's two biggest oil customers.



### Gharib Abadi envoy named IAEA conference vice president

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Kazem Gharib Abadi, Iran's representative to the Vienna-based international organizations, has been elected as the vice president of the International Atomic Energy Agency annual conference.

The 62nd Annual Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference started in Vienna on Monday, September 17, and will run until September 21.

During the conference, high-ranking officials and representatives from IAEA member states will consider a range of issues. Ali Akbar Salehi, director of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), made his speech on Monday.



### Chinese envoy: We support JCPOA

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — China's ambassador to Tehran says his country will support the Iran nuclear deal, aka the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Speaking in a meeting with Majlis Research Committee chairman Kazem Jalali, Ambassador Pang Sen said the JCPOA is a multinational treaty and every party has a duty to protect it, Mehr reported.

Jalali, for his part, said that practical support for the JCPOA is the best answer to the U.S. which unilaterally quit the deal in May.

"Now time is ripe for powerful countries such as China to take a giant leap against Trump's excessive demands and abnormal behavior," the lawmaker stressed.



### Halbusi: I'll do what is needed to protect Iraq, neighbors

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Mohamed al-Halbusi, the newly elected speaker of Iraq's Council of Representatives said on Monday that his country will not allow any attacks from Iraqi soil on Iran.

In his first televised speech, he said he will do whatever he can to protect Iraq and its neighboring countries.

Iraq's parliament on Saturday elected the Sunni politician al-Halbusi as assembly speaker after winning majority votes.

Al-Halbusi won the parliament's highest position representing the National Axis alliance, which includes the majority of Sunni political blocs.

Al-Halbusi was born in 1981 in Anbar province's Karma district.

He is a member of the Al-Hall (Solution) party, led by businessman Jamal al-Karbouli, and is seen as a young and rising political leader.



### 'Pompeo should thank Kerry for maintaining back channel to Zarif'

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Former Deputy Director of the CIA John McLaughlin has said that U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo should thank John Kerry, former secretary of state, for maintaining back channel to Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif.

"Former Deputy Director of the CIA John McLaughlin tells @MSNBC: @SecPompeo should "thank" @JohnKerry for maintaining his back channel to @JZarif and other senior #Iranian officials," Jay Solomon, a former chief foreign correspondent at the Wall Street Journal, tweeted on Monday.



### Anarchist group attacks Iranian embassy in Athens: report

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Members of an anarchist group in Athens on Monday attacked the Iranian embassy in Athens, the Greek Reporter online news portal said.

Counting about 10, members of the group Rouvikonas riding motorbikes hurled paint bottles at the outer walls of the embassy around 6:00 local time.

The source added that the assailants fled afterwards and that no arrests had been made.

The group has on several occasions attacked official and government buildings in Greece with paint, including the building of the Greek Foreign Ministry in July.

# Iran says not even thinking of talks with 'naïve' Trump administration

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said on Monday that Iran does not even think about holding talks with the U.S., insisting negotiation with the "naïve" Trump administration is not on Tehran's agenda.

"Given the naïve and uncivilized act of the current U.S. administration in withdrawing from the JCPOA [the 2015 nuclear deal known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action] and also the country's policies against Iran, we do not even think about negotiating with the U.S. let alone talking about the preconditions," Qassemi said during a press conference.

"This issue is not on our agenda. So, there will be no discussion about the preconditions. As I said, we do not think about talks with the U.S."

Qassemi also said Iran will not talk about its defense capabilities.

"Our defense policies are right. These policies are beneficial to the region and we do not hold talks about anything related to defense capabilities," he asserted.

In a press conference at the White House on July 30, U.S. President Donald Trump said he would meet with Iran "anytime they want to" and without "preconditions".

However, hours after Trump's statements, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo



appeared on CNBC to set some conditions.

Back in May, Pompeo had set 12 conditions for talks with Iran, which were dismissed by Tehran.

In remarks on August 13, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said there will be no war be-

tween Iran and the U.S. and nor will be any negotiation between the two countries.

The Leader noted that negotiation with the current U.S. administration is impossible. "Even if we were to negotiate with the U.S., we would never hold talks with the current U.S. administration."

### Rouhani to attend UN General Assembly

Qassemi also said that Iranian President Hassan Rouhani will attend the annual UN General Assembly scheduled to be held from 18 September to 5 October.

"The president will depart to the United Nations and this is an opportunity that various meetings could be held on the sidelines of the [UNGA] summit at the presidential and foreign ministerial levels," he stated.

### Iran, nuclear partners may hold meeting at New York

The Foreign Ministry spokesman also said Iran and the remaining parties to the nuclear agreement - Britain, France, China, Russia and Germany - may hold talks at the foreign ministerial level on the sidelines of the UN meeting.

Commenting on the talks between Iran and the Europeans to preserve the JCPOA, he said that the talks are on the right path.

The European Union trio - Germany, France and Britain - are expected to present their package of proposals to Iran before the second round of U.S. sanctions, which includes ban on Iran's oil export, takes effect in early November.

On Russia's decision to increase its oil production, Qassemi refrained to give any comments.

"I imagine our country's officials in oil sphere will give some explanations about this issue in upcoming days," he said.

## UN watchdog: Iran living up to its nuclear commitments

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Yukiya Amano once again confirmed on Monday that Iran is honoring its commitments under the 2015 nuclear deal between Tehran, the European Union and the 5+1 nations (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and Germany).

According to the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Iran agreed to scale down its nuclear activities in exchange for termination of sanctions.

"Since the last General Conference, we have continued to verify and monitor the implementation by Iran of its nuclear-related commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action," said a statement by Amano read at the 62nd

IAEA General Conference.

The conference opened in the Austrian capital of Vienna on Monday.

The statement added, "Iran is implementing its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA. It is essential that Iran continues to fully implement those commitments".

Amano added, "The Agency continues to verify the non-diversion of nuclear material declared by Iran under its Safeguards Agreement. Evaluations regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran continue."

Also on September 10, the UN nuclear watchdog chief said in his introductory statement to the IAEA Board of Governors in Vienna that Iran was implementing its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA.



## Gradualism not proper approach to save nuclear deal, Salehi tells EU

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Ali Akbar Salehi, director of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), said on Monday that "approach of gradualism" adopted by the European Union's is not a proper way to preserve the 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

"We believe that the so far adopted approach of gradualism is not the proper mechanism whatsoever in response to the situation arising from the American reckless policy in undermining the UN Security Council resolution 2231," Salehi said during a speech at the 62nd conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna.

Following is the full text of his speech posted on the Tasnim news agency:

It is my pleasure and delight to join you here at the 62nd General Conference. Seizing the opportunity to congratulate you, Madam President, on your deserved election, I am confident that under your able and wise presidency, the Conference will achieve the best of its collective results. Please be assured of the full cooperation of my delegation.

The General Conference, as the Agency's highest policy-making body, provides all of us with an opportunity to present our national perspective on a wide range of issues and challenges.

Let me just start with one of the most important global concerns, that is: the fate of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). I really doubt that the IAEA General Conference needs to be convinced of the historic significance and importance of the hard-won multilateral agreement on the Iranian nuclear issue. It took the concerned parties many years and a long process of tough negotiations to reach an agreement. The two sides, decided to limit their expectations and aspirations and instead, settle for a mutually agreed set of solutions. Ever since that the agreement went into effect in January 2016, Iran, as stipulated in 12 consecutive IAEA reports, has fully complied with the provisions of the deal and implemented all its ensuing nuclear-related commitments. This is a simple, undeniable and generally recognized fact.

On the other side, everybody is well aware of the U.S. approach and its particular misconduct. Following a period of less-than-faithful compliance with the provisions of the agreement, under the previous administration and subsequently more so under the current administration, the US Government eventually withdrew from the JCPOA in May 2018. The American unilateral decision, a blatant breach of the UN Security Council Resolution 2231 and an open travesty of the fundamental and cherished principles of international law and multilateralism, →13



### Alumina Iran Co

### International Call For Identification and Prequalification Assessment of Eligible Producers/Suppliers For Procurement of 20000 metric tons Pre Baked Anode via One Stage International Tender

Alumina Iran Co. intends to launch an international call for identification and prequalification of qualified eligible suppliers for procurement of high quality Pre Baked Anode Block for using in its Primary Aluminum Reduction Smelter Plant.

**1-Subject :** Purchasing 20000 mt Pre Baked Anode Block for using in the Primary Aluminum Reduction Smelter Plant

**2-The Employer's Name and Address:**

**Name.:** Alumina Iran Company affiliated with Iranian Mines & Mining Industries Development & Renovation Organization(IMIDRO)

**Address.:** Km 7 of Sankhast Road ,city of JAJARM,Northern Khorasan Province,IRAN,PO.Box:1135-94415 , website:[WWW.IranAlumina.ir](http://WWW.IranAlumina.ir)

E-mail.: [info@iranalumina.ir](mailto:info@iranalumina.ir)

Contact telephones for more information : **009858-32604230** and **009858-32605344**

**3-Delivery time duration :** about twelve (12) calenderial months

**4-Delivery Port / Final Destination :** CIF Bandar Abbas port , Iran and shipped to the Primary Aluminum Reduction Smelter Plant Located in JAJARM city , Northern Khorasan Province, IRAN.

**5-Method of payment :** Via Internal Resources of Alumina Iran Company

**6-Required Conditions ,Verifications & Certifications:**

All of the bidders/Tenderers should submit their RFQ reports and related supporting documents to the Employer from the date of this call till

OCTOBER 23, 2018.The relevant documents should include the following items.:

It is mandatory that the eligible bidders should justify its Ability to present the required export licence issued by official authorities related to the subject of the Tender .

The bidders should have the required technical and engineering and managerial facilities , ability to produce or supply the goods as mentioned in the subject of the Tender, financial ability , sufficient and related experience , Good performance history & awards by the former clients and regarding the relevant production and quality assurance standards capabilities.

The bidders should represent its abilities to procure the the mentioned goods just in time.

The bidders should have sufficient and right experience for supplying the mentioned goods of the valid international producers. It is mandatory that the bidders should be able to present the valid authority letter and the main supplier or producer supporting documents for its commitments and obligations .

**7-Deadline of Documents Submission :**

In the last time after one month of the second publication time of this call (September 22, 2018), The bidders can submit the required documents to the Central Secretariat Office in Alumina Iran Company.

**8- Other Conditions and information :**

The bidders should submit its letter of interest in writing to the client via telefax No.: 058-32272487 .

After receiving and evaluating the above mentiond documents of each bidder,the acceptable eligible bidders are invited to recieve the relevant Tender documents.

The bidders should insert and stamp its name and the subject of the Tender on the submitted envelope of related RFQ report documents.

Submission of the letter of interest and readiness to this call does not constitute any rights for bidders/applicants.

The applicant will accept the expenses related to completion and submission of the prequalification documents.

The applicant will accept all of legal responsibilities for the rightness and justifications of issued supporting documents attached to its interest letter and if any deviations have been observed during this stage and the other relevant stages, the applicant should accept the relevant legal impacts and compensate related probable damages.

This call and the contents therein do not constitute any obligation for ALUMINA IRAN CO. to invite any company for tendering, and so the final decision will be exclusively made by the ALUMINA IRAN CO.

**IRAN ALUMINA CO**  
[en.iranalumina.ir](http://en.iranalumina.ir)



# Yemeni drone strikes Saudi-led command center in Hudaydah

Yemeni army soldiers, supported by allied fighters from Popular Committees, have reportedly carried out an aerial attack against an important military target in the country's western coastal province of Hudaydah in retaliation for the Saudi-led devastating military aggression against their impoverished homeland.

A Yemeni military source, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Yemen's Arabic-language al-Masirah television network that Yemeni troops and their allies attacked a command center of Saudi troops and Saudi-sponsored militiamen loyal to Yemen's former president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, using a domestically-built Qasf-1 (Striker-1) combat drone on Monday afternoon.

There were no immediate reports about possible casualties and the extent of damage caused at the site. Earlier in the day, Yemeni soldiers and Popular Committees fighters launched a short-range missile at a gathering of Saudi troops and their mercenaries in the same Yemeni province, leaving scores of them killed and injured. The developments came a day after eleven people, all members of the same family, lost their lives when Saudi fighter jets struck a residential area in the Radman al-Awad district of the central Yemeni province of al-Bayda.

Saudi Arabia and a number of its regional allies launched a devastating military campaign against Yemen in March 2015, with the aim of bringing the government of Hadi back to power and crushing the country's Houthis Ansarullah movement.

## ■ Saudi war machine revs up as UN envoy visits Yemen

Saudi Arabia has intensified its invasion of Yemen as the United Nations special envoy for the violence-scarred country visits the capital Sana'a in an attempt to cobble together a conflict resolution mechanism.



On Sunday, Saudi warplanes killed seven civilians, including women and children, in Bayda, attacking the central Yemeni province's town of Radman. Eight others were also wounded in the attack.

Earlier in the day, two people lost their lives in a missile attack on the northern province of Sa'ada, and four more died in airstrikes on the southwestern province of al-Hudaydah.

Also on Sunday, the UN official Martin Griffiths arrived in the capital to meet with officials from Yemen's popular Houthi Ansarullah movement.

The movement took over Yemen's affairs in 2015 after Yemen's former government resigned and its head, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, fled to Riyadh, leaving the country in political turmoil.

A Saudi-led coalition has been attacking Yemen ever since, trying unsuccessfully to restore the former Riyadh-allied officials. So far, around 15,000 have died during the invasion. Griffiths invited the Houthis and the former officials to talks in Geneva in early September in an attempt to restore a UN-backed negotiation process that had broken off in 2016.

The Houthi representatives, however, could not attend the talks after Saudi Arabia refused to allow an Omani airplane, which had been meant to fly the officials, to land on the Yemeni soil.

Yemen's Saba news agency, however, said the United Nations had stricken an agreement to evacuate wounded Houthi fighters using Sana'a airport.

The World Health Organization also said that the UN was working to open a "humanitarian air bridge" to take Yemeni cancer patients for treatment at qualified facilities.

The WHO's country representative for Yemen Nevio Zagaria said, "The aim is to help patients suffering from cancer, chronic diseases and congenital anomalies receive the treatment they need," adding that 12 health conditions had been targeted.

The air bridge would operate for an initial trial period of six months, the WHO said, without specifying where the patients would be sent for treatment. "Eighty percent of patients for this flight are women and children," Zagaria said, and noted, "The air bridge is one of their last hopes."

(Source: agencies)

# May tells rebels - It's my Brexit deal or no deal

UK Prime Minister Theresa May told rebels in her divided party that if they torpedoed her Brexit deal then the United Kingdom would leave the EU without any agreement, a scenario the IMF said would make the country much poorer.

The United Kingdom is due to leave the EU on March 29 and yet little is clear. So far, no full exit agreement has been reached and some rebels in May's Conservative Party have threatened to vote down a deal if she clinches one.

The fate of May's government and her Brexit plan is in doubt because it is unclear whether she can command the 320 votes she needs in the House of Commons, the lower house of the British parliament, to approve a deal.

"I think that the alternative to that will be not having a deal," May told BBC TV, adding she was confident of getting a good agreement she thought parliament would ultimately approve.

Recent signals from Brussels have buoyed hopes that the United Kingdom and the EU can agree and approve a proper divorce arrangement before it leaves, though the sides are still divided on about one-fifth of the detail of a deal.

But many business chiefs and investors fear politics could scupper an agreement, thrusting both the EU and the United Kingdom into a "no-deal" Brexit that they say would weaken the West, panic financial markets and block the arteries of trade.

London mayor Sadiq Khan said on Sunday that as Britain now faces a choice between a bad Brexit deal or a damaging "no-deal" Brexit, voters should be given another referendum.

## ■ Disorderly Brexit?

With May's plans in doubt, many British ministers have outlined the damage that they say a disorderly "no-deal" Brexit would do to the world's fifth-largest economy and its reputation as a politically stable haven for investment.

International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine Lagarde said failure to get a deal would make the economy shrink. The economy will grow around 1.5 percent this year.



"I very much hope and pray that there will be a deal between the European Union and the UK," she told reporters.

Michel Barnier, the EU's chief negotiator on the issue, said in Madrid on Monday that talks between the EU and Britain on Brexit are being conducted in a spirit of "good cooperation".

But the EU, in a note before Barnier briefs ministers from member states on Tuesday, said both sides still have work to do to settle a range of issues, including the Irish border.

"Some parts of the draft withdrawal agreement have already been agreed in principle by the UK and the EU negotiators, although nothing is agreed until everything is agreed," the note, seen by Reuters, said.

"There are still parts of the withdrawal agreement that require further negotiation. One of them is the issue of how to avoid a hard border between Ireland and Northern Ireland."

Supporters of Brexit, who admit there may be some short term instability, say some British ministers and business chiefs are spreading scare stories about the impact of a "no-deal" Brexit in an attempt to rally support behind May's plans.

The rival tipped by bookmakers to succeed May, Boris Johnson, attacked May's Brexit plans, known as Chequers after the country house where they were hashed out in July. "The whole thing is a constitutional abomination, and if Chequers were adopted it would mean that for the first time since 1066 our leaders were deliberately acquiescing in foreign rule," Johnson said, referring to the 11th Century invasion which established Norman rule over England.

## ■ Ireland

Johnson, May's former foreign minister, scolded May for her handling of negotiations on the future of the border between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic.

But he told reporters on Monday that a technical fix to the Irish border issue reported by The Times newspaper could allow for a proper Brexit deal to be clinched.

EU officials and diplomats insist that nothing has fundamentally changed on the so called backstop plan for the Irish border.

What has changed is a shift away from discussion of checks on goods passing through Northern Ireland's border with Ireland to a discussion of the mechanisms for checking goods travelling between Northern Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom.

"This is part of the de-dramatizing process, Barnier is being creative in offering concessions in the text that seem to go the British way but in fact don't change the reality," one EU diplomat said.

No new border plan will materialize before the Conservative Party conference on Sept. 30-Oct 3, the diplomat said. (Source: Reuters)

# Top Chinese general attends joint forum with U.S. military, despite tensions

A top Chinese general attended the opening on Monday of a regional armed forces health forum organized by the Chinese and U.S. militaries, as the two sides set aside friction over trade and territorial issues such as the South China Sea.

This week's Asia Pacific Military Health Exchange in the western city of Xian, best known as the home of the Terracotta Army, has about 600 participants, with military officials from 28 countries, including U.S. allies like Japan and Australia, attending.

General Song Puxuan, head of China's Central Military Commission's Logistics Support Department, posed for pictures with Terry M. Rauch, acting U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, at the opening ceremony in one of Xian's upmarket hotels.

Song, whose attendance was not previously publicly announced, did not address the conference. Military sources say he is close to President Xi Jinping and was previously head of the military's northern command, having risen rapidly up the ranks since Xi took office six years ago.

China has been keen to highlight its cooperation with the U.S. military, despite a bitter



trade war and Chinese suspicion at both U.S. support for self-ruled and Chinese-claimed Taiwan, and U.S. involvement in the disputed South China Sea.

"This meeting can help promote the healthy and stable development of the two militaries' ties, and make our contribution towards promoting peace and stability in the Asia Pacific, providing positive energy,"

Song's colleague, Chen Jingyuan, head of health at the Logistics Support Department, told reporters.

Speaking earlier, Chen had hailed the exchange as a "first" between the Chinese and U.S. militaries on military health for the Asia Pacific.

Rear Admiral Louis C. Tripoli, Command Surgeon of the United States Indo-Pacific

Command, thanked the People's Liberation Army for its efforts in arranging the conference.

"We hope that you feel how important it is for us to be here," Tripoli said.

At the event, which features mostly technical discussions on preventing disease and treating injuries, China's armed forces will show off new equipment used for medical purposes, such as aircraft and vehicles.

China was angered in May when the United States withdrew an invitation to a major U.S.-hosted naval drill, saying that closing the door does not promote mutual trust and cooperation. The Rim of the Pacific exercise, known as RIMPAC and previously attended by China, is billed as the world's largest international maritime exercise and held every two years in Hawaii in June and July.

The Pentagon said the withdrawal of the invitation was in response to what it sees as Beijing's militarisation of islands in the South China Sea.

Still, China's navy chief Shen Jinlong plans to pay a working visit to the United States later this month, during which he will attend an international naval forum.

(Source: Reuters)

## Mattis condemns Russia for influence-peddling in Macedonia



Defense Secretary Jim Mattis arrived in Macedonia Monday, condemning Russian efforts to use its money and influence to build opposition to an upcoming vote that could pave the way for the country to join NATO - a move Moscow opposes.

Mattis told reporters traveling with him to Skopje that there is "no doubt" that Moscow has been funding pro-Russian groups in order to defeat the referendum on a name change later this month.

"They have transferred money and they're also conducting broader influence campaigns," Mattis said. "We ought to leave the Macedonian people to make up their own minds."

Macedonians will vote Sept. 30 on whether to approve the new name of North Macedonia in an effort to placate Greece, which has for years blocked Macedonia's path to NATO and the European Union. But any progress toward NATO membership by the Balkan nation is strongly opposed by Russia, which doesn't want the alliance to expand to areas formerly under Moscow's influence.

Mattis is the latest in a string of international leaders visiting Macedonia to voice support for the referendum, and he's the most senior U.S. official to go there. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg, German chancellor Angela Merkel, and Austrian chancellor Sebastian Kurz have all visited and made public endorsements of the name change, saying it's critical in order for the country to join NATO, after years of waiting.

Mattis said that he and other NATO allies "say right up front in open press what we think. We're not passing money to people behind the scenes, we're not putting together parties that we control or try to control."

Russia has already been called out for trying to influence the vote. In July, Greece expelled two Russian diplomats accused of supplying funds to protest groups who were opposing the name change deal. Russia denounced the expulsions as unjustified.

Greece, a member of NATO, has for years vetoed attempts by Macedonia to join NATO, complaining about the country's name ever since Yugoslavia broke up in the early 1990s. Greece argues that the name implies a territorial claim against the northern Greek region of Macedonia and its ancient heritage.

NATO leaders in July formally invited Macedonia to begin membership talks on the condition that it wouldn't become effective until the name change was implemented.

But there is widespread concern about Russian impact on the vote. "There is this influence campaign to try to buy off people and try to support pro-Russian organizations," said Laura Cooper, the deputy assistant defense secretary for Russia and the region. She said she couldn't give specifics about the pay-offs, but said the U.S. is aware of financial support that Moscow has given to pro-Russian individuals and groups that are working to undermine the referendum.

Russia, she said, is "swooping in now with disinformation and other forms of malign influence to try to change the minds of the Macedonian people." As examples, she cited efforts to convince people that the vote isn't relevant and isn't the last step for NATO admission.

Evelyn Farkas, an expert on the region who is a fellow with the Atlantic Council and a former Defense Department adviser, said Mattis' visit to the tiny nation could help sow support for the name change. "I think Mattis could make or break this thing by delivering a strong message to the opposition which has been grudgingly quiet, that they need to come out in full-throated support, because they're not going to get another chance later," said Farkas. "He can tell them this is their last chance."

Farkas, who was recently in Macedonia, also said the visit reaffirms America's commitment to the region and the need for stability there.

According to Cooper, the U.S. has given Macedonia about \$5 million in security assistance annually since 1991, and the total U.S. aid since then has been about \$750 million.

Mattis plans to meet with Macedonia President Gorge Ivanov, center-left Prime Minister Zoran Zaev, and Defense Minister Radmila Sekerinska.

The main conservative opposition VMRO-DPMNE party and Ivanov have said Macedonia's goal is to join NATO and the EU, but that they oppose the deal with Greece, warning it will damage the country's national interests. Mattis said he believes the Macedonian peoples' lives can be changed with added economic opportunities and security, and it's important to have those options available. He said he will take that message to Ivanov.

Polls indicate Macedonians will likely back the deal, but it's not clear if turnout will meet the required 50 percent for the vote to be valid. The agreement with Greece was signed in June, and requires changes to the Macedonian Constitution. The final step for NATO admission is ratification by Greece's parliament, which would vote only after Macedonia completes all necessary procedures.

(Source: AP)

## 'This woman will be heard': White House adviser on Kavanaugh accuser

White House adviser Kellyanne Conway said Monday the woman who accused Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh of sexual misconduct will be heard as part of sworn testimony before the committee weighing his nomination.

"This woman should not be insulted and she should not be ignored," Conway said in an interview with Fox News. She said she had spoken with a number of U.S. senators including Republican Lindsey Graham about the matter. "This woman will be heard."

(Source: Reuters)



STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	158071.9
IFX	1837.2

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	48,870 rials
GBP	54,930 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: isna.ir

COMMODITIES

WTI	\$69.54/b
Brent	\$78.71/b
OPEC Basket	\$76.46/b
Gold	\$1,199.25/oz
Silver	\$14.22/oz
Platinum	\$805.30/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

NEWS IN BRIEF



**Exports from mining sector up 15%**

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iran's exports of minerals rose 15 percent in the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-August 21) compared to the same period last year

The value of exported minerals stood at about \$5 billion in the mentioned time span, IRNA reported quoting Jafar Sarqini, deputy industry, mining and trade minister as saying on Monday.

Steel, copper, limestone and zinc are among the top minerals that Iran exports to many countries in the Middle East, Europe and Africa.



**Sahraie appointed new director of TSE**

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Board of directors at Tehran Stock Exchange appointed Ali Sahraie as the new director of TSE.

Sahraie replaced Hassan Qalibaf Asl who held the position for almost a decade, IRIB reported on Monday.

Selected from among seven candidates, Sahraie will run TSE for two years.

Iran-Iraq trade grew 30% in 5 months

**Al-e Es'haq says value of trade ties with Iraq can reach \$20 billion**

**1 →** Addressing the tourism sector, the businessperson said that “at the present time 1.7 million Iraqi tourists visit Iran and the same number of Iranian tourists, excluding those who visit Iraq in Arbäeen (the fortieth day after Ashura), travel to Iraq per year, i.e. the two countries can handle up to 4 million tourists, which will bring them a large amount of revenues, trade, and employment.”

China won't just play defense in trade war, Global Times says

China will not be content to only play defense in an escalating trade war with the United States, a widely read Chinese tabloid warned, as U.S. President Donald Trump was expected to announce new tariffs on \$200 billion in Chinese goods as early as Monday.

The United States and China have already levied duties on \$50 billion worth of each other's goods in an intensifying row that has jolted global financial markets in the past few months.

Last week, the U.S. Treasury Department invited senior Chinese officials, including Vice Premier Liu He, to more talks on the tariff dispute, though skepticism remained high among trade observers on both sides over the prospects of a breakthrough.

China's Foreign Ministry reiterated that the escalation of the trade conflict was not in anyone's interest.

“We have always maintained that the only correct means to resolve the trade dispute is through dialogue and consultation on an equal basis with mutual trust and respect,” ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told a regular news briefing.

A senior administration official told Reuters over the weekend that Trump was likely to announce the new tariffs as early as Monday.

“It is nothing new for the U.S. to try to escalate tensions so as to exploit more gains at the negotiating table,” the Global Times, which is published by the ruling Communist Party's People's Daily, wrote in an editorial.

“We are looking forward to a more beautiful counter-attack and will keep increasing the pain felt by the U.S.,” the Chinese-language column said.

Besides retaliating with tariffs, China could also restrict export of goods, raw materials and components core to U.S. manufacturing supply chains, former finance minister Lou Jiwei told a Beijing forum on Sunday, according to an attendee.

Lou is chairman of the National Council for Social Security Fund.

The person who attended the event and is familiar with the White House's thinking said such a move would likely attract sharp retaliation from Washington, which has studied its own limits on exporting key technologies to China. *(Source: Reuters)*

Tax revenues exceed \$8.5b in 5 months

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — The Iranian National Tax Administration collected 366 trillion rials (about \$8.57 billion) in tax during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 22, 2018), up 10 percent year on year.

According to the administration's head, Seyed Kamel Taqavinejad, more than 190 trillion rials (over \$4.5 billion) was collected as direct taxes and about 175.5 trillion (about \$4.17 billion) derived from the tax on goods and services sectors, IRIB reported.

Based on the latest data released by the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), the country's tax income rose 14.1 percent during the last Iranian calendar year (March 2017-March 2018) to reach 1.15 quadrillion rials (about \$27.3 billion).

The Iranian government earns budget from various sources including the revenues and offering capital assets and divesting financial assets to the private sector, the report said.

According to Taqavinejad, the share of tax revenues in Iran's gross domestic product



(GDP) has reached eight percent.

As planned, the figure should reach 11 percent by the end of the Six Five-Year National Development Plan (March 2021).

President Hassan Rouhani's economic strategy is to significantly reduce the government's dependency on oil and instead collect tax more systematically.

‘U.S. sanctions on Iran unproductive & wrong’: Novak

**ENERGY** **TEHRAN** — U.S. sanctions on Iran's oil industry are unproductive and there will be consequences to such a move, Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak told CNBC on Monday.

“Our position remains that this is unproductive, this is wrong,” Novak said when asked about the possible impact U.S. sanctions on Iran's oil industry could have.

“It is better to continue working in the market, Iran being just another exporter that provides stable supplies to the market,” Novak said, speaking to CNBC's Geoff Cutmore



at the Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) last week in Vladivostok, Russia.

“It is one of the richest in resources and has a solid standing in terms of its energy capability both in the OPEC, and in the energy markets as a whole. So, I think there will be consequences, I am sure, but we could only comment once they are in place,” he said.

Novak has repeatedly voiced concern over the impact of U.S. sanctions against Iran.

Last Wednesday, he said that “This is a huge uncertainty on the market – how countries, which buy almost two million barrels per day of Iranian oil, will act. The situation should be closely watched, the right decisions should be taken,” as Reuters reported.

Novak said global oil markets were “fragile” due to geopolitical risks and supply disruptions, the report added.

Since implementation of the Iran nuclear deal (known as JCPOA) in January 2016, Iran and Russia have signed a number of agreements to cooperate in development of Iran's oilfields.

Novak and his Iranian counterpart Bijan Zanganeh discussed energy cooperation between the two countries and through OPEC besides the possibility of Russian oil companies taking part in projects in Iran in Moscow in late July.

Capital market unfazed by economic problems

**1 →** Although Iran's economy is experiencing a series of problems including stagnation, high inflation and unemployment rates, but capital market indices open in green and hit record high.

The growth can be explained regarding the dominant recession on other domestic markets, which has guided a big sum of liquidity from other markets such as auto, foreign currency, housing and coin to the capital market.

The government's recent focus on supporting and expanding the capital market, can also explain the recent jump in indices.

The low tax rate, liquidity transparency, and other provided instruments by the government has presently given the investors in the capital market the confidence about low liquidity risk in the stock market and has led to attraction of a large volume of capital and expansion of trade and cooperation among private companies.



Export-oriented companies such as petrochemical, steel and mining companies whose products are priced at higher

rates at the capital market, can presently benefit from higher profit margin in comparison with other companies and their presence in the stock exchange market can boost domestic production and job creation.

In case the required infrastructure in the capital market is improved, higher growth and more trades are predictable in the capital market but the growth makes some concerned since it is merely witnessed in the capital market but not in other ones.

Some express concern that due to the leading recession on economy, existing inflation, the unclear future of the nuclear deal, known as JCPOA, which has a high impact on domestic markets including the capital market, the experienced upward trend and record breaking of the capital market indices should not be considered as an ongoing one in the long-run.

Credit Suisse criticized by Swiss watchdog over anti-money laundering policies

Credit Suisse has been censured by the Swiss financial watchdog for deficiencies in its anti-money laundering procedures in cases linked to world football's Fifa, Brazil's Petrobras and Venezuela's PDVSA oil company, as well as a business relationship with a prominent client.

Finma, the financial supervisor, said on Monday it had found deficiencies in Credit Suisse's control and risk management procedures, as well as anti-money laundering procedures. It demanded remedial steps to improve them — but under Swiss law did not have the power to impose fines.

In response, Credit Suisse said it acknowledged Finma's rulings. It had commissioned its own reviews of the incidents, “and has co-operated with Finma throughout the process, taking proactive remediation measures.”

The criticism from Finma comes as a blow to Tidjane Thiam, who took over as Credit Suisse's chief executive in mid-2015 and has pushed through a sweeping restructuring to refocus the group on managing the wealth of the world's rich.

In its statement, Finma said the bank had failed to adequately record and monitor risks arising from a business relationship with a “politically exposed person” and the responsible client “relationship manager”, who had since been criminally convicted.

Finma said the relationship manager,



who had been very successful in terms of assets under management, breached the bank's compliance regulations repeatedly over a number of years. “However, instead of disciplining the client manager promptly and proportionately, the bank rewarded him with high payments and positive employee assessments. The supervision of the relationship manager was inadequate due to this special status,” the regulator said.

Finma said that since 2015 it had been investigating “several banks” in relation to suspected corruption involving Fifa, Petrobras and PDVSA, examining the period from 2006 to 2016. At Credit Suisse it had found shortcomings in identifying clients, determining beneficial owners, categorizing a business relationship as posing an increased risk, taking necessary actions in cases of increased risk and in documentation.

“The identified shortcomings occurred repeatedly over a number of years, mainly before 2014,” Finma said.

*(Source: Financial Times)*

World's richest economies enjoy biggest pay raise in a decade

Workers in the world's richest countries are getting their biggest pay bump in a decade, a step toward solving a labor market puzzle that's unnerving central bankers.

As shrinking unemployment in the U.S., Japan and euro zone finally forces companies to lift wages to retain and attract staff, JPMorgan Chase & Co. reckons pay growth in advanced economies hit 2.5 percent in the second quarter, the most since the eve of 2009's worldwide recession. The bank predicts wages will accelerate to near 3 percent next year.

Fatter wallets should support global economic growth already enjoying its best upswing since 2011, while encouraging central banks such as the Federal Reserve to keep tightening monetary policy before inflation takes hold. It may prove less welcome news for stock and bond prices.

“It's a good thing; you're more confident in the sustainability of your expansion, you're more confident that you're going to get inflation moving up,” said Bruce Kasman, chief economist at JPMorgan in New York. “It is a signal that we're normalizing economic cycles.”

If sustained, the pickup in pay will settle a debate over whether the historical relationship between tightening labor markets and rising wages had broken down even as unemployment in developed economies fell to its lowest since 1980 by JPMorgan's estimation.

Reasons to doubt the reliability of the Phillips Curve, an economic model created in the 1960s, include the assimilation of China and India into the global workforce,



greater automation, retiring baby boomers being replaced by lower-paid workers, low productivity, companies increasingly dominating industries and declining labor-union membership.

By suppressing pay, such forces have been identified as driving the rise of populism at the ballot box as voters embraced President Donald Trump and Brexit in the hope they would spur prosperity.

“At some stage the Phillips Curve should reassert itself as the labor market continues to tighten in much of the developed world,” said Megan Greene, chief economist at Manulife Asset Management.

There are fresh signs employees are already doing better. Average hourly earnings for private American workers climbed 2.9 percent over the year in August, the most since the recession ended in mid-2009. Flowers Foods Inc., a Thomasville, Georgia-based maker of packaged bakery products, is among the companies reporting higher employee costs as the U.S. jobless rate sits near the lowest since the 1960s.

*(Source: Bloomberg)*

Italy sends smoke signals to markets that it will play by Europe's budget rules

Italy's economy minister is expected to prevent Italy's 2016 budget deficit from rising above 1.6 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), an Italian newspaper reported Monday.

Economy Minister Giovanni Tria is due to meet Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte and joint Deputy Prime Ministers Luigi Di Maio and Matteo Salvini on Monday to discuss the country's 2019 budget — its spending plans and growth targets.

Italy is due to present a draft version of its 2019 budget to the European Commission for approval shortly.

It is being closely watched by financial markets, European lawmakers and the Italian public alike to see if the government will stick to plans that include increasing welfare spending, reducing taxes and scrapping pension reforms that had increased the retirement age.

Italian newspaper Corriere della Sera reported on Monday that the goal of the meeting on Monday was to start “to pin down some numbers” and decide what funds to allot to the different measures being considered, Reuters said.

The European Commission — the executive arm of the EU which has to check and approve draft budgets of countries in the euro zone — requires government spending to



not exceed 3 percent of a member country's gross domestic product (GDP).

The newspaper reported that Economy Minister Tria, seen as a moderating influence in government, is set on preventing the 2019 budget deficit from rising above 1.6 percent of GDP, a move that could avoid a confrontation between Italy and European lawmakers.

The newspaper calculated the government needs either

10 billion euros (\$8.58 billion) in additional revenues or lower spending to hit the 1.6 percent goal. The figure must rise to 15 billion euros if the government wants to adopt at least some of the measures pledged by the coalition's parties without jeopardizing the 1.6 percent ceiling, the paper said.

Financial markets were roiled when Italy's coalition government, made up of the anti-establishment Five Star Movement and right-wing Lega party, announced their controversial spending intentions in June this year.

While the spending plans, including a pledge to introduce a universal basic income, were popular with Italian voters fed up with austerity measures, investors feared the measures would increase Italy's budget deficit (the amount by which its spending exceeds its tax receipts) and would increase its already large debt pile.

Rome's government debt stands at 130 percent of GDP, just below Greece's.

Corriere said Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte was expected not to challenge a 1.6 percent deficit limit although it could be more difficult to convince the two deputy prime ministers, who favor more spending.

*(Source: CNBC)*



# Oil higher as U.S. Iran sanctions raise supply concerns

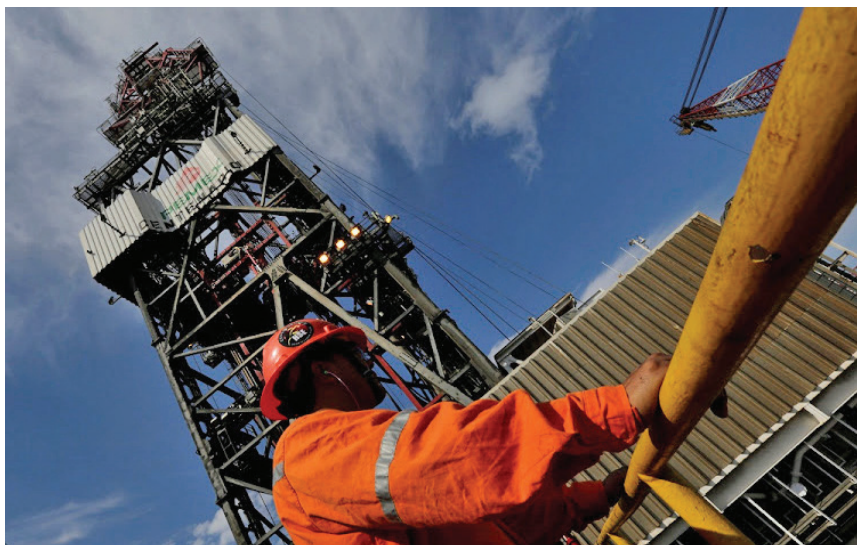
Oil prices rose on Monday as investors focused on the impact of U.S. sanctions on Iran despite assurances by Washington that Saudi Arabia, Russia and the United States could together raise output fast enough to offset falling supplies.

U.S. Energy Secretary Rick Perry said in an interview with Reuters on Friday that he did not expect any price spikes and that the world's top three oil producers could between them raise global output in the next 18 months.

Brent crude oil was up 45 cents a barrel at \$78.54 by 0830 GMT. U.S. light crude was up 45 cents at \$69.44.

Iran's oil exports have been falling in recent months as more buyers, including its second-largest buyer India, cut imports ahead of U.S. sanctions that take effect in November. Washington aims to cut Iran oil exports down to zero to force Tehran to re-negotiate a nuclear deal.

"Iranian crude oil export loadings have declined by 580,000 barrels per day in the past three months," Bank of America Merrill Lynch analysts said in a note to clients on Monday.



A leading Iranian official said on Saturday that Saudi Arabia and Russia had taken the oil market "hostage" and accused other producers of turning the Organization of

the Petroleum Exporting Countries into "a U.S. tool".

Iran is the third-largest OPEC producer. A deepening trade war between United

States and China is unsettling commodities and energy markets.

U.S. President Donald Trump is likely to announce new tariffs on about \$200 billion on Chinese imports on Monday, a senior administration official told Reuters.

The trade dispute is raising concerns about the potential for slower growth in oil consumption, offsetting supply concerns stemming from the upcoming U.S. sanctions on Iran over its nuclear program.

Also weighing on oil prices, U.S. drillers added two oil rigs in the week to Dec. 1, bringing the total count up to 749, the highest since September, Baker Hughes energy services firm said on Friday.

A Joint Technical Committee of OPEC and non-OPEC producers was due to meet on Monday to coordinate production may speak afterwards.

"Markets will be looking towards OPEC and Joint Technical Committee conference call for forward guidance on oil market fundamentals in the coming term," said Benjamin Lu, a broker at Philip Futures.

(Source: Reuters)

## China to speed up efforts to cut solar, wind subsidies



China will speed up efforts to ensure its wind and solar power sectors can compete without subsidies and achieve "grid price parity" with traditional energy sources like coal, according to new draft guidelines issued by the energy regulator.

As it tries to ease its dependence on polluting fossil fuels, China has encouraged renewable manufacturers and developers to drive down costs through technological innovations and economies of scale.

The country aims to phase out power generation subsidies, which have become an increasing burden on the state.

China's regions will make an extra push to provide technological and policy support to the renewables sector in order to ensure they can operate subsidy-free, according to draft guidelines issued by the National Energy Administration (NEA) dated Sept. 13 to the industry and reviewed by Reuters.

The guidelines said some regions with cost and market advantages had already "basically achieved price parity" with clean coal-fired power and no longer required subsidies, and others should learn from their experiences.

They also urged local transmission grid companies to provide more support for subsidy-free projects and ensure they have the capacity to distribute all the power generated by wind and solar plants.

The draft guidelines were issued for feed-

back from the industry and it is unclear when they will come into effect.

Solar power generation costs fell 90 percent from 2007 to 2017, and GCL New Energy Holdings, one of China's biggest clean energy developers, said in late August that grid price parity could happen within a year.

"Parity is here already for high price markets," said Thomas Lapham, chief executive of Asia Clean Capital, which builds rooftop solar projects for major corporations in China.

"I don't think there will be a specific magical date when (parity) is here for all locations," he said. "It will gradually spread over time as efficiencies continue to improve and prices become more competitive."

China's solar sector is still reeling from a decision to cut subsidies and cap new capacity at 30 gigawatts (GW) this year, down from a record 53 GW in 2017, with the government concerned about overcapacity and a growing subsidy backlog.

According to the NEA, the government owed around 120 billion yuan (\$17.46 billion) in subsidies to solar plants by the middle of this year.

Lapham said the cap on new projects has hurt the industry in the short term, but by making a component supply glut even worse, it has also reduced prices and brought China even closer to grid price parity.

(Source: Reuters)

## Suez group backs UK energy-from-waste power as landfill space shrinks



Suez, the French utility, is to invest more than £100m in a new energy-from-waste power station in the north-east of England as it seeks to capitalize on the growing demand for alternative ways in which to process waste.

The company plans to build a new plant near Billingham in Stockton-on-Tees which will serve the public sector as well as commercial customers in the north-east and Scotland. Once operational in 2022, the plant will generate about 25GW of electricity, enough to power the equivalent of roughly 30,000 households. It will have enough capacity to process 200,000 tons of residual — non-recyclable — waste a year.

David Palmer-Jones, chief executive of Suez recycling and recovery in the UK, said the UK "has a shortfall in vital, non-landfill waste-treatment capacity".

The amount of available landfill space in the UK has fallen dramatically in recent years. Tax levies have been successful in shifting waste materials away from landfill — and into energy from waste facilities — but the industry says the decline in landfill has outpaced the delivery of alternative infrastructure. The UK had thousands of landfill sites in the 1990s but by 2020 it is estimated there will only be about 50.

Suez already operates several other energy-from-waste facilities in, among other places, Suffolk and Cornwall.

The investment will go ahead despite the uncertainty over the terms of Britain's exit from the EU at the end of next March. Palmer-Jones said Suez was making preparations for a hard Brexit and was "scenario planning" for "the risk that we, as an industry, are forced to re-shore the 3.5m tons of residual waste that the UK exports to northern Europe".

While it remained in the interests of both Britain and its EU neighbors to continue to "trade freely" in waste resources, Palmer-Jones warned that the UK had "insufficient infrastructure and rapidly reducing landfill capacity, particularly in the south-east, to handle an abrupt influx of 3.5m tons more waste".

In such a scenario, he added, the limited landfill space in the south-east would be filled quickly and result in its transport northwards to seek alternative landfill.

"At worst we could see up to 400 large truck loads a day, seven days a week, clogging up our roads hauling waste to landfill. Most of the extra traffic will hit the main road arteries running from London and the south-east heading to the Midlands and north," he said.

(Source: Financial Times)

## Asian middle distillates lose steam as demand fizzles out

Asian middle distillates back-pedaled in the second week of September, tracking weaker demand which saw the gasoil and jet market giving up some of its gains from the start of the month. In the Asian gasoil market, sentiment was still buoyant for the benchmark FOB Singapore 10 ppm sulfur gasoil grade with traders saying that demand continued to be steady even as regional supply balances were still seen limited.

The front-month October/November Singapore gasoil timespread remained rangebound over the same period to be assessed at plus 66 cents per barrels (cents/b) Friday, up a cent/b from the start of the week.

Meanwhile, the Q4/Q1 timespread dipped 11 cents over the week to be assessed at plus 94 cents/b Friday.

Traders said late last week that while the cash differential for the FOB Singapore 10 ppm sulfur gasoil grade has been rangebound for a while now, it was more a function of the product having found equilibrium in the market.

"It's at quite an acceptable level for both sides, sellers as well as buyers," a trader said last week.

"It [the FOB Singapore 10 ppm sulfur gasoil cash differential] may be rangebound, but it's maintaining on the high side. And while further push-up may be harder, it's still the high demand season where we see winter demand activities in Korea and Japan for stockpiling kerosene. The recent typhoons in North Asia are also supportive factors as some refineries had to suspend loadings due to weather-related issues," he added.

At the Asian close Friday, the cash differential for 10



ppm sulfur gasoil loading from Singapore was assessed at plus 60 cents/b to the Mean of Platts Gasoil assessments, FOB Singapore, down 3 cents/b from Thursday.

Looking ahead, market participants were heard to be awaiting the results of the very first gasoil buy tender from the Philippines' PNOC Exploration Corporation.

The company issued a tender on August 24 for 50,000 million tons (mt) of 50 ppm sulfur gasoil, with a view of subsequent shipments of up to four gasoil cargoes per month, for up to one year, after negotiations with the potential seller. PNOC's tender closed on September 13, but results could not immediately be confirmed Monday.

Meanwhile, sentiment in the co-distillate jet fuel market weakened, in line with continual weakness in the physical market as buying appetite remained dull

approaching the end of peak summer travel season.

In addition, market sources added the region was saddled with ample supply as a closed arbitrage to move barrels from Asia and the Middle East to the west of Suez has trapped surplus barrels in the region.

The front-month October/November timespread for the same period flipped into a contango structure to minus 15 cents/b Thursday on weak fundamentals. This marked a 59-week low for the jet fuel timespread but on Friday, the timespread improved slightly to minus 9 cents/b.

The quarterly Q4/Q1 spreads were also down to plus 44 cents/b Friday, marking a plus 33 cents/b decline from the start of the week.

FOB Singapore cash differentials for physical cargoes fell by 10 cents/b from the start of the week to minus 43 cents/b to Mean of Platts Singapore jet fuel/kerosene assessment on September 12, before rebounding to minus 19 cents/b on Friday.

Market participants were eyeing award details from Qatar Petroleum for the Sale of Petroleum Products, or QPSP's tender to supply 240,000 mt of Pearl GTL jet fuel for loading from Ras Laffan over October-March, 2019.

Several market observers also noted that results from Bahrain Petroleum Co., or Bapco's could likely set the tone for jet fuel cargo premiums loading from the Persian Gulf region. The refiner is closing a sell tender to supply 40,000-60,000 mt of jet A-1 fuel on September 17. The cargo is slated for loading from Sitra over October 7-10.

(Source: Platts)

## OPEC sees need to keep oil supply deal as demand faces headwinds

OPEC needs to keep working with other oil producers to manage global supplies as demand for crude faces "headwinds," the head of the organization said.

The historic supply deal between Saudi Arabia, Russia and other producers reached in late 2016 needs to become permanent, Mohammad Barkindo, secretary-general of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, said Sunday in an interview in Dubai. Oil demand is "robust," though crude use "is beginning to face some headwinds," he said, without elaborating.

"There is no viable alternative on the table other than to institutionalize and make this cooperation between ourselves and our good partners from non-OPEC in a permanent fashion," Barkindo said. Low crude prices hit the oil industry and starved it of investment, leaving continued cooperation among producers as they only way to maintain stability in markets, he said.

Crude is averaging about \$72 a barrel this year, and the International Energy Agency warned last week that prices could rise above \$80 a barrel unless producers make up for lost supply from OPEC members Iran and Venezuela. While trade disputes and financial woes in some emerging markets threaten to erode crude demand, the IEA, a watchdog of the industry, said that supply risks outweigh those concerns.

Saudi Arabia and Russia led OPEC and allied producers in agreeing to cap output starting in January 2017 to curb a glut. They changed course in June and have since pledged to ensure that supplies are adequate to meet demand. A committee of OPEC members and allied producers is set to meet next week in Algeria to review compliance with their production targets, though it's unclear whether the committee will try to enforce output quotas for individual countries.

Khalid Al-Falih, the Saudi energy minister, and his Russian counterpart Alexander Novak met Saturday and "re-emphasized their joint commitment to ensuring the adequacy of oil supplies, especially considering market uncertainties on the horizon," the Saudi energy ministry said Sunday in a statement. The ministers reviewed "the state of the global economy, oil demand and potential risks to supply," according to the statement.

Iran's crude sales are falling as the U.S. prepares to restrict Tehran's ability to sell oil and participate in global financial markets. Fellow OPEC-member Venezuela is pumping half as much oil as it did in 2016 and faces further declines amid economic upheaval.

Russia is ready to boost production to record levels, should the market require it, Energy Minister Novak said last week. Saudi Arabia, which has never pumped more than 11 million barrels a day, says it can produce at least 12 million. The kingdom is OPEC's biggest producer and holds most of the group's spare capacity.

(Source: Bloomberg)

## Japan struggles to cut its high solar power costs

With some of the highest solar power costs in the world, Japan introduced an auction system last year to remedy the situation through competition. But that plan hit a stumbling block in the second round of bidding this summer, as it failed to award a single contract to solar farm operators whose desired prices far exceeded government targets.

A feed-in-tariff system was introduced in 2012 to promote the adoption of renewable energy, which has higher costs than thermal or water power, by buying energy from producers at favorable prices. Though renewable energy has taken root as a result, it has also kept costs from falling because the higher rate is passed onto consumers through their electricity bills.

Concerned with reducing this burden on businesses and households, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry installed an auction system in fiscal 2017 for mega solar farms 2,000 kW or larger. The format would promote competition by having builders of solar power plants provide their desired purchase price and award contracts starting with the lowest tender.

New solar power projects smaller than 2,000 kW still qualify for the feed-in-tariff system and have their energy purchased at a fixed price.

In the first round of bidding last fall, the lowest accepted price was 17.2 yen (15 cents at current rates) per kilowatt-hour, far lower than the feed-in-tariff price of 24 yen in fiscal 2016. Yet there were also several contracts awarded at the upper limit of 21 yen set by the government. The ministry therefore decided to conceal the cap this time, until it received the results.

The upper limit for this summer's bidding was 15.5 yen, according to the Green Investment Promotion Organization, which was in charge of the auction. No contracts were awarded, however, because the lowest tender from the nine bidders was 16.47 yen. The failure to award a contract this time will make it harder for operators to lower costs going forward.

An economy ministry official said the cap was "ambitious but sufficiently profitable." A ministry survey found that over 100 commercial solar plants, including mega solar projects, would even be profitable at a price below 10 yen.

But participating bidders said they did not foresee the ministry reducing the upper limit so much. The third auction will take place in the second half of fiscal 2018.

Greater difficulty securing development sites like old golf courses for mega solar farms also contributed to the botched bidding. Negotiations to buy land for these large projects have often run into trouble because they involve purchasing the rights from hundreds of landholders.

"Issues like acquiring land have held up our current developments, so we plan to enter from the next auction onward," said Chiba-based solar developer Hina, which was awarded a contract in the first round of bidding.

Other hurdles include significant security deposits to participate in the auction and a lack of available capacity on big power companies' grids.

There is also little need for solar power companies that began generating when the feed-in-tariff system began to take on projects whose purchase price will be lowered by bidding, since those initial contracts pay 40 yen per kilowatt-hour for 20 years.

"It will be hard to encourage companies to cut costs because Japan's feed-in-tariff system fixes the purchase price of renewable energy," said Hitoshi Honna, president of eRex, a power company that works with renewable energy.

Japan's solar power generation costs are high compared to the rest of the world and double that of Europe. As solar power generation grows more difficult at home, companies like Orix are shifting investing to other domestic renewable energy sources like geothermal power as well as solar power plants abroad.

(Source: Nikkei)



NEWS IN BRIEF



## No India-Afghanistan trade route through Pakistan

**INTERNATIONAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Pakistan's foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has rejected reports that Pakistan has expressed its readiness to discuss the restoration of India-Afghanistan trade route using Pakistan's land.

"Pakistan has not agreed to consider Afghanistan-India trade through our land," Pakistan's foreign office said in a statement, quoting Qureshi.

Indian newspaper Economic Times had earlier carried an interview with U.S. envoy to Afghanistan John Bass, in which he revealed that Pakistan had approached Afghanistan earlier this year and indicated its willingness to resume trade between Afghanistan and India through its land.

It grabbed headlines in India and Afghanistan as Pakistan has not allowed Indian goods to be transported through its territory to Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, Qureshi ended his first overseas visit to Afghanistan on a happy note. During the visit, he held talks with senior political leaders in Kabul, including President Ashraf Ghani, and discussed ways of enhancing bilateral ties, including the need to fight the menace of terrorism together.



## Afghan refugees born in Pakistan to get nationality

**INTERNATIONAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — The newly-elected Pakistan government led by Imran Khan has announced that it will grant nationality to all Pakistan-born refugees of Afghan and Bangladeshi origin, ending months of suspense and speculation.

"There is no social security system and hundreds of thousands of unregistered Afghans and Bangladeshis are living in this metropolis," he said. "They cannot get ID cards and passports and this is why they are denied jobs," he said, adding that unemployment led to criminal activities.

Pakistan has been hosting Afghan refugees since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Afghan government officials have been in talks with their counterparts in Pakistan over repatriation of Afghan refugees.

Many meetings have taken place over the past few years between the officials of Afghanistan, Pakistan and the UNHCR, where they reaffirmed their commitment to the principle of voluntary repatriation to end the problems related to Afghan refugees in Pakistan.

The latest announcement has come as a huge relief to those Afghan refugees who were born in Pakistan as they won't be forcibly expelled now. The future of thousands of unregistered refugees or those whose registration cards have expired remains in dark.



## India not to lower guard along border with China

**INTERNATIONAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — India will not lower its guard along the border with China, while maintaining border peace in sync with the "Wuhan" spirit, Indian Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has said, according to reports.

Nearly a month after talks with her Chinese counterpart Wei Fenghe, Sitharaman said both sides recognised that the broad decisions arrived at the informal summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping in Wuhan should govern management of the border.

"Absolutely", she told when asked whether India is still on guard and not lowering it despite the Wuhan spirit.

At the Wuhan summit in April, Modi and Xi resolved to open a new chapter in ties, and directed their militaries to boost coordination along the nearly 3,500 km Sino-India border, months after the most serious military faceoff in decades between the two nuclear-armed neighbours in Doklam triggered fears of a war.

At the same time, she added that as defense minister of India, she was conscious of the fact that the she will have to keep the border guards alert.

India and China have faced border issues in recent past, especially in Doklam, which almost led to a serious standoff between the two neighbors.



## 15 policemen killed in clashes in Afghanistan

**INTERNATIONAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — The situation in Afghanistan continues to deteriorate with insurgents upping the ante across the country. In latest clashes, at least 15 police officials were killed in northwestern provinces of Baghdis and Farah. In one attack, five police officers, including a senior police officer, were killed after Taliban attacked a police base on outskirts of Qala-e-Naw city, capital of Badghis province, local authorities said.

Several militants were also killed and wounded during the gun battle which occurred early Monday morning, but their number could not be exactly specified as the militants evacuated their casualties after the fighting, Xinhua quoted a source saying.

In Farah province, bordering Iran, 10 police officers were killed after clashes flared up in Gajin village of Pusht Rod district, north of provincial capital Farah city Sunday night.

The Taliban reportedly seized weapons and ammunition after attacking security checkpoints in the area before destroying the posts and two police officers went missing after the fighting, reports said.

The two provinces have been the scene of clashes between security forces and Taliban militants over the past couple of months. The violence has spiked in recent months as the country prepares for parliamentary and district council elections slated for October 20 this year.

# Despite U.S. pressure, India clears way for \$2.2-billion defense deal with Russia

**INTERNATIONAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Barely two weeks after India signed a historic defense deal with the U.S. called Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (CCSA), now the Narendra Modi government in New Delhi has cleared the way for an ambitious \$2.2-billion frigates deal with Russia.

There had been speculation that New Delhi would cancel the deal with Moscow under the U.S. pressure, since the Trump administration has imposed sanctions on Russia and declared that any country that engages in defense or intelligence sharing with Russia could also be subject to sanctions. But, New Delhi by going ahead with the Russia deal has sent a strong message to the U.S.

The agreement, which will allow India to procure from Russia four new warships for the Navy, will be signed during a summit between President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi in October, said a report in Economic Times, adding that the efforts were on to give finishing touches to the contours of the deal.

The draconian financial sanctions by the U.S. on Russia have made the purchase of weapons from Moscow a difficult affair, since Indian banks are unable to transfer money to defense companies in Russia. To evade the problem, an alternative arrangement has been done to pay in Indian rupee instead of the standard US dollar.

The ET report said that the clearance procedure before the signing is in the final stage and that India could make payments through the rupee-rouble route.

India and Russia had signed an inter-governmental agreement to proceed with the deal in October 2016, but price negotiations and technical consultations, which also involved the Indian shipyard, delayed the



final clearance, which could be one of the big takeaways from the Modi-Putin summit that is scheduled to take place in New Delhi on October 5, the report stated.

Earlier there were reports that India too might face the heat of U.S. sanctions if it goes ahead with the deal with Moscow. The reports quoted senior Pentagon officials expressing concern over recent talks between New Delhi and Moscow.

Randall Schriver, the Pentagon's top Asia official, questioned the idea that the U.S. would protect its relationship with India and not impose sanctions on it for its growing

defense ties with Russia.

"I would say that is a bit misleading. We would still have very significant concerns if India pursued major new platforms and systems (from Russia)," Schriver said at a think-tank event, earlier this month, according to Reuters.

"I can't sit here and tell you that they would be exempt, that we would use that waiver, that will be the decision of the president if he is faced with a major new platform and capability that India has acquired from Russia," Schriver added.

In India, the intelligentsia circles have

urged the government to not let India's relations with Russia be affected by U.S. hegemonic politics.

Brahma Chellenay, a geostrategist and commentator, in an interview with Tehran Times, said the ties between Russia and India should not be affected by U.S. sanctions. "Russia is a tried and tested friend of India. Although the U.S. has now become the largest seller of arms to India, Russia remains important to India's interests. India has made it clear to the U.S. that it will go ahead with the S-400 purchase and other defense deals with Russia," he said.

# Ban on Muharram procession in Kashmir mockery of religious freedom

**1 →** While the state provides patronage and support for the annual Amarnath Yatra of Hindus, it has denied the same right to Shia Muslims of Kashmir. People in Kashmir have been demanding revocation of the ban, which they see as a blatant breach of religious freedom and denial of fundamental human rights.

Each year, police impose curfew-like restrictions on Muharram 8 and 10 in parts of Srinagar city, including Lal Chowk, the nerve-center of Srinagar. Iron barricades and spoils of concertina wires are put up at every entry point. The fully-armed police personnel do not even allow pedestrian movement as tough restrictions are enforced.

However, despite the clampdown, mourners each year defy police restrictions and take out peaceful mourning processions in the main city. Each time, they are intercepted by massive contingents of heavily-armed police and paramilitary



personnel. They fire tear smoke canisters, resort to baton

charge and brutally manhandle the mourners participating in these processions.

In a statement two days ago, Kashmir Centre for Social and Development Studies (KCSDS) demanded an end to the ban, accusing government of double standards. "While the state makes every effort for pilgrimage to Amarnath Cave in spite of the misperceived security threats, we demand from the government of the day to lift the ban from the traditional (Muharram) procession in Kashmir," said the statement.

Last week, there were reports that the government has agreed to an alternate Muharram procession route, after a delegation of National Conference (NC) party called on governor. But it turned out hogwash. The ban remains in place. So, this Wednesday (Muharram 8) and Friday (Muharram 10), we will again see Shia mourners being beaten and thrashed by police personnel in the heart of Srinagar.

# Karbala to Kashmir: Brief history of 'Azadari'

**1 →** The first marsiya, a poetic elegy for the martyrs of Karbala, was composed and recited by Umme Kulsoom (sa), the sister of Hussain (as), in Medina. Ummul Baneen (sa), the mother of Abbas ibn Ali (as), played a pivotal role in making the practice popular in Medina by writing some heart-rending marsiyas. Those marsiyas, according to historical accounts, jolted people out of slumber and laid bare the evil machinations of Umayyad rulers. These are the women of Karbala, who toppled a powerful empire with their spoken and written words.

When Yazid was informed by Marwan bin Hakam, his close aide, about these mourning gatherings in Medina, he feared public mutiny and ordered the re-arrest of Imam Zainul Abideen (as), the ailing son of Hussain (as) and the only surviving male member of the holy household. That forced the caravan to move back to Damascus. But, notwithstanding the hegemonic diktats of Yazid and his coterie, the insurrection caused by the martyrdom of Hussain (as) and his companions was kept alive through azadari in Medina, followed by other places.

The importance of the role played by Zainab (sa) in the aftermath of Karbala to keep the institution of azadari alive cannot be emphasized enough. The 'messenger of Karbala', a model of defiance against injustice and oppression, shook the foundation of Yazid's empire with her soul-stirring marsiyas and sermons.

When she confronted Yazid in his Damascus palace, there was a stunned silence. "I swear by Allah that I do not fear anyone but Him and do not complain to anyone but Him," said the daughter of the 'commander of faithful'. "You may employ your deceit and shrewd tactics, but I swear by Allah that the shame and ignominy you have earned for yourself by the treatment meted out to us cannot be erased." That is exactly what happened as the word spread and a mighty empire of Yazid was razed to ground.

In 352 hijri, the first Muharram procession was taken out in Baghdad by then Abbasid ruler Mu'tazz Daulah. Almost 11 years later, on the occasion of Arbadeen (the fortieth day after Ashura), a historic procession was taken out from Baghdad to Karbala. In 423 hijri,



first zuljanah procession was taken out in Kufa by the members of Banu Assad clan. Many similar processions were later taken out in Baghdad, Iran and India.

In India, Muharram processions were first taken out in Awadh (present day Lucknow in north India), almost 200 years ago, under the patronship of the Nawabs of Awadh, who ruled Awadh for a long time. Mirza Abul Qasim, a legendary marsiya nigaar of Kashmir, had travelled all the way to Awadh on the invitation of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah.

In Hyderabad, south of India, during the reign of Nizams, both Muslims and non-Muslims would participate in Muharram processions. From quiet ceremonies inside crammed hallways to huge street processions, azadari over a period of time became synonymous with the cry of oppressed and revolt against the oppressor.

Imam Zainul Abideen (as), as an eyewitness of Karbala, played a key role in establishing the institution of azadari and conveying the message of the martyrs. His descendants kept the tradition alive. They would invite prominent poets to write and recite elegiac poetry in the honor of the martyrs of Karbala.

Imam Mohammad Baqir (as), during his time, gave further impetus to the practice of azadari. He was followed by Imam Jafar

Sadiq (as), who invited the famous poet Jafar Affan to recite marsiyas. During this time, Umayyads and Abbasids were busy fighting for power, so Imam Jafar Sadiq (as) had time and freedom to enlighten people about the philosophy of Imam Hussain's uprising in Karbala.

During the time of Imam Musa Kazim (as), some changes were introduced to marsiya nigaari. He asked the poets of that time to write in their respective languages as per their own linguistic and cultural traditions to spread the message of Karbala far and wide.

In Kashmir, the history of annual Muharram commemorations is riveting. People have offered blood, sweat and tears to keep the tradition of azadari alive. According to many historians, azadari in Muharram was popularized in Kashmir by Mir Syed Ali Hamdani (ra), the great Sufi saint who came to Kashmir from Iran. A staunch lover of Holy Prophet (as) and his progeny, he is believed to have brought many tabarrukaat (symbols of heritage) from Karbala. Before his time, Kashmiri nauhas and marsiyas were heavily laden with Sanskrit words. The popularity of Persian nauhas in Kashmir is largely attributed to him.

Then came Mir Shamsuddin Araqi (ra), also from Iran. During his time, the practice

of azadari became widespread in Kashmir. He came to Kashmir twice. The first time as a government envoy from Iran, and second time for religious guidance of people. This was during the reign of Shahmiri dynasty when Qazi Chak was the Prime Minister. Until that time, people used to do azadari inside bungalows owned by Shia aristocrats. He built Khanqah in Zadibal where he started to hold azadari majalis (ceremonies) during the month of Muharram.

The first marsiya, a blend of Kashmiri and Sanskrit, was composed by Mir Syed Hassan during the Shahmiri dynasty rule in 822 hijri. During the Chak rule, Kashmiri marsiyas gained unprecedented prominence. However, during the Afghan rule, marsiya nigaars were forced to go into hiding. Mourning ceremonies were organized mostly at night time and marsiyas were composed and recited clandestinely.

Keeping the Karbala movement alive has come at a cost. The lovers of Ahlulbayt (as) in Kashmir have been persecuted by rulers throughout history. They were attacked and looted almost 21 times and the shrine of Mir Shamsuddin Araqi (ra) was set ablaze at least nine times. That explains why mourning ceremonies were held mostly inside packed halls, at night, till the time of former chief minister Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah.

During his time, in 1950s, two processions used to be taken out in Srinagar city. At his request, it was decided to take out a joint procession, in which both Shias and Sunnis participated. In 1989, the procession was banned and the ban remains in place. Government justifies the ban saying these processions pose 'law and order problem', although the processions are completely peaceful in nature.

The institution of azadari could not be obliterated by Yazid of that time and it cannot be obliterated by Yazids of today. The tyrant always seeks to hide his tyranny. The campaigners of truth and justice commemorate Karbala through azadari to keep the movement alive, to unmask tyrants and their tyranny. That is precisely why sympathizers of these tyrants oppose the practice of azadari, to hide the oppression unleashed on the oppressed.







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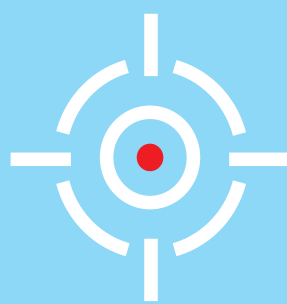
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# Eating fiber can delay brain aging

Fiber is a key element of a healthful diet. New research breaks down the mechanism by which it can delay age-related brain inflammation.

Fiber can be found in fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, beans, pulses, and whole-grain foods.

If all the studies that urge people to consume a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains for a healthy life haven't convinced you yet to add more broccoli to your plate, perhaps this latest research will.

Eating fiber-rich foods — such as broccoli, nuts, oats, beans, and whole-grain bread — might help delay brain aging by triggering the production of a short-chain fatty acid that has anti-inflammatory properties.

This the main takeaway of a new study that was recently published in the journal *Frontiers in Immunology*.

Rodney Johnson, a professor and the head of the Department of Animal Sciences at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, is the corresponding author of the study, and Stephanie M. Matt is the first author of the paper.

## ■ How fiber lowers inflammation

As Matt and colleagues explain in their study paper, microglia — a major type of immune cell in the brain — tend to become hyperactive and chronically inflamed with age. This inflammation of the microglia is one of the main causes of memory and cognitive decline in old age.

Previous research has shown that a drug form of butyrate, which is a short-chain fatty acid that is produced in the colon when bacteria ferment fiber in the gut, can improve memory and reduce inflammation in mice.

A bone-produced hormone is found to reverse the signs of brain aging in mice. However, the precise mechanisms behind this weren't entirely understood. Also, previous research had not shown whether simply increasing the dietary content of fiber would achieve the same results as the drug.

So, Matt and colleagues fed young and aging mice diets high and low in fiber. Then, the scientists measured the mice's blood levels of butyrate and their levels of pro-inflammatory substances in their intestines.

Prof. Johnson sums up these findings, saying, "The high-fiber diet elevated butyrate and other [short-chain fatty acids] in the blood both for young and old mice."

"But," he goes on, "only the old mice showed intestinal inflammation on the low-fiber diet [...]. It's interesting that young adults didn't have that inflammatory response on the same diet. It clearly highlights the vulnerability of being old."

Also, consuming a high-fiber diet reduced the intestinal inflammation in aging mice so much that it was indistinguishable from that of young mice.

"Dietary fiber can really manipulate the inflammatory environment in the gut," says Prof. Johnson. What about the brain, however?



**We know that diet has a major influence on the composition and function of microbes in the gut and that diets high in fiber benefit good microbes while diets high in fat and protein can have a negative influence on microbial composition and function.**

## ■ Why fiber is good for your brain

A genetic analysis of inflammatory markers conducted by the scientists found that a high-fiber diet reduced inflammation in the brain's microglia. The researchers suspect that this was achieved by diminishing the production of a pro-inflammatory chemical known as interleukin-1 $\beta$ , which some studies have linked with Alzheimer's.

Study co-author Jeff Woods, a professor in the Department of Kinesiology and Community Health at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, comments on the findings.

"We know that diet has a major influence on the composition and function of microbes in the gut and that diets high in fiber benefit good microbes," he points out, "while diets high in fat and protein can have a negative influence

on microbial composition and function."

Altering gut microbes, explains Prof. Woods, "is one way in which [diet] affects disease."

Prof. Johnson explains that the findings are relevant to humans, saying, "People are not likely to consume sodium butyrate directly, due to its noxious odor," he says, but, "A practical way to get elevated butyrate is to consume a diet high in soluble fiber."

"What you eat matters. We know that older adults consume 40 percent less dietary fiber than is recommended. Not getting enough fiber could have negative consequences for things you don't even think about, such as connections to brain health and inflammation in general."

(Source: Medical News Today)

## A wearable device for regrowing hair

Although some people embrace the saying "bald is beautiful," for others, alopecia, or excessive hair loss, can cause stress and anxiety.

Some studies have shown that stimulating the skin with lasers can help regrow hair, but the equipment is often large, consumes lots of energy and is difficult to use in daily life. Now, researchers have developed a flexible, wearable photostimulator that speeds up hair growth in mice. They report their results in *ACS Nano*.



Affecting millions of men and women worldwide, alopecia has several known causes, including heredity, stress, aging and elevated male hormones. Common treatments include medications, such as minoxidil, corticosteroid injections and hair transplant surgery.

In addition, irradiating the bald area with a red laser can stimulate hair follicles, causing cells to proliferate. However, this treatment is often impractical for home use. So, Keon Jae Lee and colleagues wanted to develop a flexible, durable photostimulator that could be worn on human skin.

The team fabricated an ultrathin array of flexible vertical micro-light-emitting diodes (LEDs). The array consisted of 900 red LEDs on a chip slightly smaller than a postage stamp and only 20  $\mu$ m thick.

The device used almost 1,000 times less power per unit area than a conventional phototherapeutic laser, and it did not heat up enough to cause thermal damage to human skin. The array was sturdy and flexible, enduring up to 10,000 cycles of bending and unbending. The researchers tested the device's ability to regrow hair on mice with shaved backs. Compared with untreated mice or those receiving minoxidil injections, the mice treated with the LED patch for 15 minutes a day for 20 days showed significantly faster hair growth, a wider regrowth area and longer hairs.

The authors acknowledge funding from the Ministry of Science and ICT.

(Source: acs.org)

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## Glassware makes one - fourth of Tehran handicraft exports

**HERITAGE TEHRAN**  
d e s k — Glassware accounts for almost one-fourth of handicrafts exports from Tehran province, a local tourism official has said.

“Handicrafts exports from Tehran province reached \$62 million in the past [Iranian calendar] year (ended March 2018) as glasswork objects constituted almost one-fourth of the sum,” Mehr Mohammad Enshaei as saying on Monday.

He said that the craft is dominating the province.

“Glassware workshops have become prevalent in Tehran to some extent that its artisans consider it as the main souvenir of the province.”

Enshaei said that “Laleh Abbasi” candlesticks, which depict portrait of Nasir al-Din Shah (r. 1848 -1896), are amongst the best-sellers.

Tehran exported a worth of \$15.3 million during the first three months of the current Iranian year as the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization anticipated it would reach \$75 million this year.

Tehran also exported sets of leatherwork, marquetry and woodcarving along with personal ornaments, handmade textiles, semi-precious stones amongst others.

Earlier this month, Enshaei announced that a vast complex dedicated to handcrafted glassware is being built in western Tehran.

Iran exported \$280 million worth of handicrafts during the past Iranian year to Iraq, Afghanistan and Germany, the U.S., the UK, and the Persian Gulf littoral states amongst others.



## Ancient three-way collision formed British mainland

Parts of Britain are a lot more like France than ever before realized.

In fact, Cornwall and south Devon on the British mainland are basically part of France — at least, geologically speaking. New research finds that these areas all derive from an ancient bit of continental crust called Armorica. Previously, the British mainland was thought to have been formed from only a piece of crust called Avalonia and a segment of the precursor to North America, Laurentia. The new research suggests that it was instead a three-way merger.

Understanding this process requires going back 400 million years ago, well before the formation of the famous supercontinent Pangea, which formed around 300 million years ago. It was the early Paleozoic, and most of the above-sea-level crust on Earth was divided into several continents, the largest being Gondwana, which contained the continental crust that would become the modern southern-hemisphere continents. The others were Avalonia (the precursor to Canada and much of Europe), Laurentia (the precursor to North America), Barentsia, Baltica, Siberia and North and South China. [Photo Timeline: How the Earth Formed]

(Source: Live Science)



### ROUND THE GLOBE

## Alejandro de Humboldt National Park

Alejandro de Humboldt National Park (AHNP) is located in the Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa Mountains on the North Coast of Eastern Cuba.

The largest and best-conserved remnant of forested mountain ecosystems in the Caribbean, AHNP is widely considered to be Cuba's most important protected area for its extraordinary biodiversity values. In addition to the 66,700 ha of land AHNP includes a marine area of 2,641 ha, i.e. the total surface is of 69,341 ha with a terrestrial buffer zone of 34,330 ha.

The property is embedded into the much larger Cuchillas del Toa Biosphere Reserve, which exceeds 200,000 ha. The



altitude ranges from 220 m below in the marine parts to 1,175 m above sea level at El Toldo Peak.

Due to the exposure to trade winds and the mountainous topography the North Coast of Western Cuba is the country's rainiest and coolest region. Important rivers, including the Toa River, Cuba's largest river, rise in the forested mountains, boasting remarkable freshwater biodiversity.

Next to various types of semi-deciduous broadleaf and pine forests there are xenomorphic shrub formations in drier areas and mangroves along the coast. It is assumed that the area was a Pleistocene Refuge where numerous species have survived past periods of climate change.

Jointly with the complex and varied geology and topography this helps explain the extraordinary biodiversity. Another particularity of the property is the toxicity of many of the underlying rocks to plants.

(Source: UNESCO)

# Zeinodin caravanserai, a destination for avid time travelers!

**1 →** Zeinodin caravanserai is situated on kilometer 60th of a modern road that connects Yazd to Kerman, meanwhile it was along the then strategic ancient Silk Road that linked Europe and Asia.

The Zeinodin plays host to tens of foreign and domestic visitors each day.

The atmospheric caravanserai offers two types of rooms; some exquisitely laid out around a courtyard and others embedded along the main corridors.

Like its other Iranian counterparts, the caravanserai has a massive portal with elevated surrounding walls.

The earliest caravanserais in the county were built in Achaemenid era (circa 550 -330 BC). Such roadside inns were thriving upon the development of road systems and the increase in the number of travelers and merchants.

Shah Abbas I (1571-1629) is credited with building a network of caravanserais across Iran during the much later Safavid dynasty.

Caravanserai, or most commonly known as caravansara in today's Iran, is a compound word combining “caravan” with “sara”. The first stand for a group of travelers and sara means the building.

### ■ Under travelers’ eyes

Here is a select of comments that visitors to the caravanserai have posted to TripAdvisor, one of the most popular travel websites in the world:

### ■ “One of the highlights of our visit to Iran”

Located about 30-minute drive from Yazd, this renovated Caravanserai is a unique place to stay. As a former site where camel trains would stay for the night, the accommodation surrounds the inner courtyard and the furniture is very rustic.

Beware that the bathrooms are communal but extremely clean and well appointed. The cost is reasonable and includes a lovely buffet dinner and breakfast.

The rooftop provides a perfect place to view the night stars and also take wonderful sunset and sunrise photos. (Roger B. from Sydney, Australia; Reviewed September 2018)

### ■ “Magic in the desert”

We could not resist the opportunity to stay in a caravan-



An aerial view of the Zeinodin

serai and this ended up being our private hotel for the night as there were no other guests there. We received a warm welcome plus a cup of tea and I was able to take my scarf off as it was a private residence for the night. Such relief after two weeks in the heat.

We were given a courtyard room with 4 single beds. Basic but clean and comfortable. Hard mattress but soft pillows. Amenities are communal but I had them all to myself. If the place was full this may not have been so good given the number of vanities, toilets and showers and groups all struggling to get ready to leave at the same time.

We were served a gargantuan amount of food for dinner enough to feed 8 people. All very tasty, we did our best but we could not make a real dent in it. Breakfast was basic but also generous and more than we wanted. (Casa62 from

## 106 Parthian, Seleucid objects recovered in western Iran



**HERITAGE TEHRAN**  
d e s k — Iranian authorities have recently confiscated 106 historical relics from a smuggler in Harsin, Kermanshah province, CHTN reported on Monday.

The objects have been estimated to date from the Seleucid and Parthian eras, said Amir Rahmatollahi, a senior police official in charge of protecting cultural heritage.

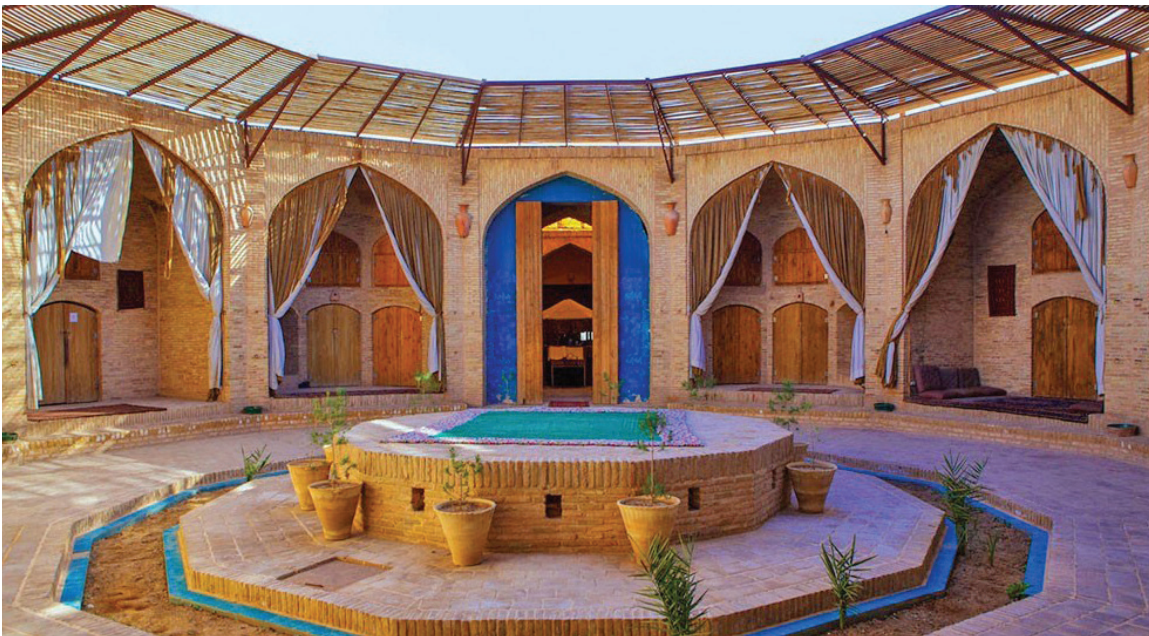
The police discovered vital clues to identify the smuggler following several days of thorough inspection and constant efforts under close collaboration with judicial authorities, Rahmatollahi explained.

Earthenware statues and rhyton(s),

coins and bronze bowls were amongst the confiscated objects, he added.

The Seleucid Empire was a Hellenistic state ruled by the Seleucid dynasty, which existed from 312 to 63 BC. At the height of its power, it included central Anatolia, Persia, the Levant, Mesopotamia, and what is now Kuwait, Afghanistan, and parts of Pakistan and Turkmenistan.

The Parthian Empire (247 BC–224 CE), also known as the Arsacid Empire was a major Iranian political and cultural power which at its height stretched from the northern reaches of the Euphrates, in what is now central-eastern Turkey, to eastern Iran.



An interior view of the 16th-century Zeinodin caravanserai in Yazd province

Brisbane, Australia; reviewed May 2018)

### ■ Great experience

We stayed there for one night. It was a great experience. There are single or double rooms, with shared bathroom. A little bit inconvenient but clean and tidy. We did not get the rooms facing the yard, so stayed inside.

The rooms are separated by wooden walls, can very clearly hear your neighbors even any tiny movements. But the place was surprisingly quiet in the night during our stay. Staffs are very friendly and nice. (Tsipporah from China; Reviewed May 2018)

### ■ “What a wonderful experience”



Zeinodin caravanserai; an exterior view

We had a wonderful stay at this once upon a time travel lodge in the desert, in the middle of nowhere. The experience brought us back the vivid images of these ancient time travelers who and their animals could finally rested their feet and met peoples for trade and exchanging information.

This caravanserai is well maintained, bedding were very clean. We had master room in the main corridor and it was very spacious and could take up to 4 people. The corridor had sufficient light in case you need to get up for toilet during the night. The shared bathroom facility was clean, the hot water for shower was adequate.

The roof top is an ideal place for sunrise and sunset viewing. There was a shot local dance performance at night and you expected to give \$2 if you attend it. Dinner and breakfast

were buffet style. Staffs were really friendly. Highly recommend this accommodation. (Jane L. from Davis, California; Reviewed March 2018)

### ■ “Unforgettable adventure and experience!”

I would highly recommend visitors to Iran to experience a stay at this accommodation... The courtyard is spectacular. It was full moon when we arrived and we could see the moon so clearly up in the sky. You can go up the rooftop to see sunrise and sunset. Other than that, there is not much to see since the location is almost like in the middle of a dessert. Dinner and breakfast is a buffet with decent spread.



A view shows one of rooms at the Zeinodin caravanserai

Staff are nice and courteous. We didn't know the room sizes when we booked until we check in. The twin room seems too small for two of us even with small luggage, hence I requested another room saying that I will pay for it. The staff was so kind to just give another room to me without asking for additional payment.

This accommodation might look like to some as lacking in terms of regular hotel facilities. However, I think this is necessary. It is great that the owners kept the facilities to a minimal so as to give all visitors a chance to experience what the past travelers and merchants went through. One thing to note is - people come here to experience staying at a caravanserai that resembles historical inns - not for good night sleep with soundproof walls and luxurious mattress and pillow. (Rezani R. from Singapore; December 2017)

## Iran seeks to nominate Yazd as UNESCO Creative City



**HERITAGE TEHRAN**  
d e s k — Iranian National Commission for UNESCO is considering to nominate Yazd as a Creative City of the UN cultural body, IRNA reported on Monday.

The commission is weighing Yazd -- itself a UNESCO World Heritage -- as Iran's next nominee for the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN), said Bahman Namvar-Motlaq who presides over the commission's department of culture.

“Necessary investigations have been carried out in this regard... and the final result is to be announced within a month,” he stated.

Yazd is widely referred to as a “don't miss” destination by almost all of its visitors. The central city, which was a cradle for Zoroastrianism, boasts a landscape architecture that features abundant badgirs (wind catchers), mud-brick houses, atmospheric alleyways, subterranean qanats, and domed icehouses to name a few. It's also famous for having hospitable people.

Iranian cities of Isfahan and Rasht have already been registered in the network that covers seven creative fields of crafts and folk arts, media arts, film, design, gastronomy, literature and music.

generals, created by the sculptor and artist Ajdar Gafarov. It is interesting that the exposition is strewn with scarlet poppies, and poetic lines pay tribute to the heroes - Turkish and Azerbaijani soldiers who died in the name of Azerbaijan's independence.

The event began with the performance of the national anthems of Turkey and Azerbaijan.

(Source: Azer News)

## Unique historical exhibition opens in Baku

An exhibition dedicated to the 100th anniversary of Baku's liberation from the Dashnak-Bolshevik occupation has opened in the Azerbaijan National Museum of History on September 14.

The exhibition presents more than 120 unique historical exhibits from museum weapons funds and banners, archival materials, maps of battles, images of battle scenes, photo documents that tell of the events of those days, Trend Life reported.

Among the exhibits are weapons and accessories of Azerbaijani soldiers, weapons of the troops of the Baku Soviet, the Centro-Caspian Dictatorship, British troops, artifacts found on the battlefields, Ottoman orders awarded to Azerbaijani soldiers, as well as books and catalogs on the Caucasian Islamic Army.

The exposition also features busts of Nuri Pasha and Habib bey Salimov, portraits of Turkish and Azerbaijani



# Scientists say world’s warming expecting more intense hurricanes

A warmer world makes for nastier hurricanes. Scientists say they are wetter, possess more energy and intensify faster.

Their storm surges are more destructive because climate change has already made the seas rise. And lately, the storms seem to be stalling more often and thus dumping more rain.

Study after study shows that climate change in general makes hurricanes worse. But determining the role of global warming in a specific storm such as Hurricane Florence or Typhoon Mangkhut is not so simple — at least not without detailed statistical and computer analyses.

The Associated Press consulted with 17 meteorologists and scientists who study climate change, hurricanes or both. A few experts remain cautious about attributing global warming to a single event, but most of the scientists clearly see the hand of humans in Florence.

■ **Global warming**

Global warming didn’t cause Florence, they say. But it makes the system a bigger danger.

“Florence is yet another poster child for the human-supercharged storms that are becoming more common and destructive as the planet warms,” said Jonathan Overpeck, dean of the environment school at University of Michigan. He said the risk extends beyond the Atlantic Ocean, such as Typhoon Mangkhut, which hit the Philippines on Friday.



For years, when asked about climate change and specific weather events, scientists would refrain from drawing clear connections. But over the past few years, the new field of attribution studies has allowed

researchers to use statistics and computer models to try to calculate how events would be different in a world without human-caused climate change.

A couple of months after Hurricane

**A couple of months after Hurricane Harvey, studies found that global warming significantly increased the odds for Harvey’s record heavy rains.**

Harvey, studies found that global warming significantly increased the odds for Harvey’s record heavy rains.

“It’s a bit like a plot line out of ‘Back to the Future,’ where you travel back in time to some alternate reality” that is plausible but without humans changing the climate, said University of Exeter climate scientist Peter Stott, one of the pioneers of the field.

■ **Based on forecasts**

One team of scientists tried to do a similar analysis for Florence, but outside experts were wary because it was based on forecasts, not observations, and did not use enough computer simulations.

As the world warms and science advances, scientists get more specific, even without attribution studies. They cite basic physics, the most recent research about storms and past studies and put them together for something like Florence.

“I think we can say that the storm is stronger, wetter and more impactful from a coastal flooding standpoint than it would have been because of human-caused warming,” Pennsylvania State University climate scientist Michael Mann wrote in an email. “And we don’t need an attribution study to tell us that in my view. We just need the laws of thermodynamics.”

Georgia Tech climate scientist Kim Cobb looks not just at basic physics but all the peer-reviewed studies that especially link climate change to wetter storms.

(Source: phys.org)

## Researchers show whether banning cage diving is actually bad for sharks



Earlier this month the New Zealand court of appeal ruled that shark cage diving is illegal, and as a result cage diving tourism will soon cease in the country.

The New Zealand ruling centers on the white shark cage diving operations off Stewart Island, which first began nine years ago. Although they were initially unregulated, 2013 saw the introduction of a code of practice developed by the Department of Conservation, followed by the introduction of permits to operate in 2014.

Despite these measures, a significant number of Stewart Islanders who spend their days in or on the sea, such as abalone divers, fishers and charter boat operators, claimed the white sharks’ behavior changed dramatically after the cage diving began. They believe they are now being targeted by the sharks.

Cage diving to view great white sharks is a huge part of the shark tourism industry and has developed across California, Mexico, South Africa, South Australia and New Zealand. The socioeconomic importance of these practices — essentially the increased monetization of live sharks over dead ones — has been used to argue that exposure to sharks in this way may foster a positive conservation ethic within tourists. This, the theory goes, then results in the general public advocating for increased protective measures for sharks.

■ **Positive shift**

A study published in the journal Marine Policy in February investigated the attitudes and environmental behavior of wildlife tourists following a white shark cage diving experience in South Austral-

ia. The results showed a positive shift in participants’ understanding, awareness, attitudes and concern for sharks.

It is known that white sharks show increased activity levels during tourism operations, but industry regulations prohibit the intentional feeding of sharks. Some baits are still consumed, though, usually as a result of a high-speed and/or stealth hit. This bait often consists of fish heads which hold little calorific value compared with the sharks’ usual diet, suggesting it is unlikely that individual sharks could obtain enough bait to lead to conditioning, and so they would not form an association between food and boats/humans.

There will always be some degree of sustained concern amongst the public for water users safety in association with shark-diving tourism. However, evidence from South Africa has shown that increased shark attacks are not correlated with proximity to cage diving tourism, nor with higher numbers of water users. White shark cage diving has developed in locations where sharks naturally aggregate, so water activities will naturally carry a certain degree of risk.

The benefits of cage diving show it to be a valuable and effective conservation tool as long as it is carefully managed to ensure a sustainable and viable industry.

With the current global decline of shark populations, it is difficult to see how banning responsible cage diving operations would benefit anyone, least of all the sharks.

(Source: The Guardian)

## Delta Blue: Last Delta II rocket launch leaves behind colorful legacy



That is not to say that the rocket’s retirement has not been met with a tinge of sadness. To the contrary, representatives from the U.S. Air Force, NASA and United Launch Alliance (ULA), the latter the company responsible for the vehicle, described the final Delta II launch on Sep. 15 as “melancholy” and “bittersweet.”

After 30 years of the Delta II being the United States’ only blue-colored launch vehicle, the rocket’s end means a future without “Delta Blue.” “They wanted future vehicles to be the same color, but there was an issue getting that approved,” said Kathy McLaughlin, ULA’s Delta II site manager, who had been with the program since the first launch on Valentine’s Day (Feb. 14) 1989.

The final Delta II to fly lifted off with NASA’s ICESat-2 satellite at 06:02 A.M. PDT (1402 GMT) on Saturday from Space Launch Complex-2 at Vandenberg Air Force Base in southern California. The predawn liftoff, coupled with a low cloud layer, meant the rocket left Earth for the last time out of view for many of the spectators watching.

“I think because it was identifiable, it became a ‘this-is-my-rocket’ kind of thing,” McLaughlin told collectSPACE in an interview.

It is not clear who coined the name or when they did so, but the origin of the Delta Blue color itself harkens back to a time well before Delta II, when its predecessor was painted white.

■ **Delta Blue**

The “primer underneath the white paint happened to be this bluish, light

blue color or ‘Delta Blue’ as a lot of people have called it,” said Jay Witzling, who retired in 2003 as Boeing’s vice president for Delta II but whose history with the vehicle extended back to 1974 and the launch of the 100th Delta rocket. “Delta was always fighting more for more performance and so the program elected to not put the white paint on.”

United Launch Alliance’s Delta II rocket is seen rising from Space Launch Complex-2 at Vandenberg Air Force Base for the final time after 30 years and 155 missions.

United Launch Alliance’s Delta II rocket is seen rising from Space Launch Complex-2 at Vandenberg Air Force Base for the final time after 30 years and 155 missions.

The move saved weight by omitting an unnecessary layer. Though some areas on the Delta II remained white for thermal reasons, from then on, it was easier — and perhaps even grew to be preferred — to keep using the primer than to find another solution, or color.

■ **Technical issues**

“There were some customers, commercial customers in particular, who wanted their own colors on the rocket. They wanted a black color or they wanted a yellow color,” recalled Witzling. “But we always found a way to way around that because of ‘technical issues.’ We maintained the color, that’s for sure.”

Outside the space program, “Delta Blue” is formally known as Federal Standard 25193. Considered a shade of cyan, it is comprised of 36.47 percent red, 55.69 percent green and 58.82 percent blue.

(Source: space.com)

## Weird ‘nuclear pasta’ could be the strongest material in the universe

A really weird form of matter found in ultradense objects such as neutron stars is looking like a good candidate for the strongest material in the Universe. According to new calculations, it clocks in at a massive 10 billion times stronger than steel.

“This is a crazy-big figure,” physicist Charles Horowitz of Indiana University Bloomington told Science News, “but the material is also very, very dense, so that helps make it stronger.”

Neutron stars are one of the end points of the life cycle of a high-mass star. Once the core of a star has burned to iron, it collapses, squeezing the protons and electrons into neutrons and neutrinos.

This incredibly high density does something strange to the nuclei of the atoms in the star. As you move closer and closer in towards the center, the density increases, squishing and squeezing together the nuclei until they deform and fuse together.

The resulting nuclear structures are thought to resemble pasta - hence the name - forming just inside the star’s crust. Some structures are flattened into sheets like lasagna, some are bucatini tubes, some are spaghetti-like strands and others are gnocchi-esque clumps. Their density is immense, over 100 trillion times that of water.

As you can imagine, recreating that kind of density in a laboratory setting just isn’t going to happen - so sadly no one got to build a nuclear spaghetti-snapping machine. Luckily, scientists now have access to powerful computer simulations, so this is what they used instead.

Although the crust of a neutron star has previously been calculated to be extraordinarily strong as well, the nuclear pasta was even stronger.

(Source: sciencealert.com)

## Scientists discover new soft coral species in Panama

A study in the journal Bulletin of Marine Science describes a new, blood-red species of octocoral found in Panama. The species in the genus Thesea was discovered in the threatened low-light reef environment on Hannibal Bank, 60 kilometers off mainland Pacific Panama, by researchers at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama (STRi) and the Centro de Investigación en Ciencias del Mar y Limnología (CIMAR) at the University of Costa Rica.

Scientists established the new species, *Thesea dalioi*, by comparing its physical traits, such as branch thickness and the bright red colony color, with the only other species in the genus in the eastern Pacific, *T. variabilis*.

*T. dalioi* is named for Ray Dalio, a supporter of marine exploration. Its name is intended to recognize Dalio’s valuable contributions to marine research and public outreach. Hannibal Bank, part of the Coiba National Park and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is a coastal seamount and a biodiversity hot spot that has only been explored recently. “After just two expeditions using submersibles down to 300 meters, we have identified 17 species of octocorals for the Hannibal Bank, including the discovery and description of three new species,” said Hector M. Guzman, marine ecologist at STRi and one of the authors of the study.

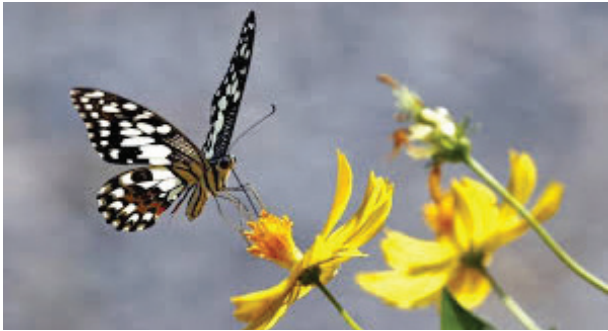
Light-dependent coral and algae, as well as other life-forms found in low-light environments, live on mesophotic reefs: meso means middle and photic means light. These reefs, such as the one where *T. dalioi* was found, are considered fragile habitats with a high diversity of corals, algae and sponges. They are also generally neglected in most environmental and conservation policies because they are difficult to reach. Hannibal Bank is one of the spots requiring more attention for its protection.

(Source: eurekalert.org)

## Organic farming methods favors pollinators, study suggests

Pollinating insects are endangered globally, with a particularly steep decline over the last 40 years. An extensive 3-year study has found that organic farming methods can contribute to halting the pollinator decline. This beneficial effect is due to both the absence of insecticides and a higher provision of flower resources.

Pollinating insects are endangered globally, with a particularly steep decline over the last 40 years. An extensive 3-year study from Lund University in Sweden has found that organic farming methods can contribute to halting the pollinator decline. This beneficial effect is due to both the absence of insecticides and a higher provision of flower resources.



Organic farming is known to promote pollinator diversity in crop fields. However, it has also been suggested that organic fields might simply attract pollinators from other habitats in the landscape, and therefore not sustain their populations in the long run.

The 3-year field experiment, conducted by researchers from the Centre for Environmental and Climate Research at Lund University, found that the number of bumblebee species in organic farms was higher and more stable over time and space than in conventional farms.

“This is the first large-scale study over the course of several years to show that organic farming has a consistent, stabilizing effect on pollinator diversity,” says Romain Carrié, a postdoctoral researcher at CEC.

Romain and his colleagues sampled bumblebees, butterflies and flowering plants throughout the growing season in 10 organic and 9 conventional farms in Scania, Sweden. Their study showed that, depending on the type of crop, the stabilizing effect was either due to a more stable provision of flowers or the absence of pesticides.

An “interesting result of our study is the fact that stable and abundant flower resources stabilizes pollinator communities, even in conventional farms where insecticides are used,” explains Romain Carrié.

(Source: Science Daily)

## Great whites may be given up by their DNA

Whether it’s in sloughed skin, feces or other biological substances, animals regularly cast off bits of their DNA into aquatic environments. Known as environmental DNA (eDNA), it can be detected in water samples, letting scientists know if a given species is present in the region. Soon, it could be used to warn beachgoers of nearby great white sharks.

The concept is being developed through a collaborative research project involving scientists from the University of California Santa Barbara, the U.S. Geological Survey, California State University Long Beach and Central Michigan University.

In initial studies, UC Santa Barbara’s Kevin Lafferty and colleagues had difficulty detecting great white eDNA in areas where the animals were suspected of being present.

The scientists then turned to a lab-based genetic analysis technique known as digital droplet PCR, which allowed them to identify species-specific genetic markers (DNA sequences)



within samples of great white shark tissue.

■ **Areas of the ocean**

When a student subsequently looked for those markers in

water samples drawn from different areas of the ocean, they were able to correctly determine which sample came from a region where the sharks were gathered, and which came from a region one mile away, where no sharks were present.

Ultimately, it is hoped that the technology could one day allow lifeguards to simply take and analyze water samples at the beach, to see if any great whites were in the area.

That said, due to the fact that shark eDNA can be carried considerable distances by currents (and the fact that sharks can swim long distances after releasing eDNA), such a setup wouldn’t let users know precisely where the sharks were. To that end, Lafferty envisions a system in which autonomous aquatic surface drones could analyze the water from a variety of locations, transmitting their data to the cloud for analysis. If a shark was detected in a given area, lifeguards could be notified via text alerts.

(Source: New Atlas)



## Women to be appointed as mayors of 22 subdistricts of Tehran

**W O M E N d e s k** **TEHRAN** — At least 22 subdistricts of Tehran Municipality will be headed by 22 women mayors who are to be appointed during the coming three months, announced Seyed Mohammad Afshani, the mayor of Tehran here on Sunday.

Women enjoy better capability in civil management, Mehr News Agency quoted Afshani speaking at the meeting of mayors of 122 subdistricts of Tehran on Sunday.

Since the 1979 Islamic Revolution of Iran, 12 women have served as mayors in the country so far. Several other women were also picked to chair city councils in the city of Robat Karim, Tehran province, and the city of Gorgan, Golestan Province.

Qualified women have already been designated as deputy governor generals, governors and mayors, further increasing women's share of top managerial posts in the country.

## RECIPE OF THE WEEK

### Adas Polow

“It is an Iranian food.”  
■ **Ingredients:**



1 pound uncooked white rice  
4 cups water, or as needed  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
2 cups water, or more as needed  
Salt to taste  
2 cups dry lentils, rinsed  
1/4 cup vegetable oil, divided  
2 large onions, thinly sliced  
1/2 teaspoon saffron  
1/3 cup hot water  
3/4 cup pitted, chopped dates  
3/4 cup raisins

■ **Directions:**  
Place the rice in a bowl, and cover with water. Soak the rice

for about 3 hours, and drain off the water. Bring the rice, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and 4 cups water to a boil in a saucepan. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer until the rice is partially cooked, about 10 minutes. Drain the liquid from the rice, and set the rice aside.

Bring 2 more cups of water and a pinch of salt to a boil in a saucepan, and stir in the lentils. Bring to a boil, and cook over medium heat until tender, 15 to 20 minutes. Remove from heat.

Heat 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil in a large skillet over medium heat, and fry the onions, stirring frequently, until golden brown, about 20 minutes. Set the onions aside. Dissolve the saffron in 1/3 cup of hot water, and set aside.

In a large nonstick pot with deep sides, heat 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil until shimmering, and spoon in half the rice to cover the bottom of the pot. Top the rice with the lentils, and cover the lentils with the remaining rice. Reduce heat to low, cover the pot, and cook until the rice is completely tender and there is a golden brown, crusty layer of rice on the bottom of the pot, about 20 minutes. Pour the saffron water over the rice and lentils, cover, and allow to cook until absorbed, about 10 more minutes.

To serve, spoon the polow into a serving dish, and peel off and place pieces of the crusty rice layer on top of the polow. Decorate the polow with dates, raisins, and fried onions.

## LEARN ENGLISH

### Job Interview

A: Very good. Now, I have a couple of final questions.

B: I hope they're not too hard!

A: Well, why should we hire you?

B: I think that I would be a **perfect fit** in this company. I have a unique combination of strong technical **acumen**, with outstanding soft skills; you know, I **excel** at building strong, long-term customer relationships. For example, when I headed the customer support department in my previous company, our team resolved about seventy percent of our customers' problems. I decided that we needed better information and technical preparation on our products, so after I **implemented** a series of **training sessions** in coordination with our technical department, we were able to solve ninety percent of our customers' issues. Given the opportunity, I could bring this kind of success to this company. A: Impressive! So, what would you consider to be your greatest weakness?

B: To be honest, I **struggle** with organization and time management. **Punctuality** has never been a strength of mine. I find it hard to organize my time efficiently. I have actually **addressed** this weakness recently, by attending a workshop on efficient time management. It helped me a lot, by providing me with great insights on how to get organized and use my time efficiently, so I think I'm getting better now.

A: Great... Well, let me tell you that I am very pleased with this interview. We are **short-listing** our candidates this week, and next week we will inform our short listed candidates of the day and time for a second interview with our CEO.

B: Great, thanks a lot! I hope to hear from you! Good bye.

#### ■ Key vocabulary

**a perfect fit:** the right person for the job

**acumen:** the ability to think clearly and make good decisions

**excel:** be superior to, among the best

**head:** to be the leader of something

**implement:** to make something active or effective

**training session:** a meeting where people acquire skills and knowledge about a subject

**struggle:** have a difficult time

**punctuality:** arriving or doing something at the expected or planned time

**address:** to deal with (a matter, issue, problem, etc.)

**short list:** to select a few candidates in order to make a final selection or decision

#### ■ Supplementary vocabulary

**prospect:** someone or something that is likely to succeed or to be chosen

CV: curriculum vitae; a short document that describes your education, work experience, etc.

**shortcoming:** a weakness that someone has

**asset:** a valuable or beneficial thing or ability that a person has

**triumph:** a great success or achievement a person has

(Source: [irlanguage.com](http://irlanguage.com))

# Muharram, rejoining families, promoting intimacy

By Maryam Qarehgozlou

Once I grew old enough to figure out the main reasons behind the mourning rituals of Muharram I became genuinely fond of it, as it is not just a month grieve, but a time to heighten the strong sense of intimacy.

The mourning of Muharram or Muharram observances marks the anniversary of the Battle of Karbala (October 10, 680 AD) in present-day Iraq. The battle took place between a small group of supporters and relatives of Prophet Mohammad (PBHU) grandson, Imam Hossein (AS), and a larger military detachment from the forces of Yazid I, the Umayyad caliph.

Imam Hossein (AS) was martyred and beheaded in the battle, along with most of his family members and companions, including his six-month-old son, Ali al-Asghar, with the women and children taken as prisoners.

The battle has a central place in Shia history, tradition and theology and it has frequently been recounted in Shia Islamic literature. However, for me the month is not just about mourning the unfortunate events of the Battle of Karbala.

The month of Muharram is inextricably tied with my childhood memories. Being pre-occupied with the thought of wearing black clothes (a tradition observed in this month to show the sorrow at the events of Karbala), asking my older cousins to let me help with preparing Nazri food (charity food being distributed among the mourners) and the smell of dried capsules of esfand mixed



with other ingredients which were placed onto red hot charcoal, and the sound of little popping noises once they explode.

While we, as children felt great sorrow for Imam Hossein (AS) and his family and the way Umayyad caliph had treated them and could actually relate to them by thinking how hard it was to lose all your loved ones, we also felt good because we knew all we did was in a good cause.

Being almost 28, I remember experiencing Muharram both during long and hot summer days and freezing winter days.

My grandmother's house, a fairly spacious two-story home with a big yard, was the best place to stay during the mourning days of Muharram. Staying up all night to prepare Nazri food, taking turns to stir the food in big pots, either during chilly nights of winter or short summer nights with the soft breeze sweeping through the trees, are the nostalgic, treasured memories of my childhood.

Boys used to go out with their fathers to take part in mourning rituals such as Sineh-Zani (chest beating), and we girls used to stay at home with our mothers and aunts to prepare

## Prevalence of overweight and obesity among girls increasing

**W O M E N d e s k** **TEHRAN** — The prevalence of overweight in girl students under the age of 20 is increasing from 6.4 percent in 1980 to 10.3 percent in 2015, Mohammad Hashemi, secretary of the society for the prevention of obesity in Iran said here on Sunday.

The prevalence of obesity in girls under the age of 20 also shows an increase of 1.7 percent compared with 4.5 percent at the same period of time, IRNA quoted Hashemi as saying.

Obesity is the leading cause of non-transmissible diseases in students, said Hashemi, adding obese students are more prone to develop diseases in adulthood and they do not enjoy good performance in their life and society.

Student's obesity is a health problem and it leads to diabetes in the second or third decade of their life, he added.

Families should care about the health and nutrition of their children at the beginning of the school year, preparing



## Back to school tips for the good enough mom

No need to go over the top with fancy teacher gifts or expensive supplies. Just aim for "good enough" with these back to school tips for working moms.

Is it just me, or has the whole "back to school" season become one more competition to show just how awesome of a mom you are?

I'm volunteering to be the voice of sanity and reason for all us working moms who will be settling for "good enough" as we help our kids prepare for their annual return to the classroom. My good-enough list of back to school tips includes hacks and shortcuts for starting the year off right:

■ **Shop for nice-to-haves at local retailers.**

At my kids' Montessori school, they both have to wear "sturdy indoor slip-on shoes" inside the classroom only. I could order these online, but it's pretty much guaranteed they won't fit unless we go to a store and try them on.

We also need to get some rain boots and coats, maybe new lunch boxes, a few pairs of non-hole pants — nothing that has to be purchased by the first day of school, necessarily, or was prescribed by the teacher.

The kids and I can just tack it on to another errand run soon. No big whoop.

Also, feel totally free to buy secondhand, my friends. Sometimes you can find everything your kids need at a single resale shop for half the price of new stuff from five different stores.

■ **Reevaluate what your kids can do or contribute.**

We do too much for our kids. Am I right? It starts out because they aren't capable of doing the things (not too many babies can change their own diapers). But as they grow up, we often step in and "help" just to get it done faster or better — even when our child is fully able to perform the task himself.

Now that your kiddos are a year older since last back-to-school season, it's the perfect time to consider new chores or responsibilities they can do on their own. My 8-year-old can make her own lunch now, and my 5-year-old can buckle/unbuckle himself in his car seat. Think about how your kids can exhibit more independence (and simultaneously take some to-do's off your list) this year.

Stick to these basics and you'll do just fine helping your child start the school year off right.

■ **Devise a routine you and your kids can stick to.**

Looking at my kids' end-of-school reports from last year, I felt all manner of shame and guilt when I saw how many "tardies" they had racked up. I drive them to school each morning, so the fault for this habitual lateness falls squarely on me.

We (I) have decided they are going to bed earlier (8 p.m. instead of 9-ish-or-something), waking up earlier (7 a.m. alarm clock) and leaving the house no later than 8 a.m. to make it to carline by 8:40. It's going to take a bit more preparation and sticking to routine than we did last year, but we're (I'm) determined to be punctual this year. Dammit.

If your routine from last year could use similar overhauling or tweaking, be honest with yourselves about what you can achieve and then commit. Make it happen!

■ **Over the weekend, get laundry, groceries and meal prep done for the week.**

I don't think I can overstate how much it helps working moms to get household essentials done on weekends as opposed to "trying to squeeze it in" on weeknights. I know this well, because I often fail to get laundry or gro-

a healthy food package in order to prevent obesity of the students, the official explained.

Consumption of foods and drinks with high sugar content and physical inactivity are the leading cause of obesity in students, said Zahra Abdollahi, director general of the department of nutrition improvement of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education speaking to IRNA.

Abdollahi further emphasized the need for gaining nutrients and energy in the growing age but not more than the need of the body.

Prevalence of overweightness in adult women has reached 32.3 percent in 2015, compared 31.7 percent in 1980. The prevalence of obesity in women shows a growing rate of 24.1 percent in comparison to 16.6 percent at the same period of time.

Currently, 29 million people suffer overweightness or obesity in Iran.

ceries finished by Sunday night, and spend the remainder of the week cursing myself as I dig through laundry baskets or stop at the grocery store on the way from home from a long workday.If you're able to share the work with your spouse and kids, all the better. Just get it done, and you'll all be glad. Trust me.

Make it easier on you and the kids by gently transitioning from summer to school schedules.

■ **Spend the week before school starts shifting from summer low gear to school year high gear.**

Does your family let things slide during summer? We sure do. Bedtime and morning become fluid, school-type work (reading, writing, 'rithmetic) doesn't happen with a lot of regularity, and there's a whole lotta TV-watching goin' on.

If you can, ease everyone back to school-night bedtimes and wake-up times over a period of days. Have them sit down and do 15 minutes of writing/reading work each day, just to remind them what it's like. Talk about what they're looking forward to in school, who their classmates and teachers will be, and activities they might be interested in trying.

(Source: [workingmomsagainstguilt](http://workingmomsagainstguilt).)

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → €

## Bill on earthquake preparedness and response in Tehran drafted

Tehran Disaster Mitigation and Management Organization (TDMMO) has prepared a draft of a bill on earthquake preparedness and response, Ahmad Sadeqi, the organization's director has said.

The bill is now drafted and is ready to be submitted to Tehran city council, ISNA news agency quoted Sadeqi as saying on Tuesday.

Once the council approve the bill Tehran Municipality will be tasked with implementing it, he added.

The bill is aimed to improve urban management in face of a possible earthquake and experts have had a hand in preparing the draft of the bill, he explained.

## PREFIX/SUFFIX

### “-mis”

■ **Meaning:** wrongly, badly

■ **For example:** The prime minister admitted that the crisis had been **mishandled**.

## PHRASAL VERB

### Boil something down

■ **Meaning:** to make a list or piece of writing shorter by not including anything that is not necessary

■ **For example:** You can boil this down so that there are just two main categories.

## IDIOM

### Blow off (some) steam

■ **Explanation:** release strong emotions or energy by engaging in some kind of enjoyable, vigorous, or relaxing activity

■ **For example:** When work gets frustrating, I like to go bowling to blow off some steam.



# While all eyes are on Syria's Idlib, U.S. continues to decimate Yemen

By Darius Shahtahmasebi

The U.S. is ready to defend Syria from an assault launched by Syria's own government and its allies — or so Washington wants you to believe. In the backdrop, Yemen continues to burn in silence.

On September 3, U.S. ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley — eloquent diplomat that she is — retweeted a tweet from the warmonger in chief that is the U.S. president, with the caption “All eyes on the actions of Assad, Russia and Iran in Idlib.” This is the same U.S. administration who just facilitated the bombing of a school bus in Yemen, slaughtering at least 40 children in the process.

Maybe, just maybe, Nikki Haley should keep her eyes on herself.

If the world did direct its eyes to what is taking place in Yemen, they would know that the United Nations has just warned of an “incalculable human cost” in the works, as the U.S. and its allies press forward with an offensive to retake the Yemeni port city of Hodeida from the Houthi rebels.

That's right. The U.S., currently waving its arms in despair about human rights abuses and chemical weapons attacks that have not even taken place in Syria yet, is supporting a major offensive of its own that will lead to a humanitarian crisis of monumental proportions.

Yemen, a country already deeply in crisis, relies on the port of Hodeida for at least 70 percent of its humanitarian aid. It therefore makes sense from a humanitarian perspective to turn its location into a major war zone, am I right?

The small minority of people who are inclined to care about innocent Yemenis need not fret though. U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has just this week certified that the Saudi-led coalition is taking sufficient steps to protect civilians. According to Pompeo, the Persian Gulf nations involved are “undertaking demonstrable actions to reduce the risk of harm to civilians.”

“They are taking steps, in the view of the U.S. government and this administration, in the right direction,” State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert told a briefing, according to Reuters. “We see them taking steps. Is it perfect? No absolutely not. Do we see them doing what they can to mitigate civilian casualties? Absolutely we do.”

Thank God — I was getting worried there for a second. The U.S.-backed Saudi-led coalition may be killing children as if they were ants, but they are taking steps to mitigate the number of children they are killing at the same time.

A seven-page memo sent to Congress and obtained by the Intercept further confirmed Pompeo's delusional thinking, as the memo called Saudi Arabia and the UAE “strong counterterrorism partners.” Never mind that just last month, the Associated Press reported the U.S. and its allies were actually recruiting Al-Qaeda fighters to join the coalition.



Oops.

While the Trump administration is taking a horrifying and bloody war and taking it to new depths, the truth of the matter is that this war did not begin under Donald Trump. The war in Yemen, the Arab world's poorest nation, fast becoming the world's worst humanitarian crisis, was started by none other than peace-prize laureate Barack Obama himself.

But why did this war start, and why has the U.S. continued to support it?

In an overlooked interview with the Real News' Aaron Maté, Rob Malley, President of the International Crisis Group and former Special Assistant to President Obama, gave a disturbing glimpse into who actually pulls the strings on U.S. foreign policy.

According to Malley:

“To try to understand what the Obama administration was about, and I've tried to just to try to, to explain it to myself, to try to understand how we got to where we are, let's not forget at the time we were in the middle of these negotiations with Iran, trying to reach a nuclear deal which was extremely unpopular with our traditional allies in the region, from Israel to Saudi Arabia to the UAE and others. And the Saudis came to us and said that they were about to intervene in Yemen, to attack the Houthis that had toppled the government at the time. And they asked for our assistance...”

“So there was on the one hand a number of voices expressing concern about that. But on the other hand were many people saying the relationship with Saudi Arabia is almost at breaking point. They believe we'd betrayed their trust for a number of reasons. But Iran, Iran negotiating the Iran deal, or the negotiations over the Iran deal was one of them. We needed to protect that deal and make sure that we could get it done, because if we didn't have a deal there was a risk of a war with Iran. And so I think the decision was made in the end by President Obama to say we're going to be, to support

parts of this war...”

Only a peace prize laureate could pull off a feat like that. But all joking aside, the human cost of the war in Yemen is nothing short of shameful.

On October 8, 2016, an aerial bombardment targeted a crowded funeral in Sana'a, the capital of Yemen, the aftermath of which was aptly described as a “lake of blood.” According to the UN, more than 140 Yemenis were killed and at least 525 others were injured.

To date, the U.S.-backed Saudi-led coalition has struck well over 100 hospitals, as well as wedding parties, refugee camps, food trucks, factories, transport routes, agricultural land, residential areas, and schools, to name a few. Yes, you read that right. Yemen, with only 2.8 percent of its land being cultivated, is actively targeted by the U.S.-backed coalition. According to Martha Mundy, professor emeritus at the London School of Economics, “to hit that small amount of agricultural land, you have to target it.”

Prior to spiraling into chaos, Yemen was already dependent on imports for 90 percent of its staple foods and almost all of its fuel and medical supplies. Putting aside the mass amount of violence that the U.S.-backed coalition has enacted, the rest of Yemen's population is suffering due to the Saudi-imposed blockade, which has put half the population at risk of starvation. According to the UN, over 462,000 children under the age of five are suffering from severe acute malnutrition.

This is done completely on purpose. At the end of August this year, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince, Mohammed Bin Salman, threatened that he would continue targeting women and children in Yemen and allegedly said that he wants to “leave a big impact on the consciousness of Yemeni generations.”

“We want their children, women and even their men to shiver whenever the name of Saudi Arabia is mentioned,” the Crown Prince

reportedly said.

The idea, advanced by Pompeo and his cohorts at the State Department, that the coalition has taken steps to avoid civilian casualties is by all accounts, complete nonsense. As the New York Times openly acknowledged:

“The first problem was the ability of Saudi pilots, who were inexperienced in flying missions over Yemen and fearful of enemy ground fire. As a result, they flew at high altitudes to avoid the threat below. But flying high also reduced the accuracy of their bombing and increased civilian casualties,” American officials said.

“American advisers suggested how the pilots could safely fly lower, among other tactics. But the airstrikes still landed on markets, homes, hospitals, factories and ports, and are responsible for the majority of the 3,000 civilian deaths during the yearlong war, according to the United Nations.”

In addition to supplying billions of dollars' worth of arms to the Saudi kingdom, U.S. personnel provide overwhelming assistance to the Saudi-led coalition to help bring Yemen to its knees by sitting in the Saudi's command and control center, providing lists of targets, refueling planes, running intelligence missions, and so forth.

If Donald Trump is so concerned with migrants and refugees, perhaps he should stop creating them. If he really cares about ‘America first’ and making America great again, perhaps racking up notches to America's war crime belt is not the way to go. Legal experts have already warned the U.S. government that its complicity in these attacks can make them a co-belligerent in Saudi Arabia's vast, extensive list of war crimes. This warning has fallen completely on deaf ears and has not helped at all in deterring the Trump administration from continuing some of Barack Obama's worst policies; and even now the U.S. continues to shelter the Saudi-led coalition so that it can continue its bloodthirsty policies unabated.

Make no mistake, if the U.S. pulled its support for Saudi Arabia, Yemen's suffering could stop tomorrow.

Watch out for Assad though; I heard he was about to retake a Syrian city from an Al-Qaeda affiliate. Remember Al-Qaeda, the notorious terror group the U.S. claimed was the mastermind behind the September 11 attacks? Apparently, the entire U.S. government doesn't, as it allies itself with Al-Qaeda in just about every battlefield that counts.

In the meantime, ordinary Yemenis continue to suffer by the millions. If you can absorb all of this and still believe the U.S. is genuinely concerned about human rights abuses in places like Syria, then you probably deserve what's to come next.

*Darius Shahtahmasebi is a New Zealand-based legal and political analyst, currently specialising in immigration, refugee and humanitarian law.*

## Israel, U.S. working against peace: Abbas

➔ In that war — also known as the Six-Day War, the Israeli regime took over Arab and Palestinian land that it continues to occupy to this day. It has been expanding further into Palestinian land by building settlements for Israelis deeper and deeper into those territories, in what is effectively killing the chances of Palestinian statehood.

The Tel Aviv regime, under Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who hails from the hard-line Likud Party, has taken a radical shift to the far right, with cabinet members openly advocating the annexation of occupied Palestinian territories.

More than 230 illegal settlements have been constructed since 1967. In September 2016, the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution — with a notable abstention vote by the then-administration of U.S. president Barack Obama — that denounced Israeli settlements as a “flagrant violation of international law.”

The current administration of President Donald Trump, which took over shortly afterwards, has denounced that resolution — as has Israel — and has taken a decisive line in favor of the Israeli regime and against Palestinians.

In May, the U.S. moved its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem al-Quds, in a largely solitary but consequential

move that further complicated Palestinian aspirations for statehood.

Last week, the Trump White House also announced the closure of the Palestine Liberation Organization in Washington. Palestinian officials said on Sunday that Washington had also revoked the visas of Palestinian envoy Husam Zomlot and his family.

Back in August, the Trump administration announced that it was canceling \$300 million in planned funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, which provides for the welfare of over five million Palestinian refugees across the Middle East.

The hard-line policies of the Israeli regime have, meanwhile, caused concern among the civilian Palestinian population, who routinely clash with Israeli soldiers.

Recently, Palestinians protested en masse in the Israeli-blockaded Gaza Strip to press for the right of return of those Palestinians who have been uprooted in Israeli wars and other acts of aggression since 1948. More than 180 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces ever since those protests began in the Gaza Strip on March 30. Nearly 20,000 Palestinians have also sustained injuries.



The regime also routinely blocks access to the revered Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem al-Quds, angering Palestinian Muslims who wish to enter the site for worship.

In the Sunday meeting with Abbas, the Israeli delegation voiced appreciation for his commitment to peace, according to Wafa.

(Source: Press TV)

## South Korea plays down chance of nuke progress at Kim summit

A senior South Korean official on Monday played down the chance that this week's inter-Korean summit will result in major progress in efforts to rid North Korea of its nuclear program.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in flies to Pyongyang on Tuesday for his third summit of the year with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. Presidential chief of staff Im Jong-seok told reporters the leaders plan to meet twice during Moon's three-day trip.

Im said it's “difficult to have any optimistic outlook” for progress on denuclearization during those talks, adding that progress will depend on how candid the discussions are. Still, Im said he expects the summit to produce “meaningful” agreements on ways to ease a decades-long military standoff between the rivals. He did not elaborate.

Moon's trip comes as global diplomatic efforts to rid North Korea of its nuclear program have stalled and questions have been raised about how serious Kim is about following through with his vague commitments to denuclearize. Moon has said he hopes he can help restart talks between Washington and Pyongyang, which peaked in June with a historic summit between Kim and U.S. President Donald Trump.

North Korea has long maintained that's its nuclear program is aimed at coping with what it calls U.S. military threats. As such, in exchange for giving up its nuclear program it has been seeking the withdrawal of the 28,500 U.S. troops stationed in South Korea and a peace treaty with the United States to formally end the 1950-53 Korean War. It also wants the lifting of U.S.-led sanctions.

North Korea has taken some steps, like dismantling its nuclear and rocket-engine testing sites, but U.S. officials have said the North must take more serious disarmament steps before receiving outside concessions.

Im, who is in charge of Seoul preparations for the summit, said he was confident that the talks would yield agreements that “fundamentally remove the danger of armed clashes and ease fears of war” between the two Koreas. He said he expects the agreements would help promote chances for the signing of a peace treaty that formally ends the Korean War.

Military officials have in recent months discussed the possibility of disarming a jointly controlled area at their shared border village, removing front-line guard posts and halting hostile

acts along their sea boundary.

The Koreas' 248-kilometer (155-mile) -long border is the world's most heavily fortified, with hundreds of thousands of troops stationed along a border laced with mines, barbed wire fences and anti-tank traps. The navies of the Koreas also fought several bloody skirmishes off the west coast of the Korean Peninsula.

Moon will also take a group of business tycoons such as Samsung scion Lee Jae-yong to Pyongyang. Some experts say Moon is preparing for the resumption of inter-Korean economic cooperation projects after diplomacy eventually yields results. Currently, all major joint economic projects between the Koreas remain stalled because of U.S.-led sanctions.

(Source: AP)

## Gradualism not proper approach to save nuclear deal, Salehi tells EU

➔ has placed in serious jeopardy the fate of this valuable and unique science-diplomacy achievement. Let me be very clear about the negative impact and consequences of this reckless act. As discerned almost unanimously by the international community, this ominous move is doomed to have serious repercussions for the international and regional peace and security.

The reaction at the international level to the unlawful U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA, clearly raises serious doubts concerning the validity and wisdom of the American policy. The international community's opposition to the US withdrawal, as widely analyzed and discussed and as all of us understand, does not merely reflect their deep anger at the American unilateralism but also their concerns about the extremely difficult situation in our immediate region with all its pervasive chaos, and the existing menace of terrorism.

As to the Nuclear Weapons-Free-Zone in the Middle East, Iran has since 1974 been a strong proponent of its establishment. That said, however, one cannot but lament the deliberate disregard by some, of the actual threat posed by the Zionist regime's adamant refusal to join NPT, and worse, its possession of a considerable nuclear arsenal as well as its denial of IAEA inspections. While, in the case of Iran, as stated by the Director-General, the most robust verification system is in existence anywhere in the world in my country.

Here is one of today's controversial issues, full-fledged execution of NPT related safeguards in the case of a party to the treaty and turning a totally blind eye to a non-NPT party. Such a blatant and discriminatory conduct is a travesty of justice.

What has transpired thus far on the JCPOA, by the EU and others, while encouraging, certainly needs to be further complemented through more solid and practical steps. Now is the time for EU to uphold its commitments. Here, we believe that the so far adopted approach of gradualism is not the proper mechanism whatsoever in response to the situation arising from the American reckless policy in undermining the UN Security Council resolution 2231.

Observing the merits of the nuclear deal and its moral imperative, we hope the Agency will continue executing its mandate with necessary professionalism and impartiality. Technical reports should be prepared solely on the basis of objective assessments and need to be kept free from politically-motivated elements. Within this context, we look forward to the Agency's expedition of the process of drawing “broader conclusion” on our nuclear program.

The Islamic Republic of Iran aspires to use nuclear science and technology for managing water supplies as well as responding to climate change, while continuing generating electricity, and improving health, food and agriculture. Here, we believe that one of the main missions of IAEA is to help Member States to achieve their Sustainable Development Goals through transfer of experience, share of knowledge and provision of the required equipment.

Given that nuclear power makes a significant contribution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving energy security, Iran has envisioned a long and aspiring plan in order to increase the share of nuclear power in the country's energy mix, and in line with this vision, is implementing phases 2 and 3 of Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP). Accordingly, the first concrete pouring for BNPP-2 has been planned for the third quarter of 2019. These reactors will also run two desalination plants. The safe and secure operation of BNPP has resulted in generation of 30 TWh (terawatt hours) so far and the World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO) through its peer review mechanism has evaluated its performance and has upgraded its safety performance indicators from D to B. Moreover, OSART mission to Bushehr has been planned later this year. Currently, Iran's need to electricity at its peak stands for 65,000 megawatts.

Iran also is seriously pursuing fusion technology. So far few pertinent steps have been taken and by the same token, fruitful consultations and eminent cooperation with a number of countries are underway. Moreover, we have made progress in redesigning Khondab (Arak) Heavy Water Research Reactor in close cooperation with China, and advancing the production of stable isotopes with the assistance of the Russian Federation.

Nuclear safety has always been a high priority for Iran and, as a result, we attach great importance to strengthening the relevant safety standards. Iran through cooperation with the EU among others is determined to establish an advanced nuclear safety center equipped with modern technologies and equipment and has so far achieved tangible progress in this regard.

On the issue of nuclear security, however, we believe that the undertaken measures should neither hamper the international cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear activities nor should it undermine the established priorities of the Agency's technical cooperation program. The Islamic Republic of Iran emphasizes that the responsibility of nuclear security rests entirely with Member States and the Agency's role should be merely aimed at enhancing national infrastructures, upon voluntary request. We deem issues of terrorism and cyber-attacks as well as illicit trafficking as the most significant nuclear security threats.

Regarding the State Level Approach (SLA) we believe that despite the recent report by the Director General (GOV/2018/20), there are still ambiguities and concerns which shall be resolved before taking further action.

On the issue of technical cooperation, IAEA is expected to assist Member States based on their needs and priorities. Iran, on its part as a pioneering nuclear state remains ready to share its achievements with other member states, specifically those in our neighboring region. By the same token, the I.R. Iran looks forward to the IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology, in November 2018, in result of which we highly expect the IAEA to facilitate the transfer of nuclear science and technology to developing countries.

As always, we will look forward to a day when the motto of peaceful use of nuclear energy for all and nuclear weapons for none, is universally recognized and materialized. I conclude on this very point, and thank you Madam President, and the whole house for their gracious patience and indulgence.

**“We believe that the so far adopted approach of gradualism is not the proper mechanism whatsoever in response to the situation arising from the American reckless policy in undermining the UN Security Council resolution 2231.”**



## Five die in stampede after Angolan soccer match

Five people were killed and seven injured in a stampede after an African Champions League soccer match in the Angolan capital Luanda on Saturday, the sports ministry said.

Witnesses told Reuters the people were crushed to death when they flooded out of the stadium after the game between Angola's Primeiro de Agosto and TP Mazembe from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Angola's sports ministry said in a statement late on Sunday that it regretted the deaths and that the seven injured people had already been discharged from hospital.

Witnesses said the stampede happened after fans found the gates to the Estádio 11 de Novembro stadium shut after the match. When police opened the gates, fans rushed out and some were trampled under police horses.

The sports ministry blamed the casualties partly on the fact that the start of the game had been delayed.

Angola's sports watchdog said it would investigate the incident. Last year, at least 17 people died and dozens were injured in a stampede at a stadium in Uige, a city in northern Angola.

(Source: Reuters)

## Bale says Real Madrid more of a team without Ronaldo



Gareth Bale says Real Madrid work together more as a collective unit without former talisman Cristiano Ronaldo, after the Portuguese forward moved to Juventus in the close season.

The Welsh winger is thriving in the absence of Ronaldo and Madrid have three wins from four La Liga matches.

Bale is Madrid's key weapon as the Champions League starts again this week, with Real facing Roma on Wednesday at the Santiago Bernabeu.

"It's maybe a bit more relaxed (without Ronaldo)," Bale told the Daily Mail. "I suppose there is more of a team, more working as one unit rather than one player."

Madrid's all-time top goalscorer Ronaldo was crucial to the club's three consecutive Champions League wins under former coach Zinedine Zidane, although it was Bale who scored twice against Liverpool in the 3-1 triumph in May's Kiev final.

Bale came on from the bench and said he was annoyed about not starting the match, with that rage fuelling him to score a brilliant overhead kick.

"(I was) angry. Quite angry, to be honest. Obviously, I felt I deserved to start the game," said Bale. "I'd been scoring goals. So yeah, I suppose it was hard to put the anger aside."

With Ronaldo out of the way he is essential to new manager Julen Lopetegui's Madrid, with the defending champions ready to start their bid for a fourth consecutive trophy on Wednesday in Group G.

(Source: Goal)

## Derby boss Lampard hit with FA charge after sending off

Derby County manager Frank Lampard was charged with improper conduct by the English Football Association on Monday after being sent to the stands during his team's 1-0 defeat by Rotherham United in the Championship at the weekend.

The former England and Chelsea midfielder was sent off for leaving his technical area to argue with a match official over the failure to award Derby a penalty after the ball appeared to strike the arm of Rotherham's Jon Taylor in the area.

Lampard could receive a one-match suspension if he is deemed to have used insulting language or behaviour towards the official during the incident.

"Derby County manager Frank Lampard has been charged following the game against Rotherham United on Saturday," the FA said in a statement on Twitter.

"It is alleged that his behaviour in the 77th minute amounted to improper conduct. He has until 6 p.m. (1700 GMT) on Thursday to respond to the charge."

Derby are currently seventh in the second-tier table and host 13th-placed Blackburn Rovers on Tuesday.

(Source: Eurosport)

## Kenya's Kiptum hit by car while leading half marathon in Colombia

Kenyan runner Joseph Kiprono Kiptum was hit by a car as he was leading a half marathon in Colombia.

Kiprono, 30, was nearing the finish line in Medellin when he was struck by a vehicle which had apparently ignored a street closure. The athlete was treated at the roadside and taken to hospital with cuts and bruises and has now been discharged in "good health".

Kiprono's compatriot Daniel Muindi Muteti won the elite race in 1:03:45. Race organizers said: "Joseph Kiprono was brought in by the emergency staff of the Medellin Marathon."

"The patient is stable, has multiple contusions and abrasions in soft tissues, has no fractures of any kind, and orthopaedic doctors reviewed him, he is in good health and is out of danger."

Kiprono won the event in Colombia's second city in 2015.

Race organizers also confirmed a 38-year-old amateur runner, Juan Camilo Arboleda, died after collapsing with heart problems at the finish line.

(Source: BBC)

# Swiss watchdog raps Credit Suisse for anti-corruption failings

Credit Suisse (CSGN.S) failed to adequately combat money laundering in suspected corruption cases linked to soccer's ruling body FIFA and Venezuelan and Brazilian state oil companies, Switzerland's financial watchdog FINMA said on Monday, dealing a blow to the bank's reputation.

Watchdog FINMA will appoint an independent auditor to oversee the bank's anti-money laundering processes, but stopped short of forcing it to return any profits that it might have illegally reaped. FINMA has no authority to fine banks its supervisors.

Switzerland's second-biggest bank behind UBS (UBSG.S) also fell short of its obligations to fight corruption while managing "a significant business relationship" with a politically exposed person, the authority said on Monday.

Credit Suisse said in a statement the Swiss watchdog had uncovered "legacy weaknesses", adding it has acted to bolster compliance since Chief Executive Tidjane Thiam took over from his predecessor, Brady Dougan, in March 2015.

Instead of disciplining a star private banker who breached compliance regulations for years, FINMA said Credit Suisse boosted his pay.

A banking source identified the manager as Patrice Lescaudron, jailed for five years in February.

"The identified shortcomings occurred repeatedly over a number of years, mainly before 2014," FINMA said, adding that many of the problems emerged from group subsidiary Clariden Leu AG, which was fully merged into Credit Suisse in 2012.

"FINMA identified deficiencies in the anti-money laundering process, as well as shortcomings in the bank's control mecha-



nisms and risk management," the authority added.

The independent auditor will monitor Credit Suisse to ensure it follows through on improvements.

The enforcement action against Credit Suisse emerged from FINMA's investigation into several Swiss financial institutions starting in 2015 in relation to suspected corruption involving FIFA, Brazil's Petrobras (PETR4.SA) and the Venezuelan state oil company PDVSA.

### PAST FAILINGS

Thiam has been forced to manage repeated allegations of wrongdoing that Credit Suisse said preceded his arrival, including charges

of foreign exchange rates rigging in Europe, a hiring corruption probe in Asia and a \$1 billion graft probe involving Venezuela's state oil company.

FINMA last year reprimanded Credit Suisse over its dealings with Malaysian state fund 1MDB. Singapore's central bank also fined the bank for breaching money laundering rules in the case.

Analysts said the regulator's harsh tone and the instalment of a monitor could dent confidence in Credit Suisse's efforts to fix problems of the past.

"FINMA's statements will hardly calm things down, since it put it out there in black and white what it thinks about the quality

of the bank's efforts to fight money laundering," Zuercher Kantonalbank analyst Javier Lodeiro said.

"Still, this enforcement action did focus on the time between 2006 and 2015."

FINMA acknowledged Credit Suisse has undertaken measures since 2015 to strengthen compliance and anti-money laundering protections, but said more must be done "to prove that higher-risk business relationships and transactions are adequately detected, categorised, monitored and documented".

Lescaudron, the Geneva-based relationship manager, was found guilty of serious fraud and forgery in his handling of clients, including former Georgian Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili and Russian oligarch Vitaly Malkin, over an eight-year period.

That case reveals weaknesses in the bank's organization and risk management, FINMA said. "Instead of disciplining the client manager promptly and proportionately, the bank rewarded him with high payments and positive employee assessments."

Credit Suisse said it has not been fined, ordered to hand over profits or had any curbs on its business activities, suggesting its failings were less serious than those committed by some other Swiss financial institutions.

Earlier this year, FINMA ordered PKB Privatbank SA Lugano to surrender 1.3 million Swiss francs (\$1.35 million) in unlawfully generated profits after concluding it committed serious breaches linked to its business with Petrobras.

Credit Suisse said that it has already made thousands of improvements to correct weaknesses as part of a restructuring program that Thiam began, including hiring 800 compliance specialists in the last three years.

(Source: Reuters)

## Ronaldo returns to Spain in Juve's Champions League opener



Fresh from scoring his first goals for Juventus, Cristiano Ronaldo makes an eagerly-awaited return to Spain when the Italian champions play Valencia on Wednesday in their opening Champions League group game.

All eyes will be on the Portuguese forward, the all-time top scorer in Europe's elite competition and a five-times winner of the trophy, when he makes his first public appearance in Spain since ending a trophy-filled nine-year stay at Real in July. Ronaldo's last act for Real was lifting the Champions League trophy in Kiev after beating Liverpool 3-1 in the final before he dropped the bombshell in a pitch-side interview that he had decided to leave Madrid. Ronaldo can expect a hostile reception in Valencia, who had to suffer 15 of his goals for Real and are returning to the Champions League for the first time in three years, hoping to improve on their miserable start to the La Liga campaign.

Ronaldo, who plundered a staggering 451 goals in 438 games for Real, made a slow start by his usual standards to life at Juventus by failing to score in his first three games but broke his duck with two strikes in Sunday's 2-1 win over Sassuolo.

"I really wanted to score these first goals and I'm happy to have found the net," Ronaldo told reporters. "Obviously, I was a little anxious with all the talk after my move from Real Madrid and not scoring and there was a lot of expectation on me, but I knew I was working hard and it was only a matter of time before I scored."

Juventus, knocked out in the quarter-fi-

nals of last season's competition by a Ronaldo-inspired Real Madrid, will be looking to make a strong start in Group H, which also contains Swiss champions Young Boys and Manchester United, where Ronaldo became a household name before joining Real in 2009.

Real begin their bid to win a fourth straight Champions League title at home to AS Roma on Wednesday after drawing 1-1 at Athletic Bilbao, where they certainly could have done with the firepower of all-time top scorer Ronaldo.

The week's other mouth-watering game is last season's runners-up Liverpool hosting French champions Paris St Germain, who begin another quest to win Europe's elite competition for the first time and justify the massive investment ploughed into the club by their Qatari owners since 2011.

Both sides have made perfect starts to their domestic campaigns with five wins, PSG thrashing St Etienne 4-0 at home on Friday and Liverpool enjoying a convincing 2-1 victory at Tottenham Hotspur.

English champions Manchester City host Olympique Lyonnais in Group F on Wednesday also looking to make a mark in the competition they are yet to win despite huge investment from their Abu Dhabi owners.

Five-times European champions Barcelona host Dutch league winners PSV Eindhoven in Group B on Tuesday looking to improve on their recent disappointing showings in the competition, having been knocked out at the quarter-final stage in the last three seasons.

(Source: Mirror)

## 53 Ghanaian referees banned in bribery probe

The Referees' Association of Ghana (RAG) has handed lifetime bans to six more referees in the wake of an investigation into bribery.

It also banned 47 match officials for 10 years each, while another 14 were exonerated. RAG also confirmed the sanctions handed down by the Confederation of African Football (Caf) last month - two for life and six others for 10 years.

It brings the total with life bans to eight and those with 10-year bans to 53. Those on the list released by RAG have until 1 October to appeal against the rulings.

The investigation was launched after the officials were secretly filmed accepting money by investigative journalist Anas Arameyaw Anas.

In a statement RAG said those facing lifetime bans "were found culpable for seriously breaching various portions of Disciplinary Code, Code of the Ethics and Regulations of the football controlling bodies by their actions and inactions."



David Laryea and Reginald Lathbridge had already been banned for life by Caf they have been joined by Safo Adade, Samuel Sukah, Dally Gagba, Furella Barnie, Charles Duwona and Umar Teni. This is the latest fallout from Anas' film that

has seen the Ghana Football Association president Kwesi Nyantakyi resign from his post. as well as from positions he held with Caf and Fifa.

He has also been suspended for 135 days by football's world governing body, Fifa, as it investigates corruption allegations, Nyantakyi has denied any wrongdoing.

On Thursday Fifa and Caf announced a 4 member normalisation committee to take charge of the football affairs in Ghana for the next six months.

Former football association board member Dr Kofi Amoah will head up the committee, he was in charge of the organising committee when Ghana hosted the 2008 Nations Cup.

The other members are Lucy Quist, a former chief executive of a telecoms company, Dua Adonten, a former Asante Kotoko board member and director general of Ghana Post as well as lawyer Naa Odofoley Nortey.

(Source: BBC)



# Iran fall short against Japan at FIBA World Cup 2019 Asian Qualifiers

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Four days after defeating the Philippines 81-73 at the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2019 Asian Qualifiers, Iran suffered a defeat against Japan.

In the match held at the Ota City General Gymnasium in Tokyo, Japan, Team Melli lost to the hosts 70-56 in Pool F.

A couple of key Iranian players were absent, and Japan took full advantage, notching their fourth triumph in succession, 70-56, and putting themselves in prime position to threaten the teams at the top half of the Group F team standings.

Bucking the absence of veterans Hamed Haddadi and Samad Nikkhah Bahrami, who were both sidelined with injury, Iran rode the hot shooting of Behnam Yakhchali in the first half, but Japan head coach Julio Lamas made key adjustments that enabled the hosts to turn the tables around in the second half.

The Akatsuki Five went on a telling 26-8 blast in the third quarter, erecting a double-digit lead from which Team Melli could not recover. The home team were on cruise control entering the fourth period and proceeded to treat the sellout Ota Gymnasium crowd to yet another pulsating win.

The dynamic duo of Rui Hachimura and Yuta Watanabe once again served notice of Japan's bright future. Hachimura scored 25 points, grabbed 7 rebounds and had 3 assists in another stellar showing, while Watanabe added 18 points of his own. Even without big man Nick Fazekas, it's clear Japan have more than enough firepower to beat even the strongest of Asian squads.

As for Iran, Yakhchali finished with a team-high 21 points, while Meisam Mirzaei tried his best to anchor the middle for the visitors with 10 points and 8 rebounds.

Things won't get any easier for Iran as their next game is on the road against Australia on 30 November even as Japan play host once more this time to Qatar also on the same date, fiba.com reported.

Iran fall to six wins and two losses in Group F, while Japan are knocking on the door of the top three with four wins and four defeats.



## Iran confirm date for Bolivia friendly



**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — The Football Federation Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) have confirmed the date for their friendly match against Bolivia.

In a statement, FFIRI have confirmed that they will play Bolivia on Oct. 16 in Tehran's Azadi Stadium.

According to local media, Sardar Azmoun, who has not played for Team Melli after the 2018 World Cup, will come out of retirement and play the South American football team.

Iran edged past Uzbekistan 1-0 in a friendly held in Tashkent last week.

The friendly has been arranged as part of preparation for the 2019 AFC Asian Cup UAE.

Carlos Queiroz's team have been pitted against Iraq, Vietnam and Yemen in Group D.

Iran were in Group B of the 2018 World Cup in Russia. Team Melli beat Morocco 1-0 in their first match.

The Persian lost to Spain 1-0 and drew 1-1 with Portugal in their final match.

## Team Iran's motto revealed for Asian Para Games



**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iran's National Paralympic Committee (NPC) has revealed Team Iran's motto for the third edition of the Asian Para Games.

Iran delegation will participate at the Games under the motto of "We Can Do It With Trust And Effort" in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The delegation will partake in the competition under the name of "Self-belief and Hope", Iran's chef de mission for the 2018 Asian Para Games Hadi Rezaei

said in the news conference.

"Iran will send 209 athletes to the Asian Para Games, with 136 men and 73 women competing in 13 disciplines. We've finished in fourth place in the past two editions in Guangzhou (2010) and Incheon (2014). Iran will participate in Jakarta with the aim of keeping the fourth rank," Rezaei said.

The 2018 Asian Para Games will be held from October 6th to 13th at the Bung Karno Sports Complex in the capital city of Jakarta.

## Iran edge past Philippines at AVC Cup for Women

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iran beat the Philippines 3-2 (29-27, 16-25, 25-17, 12-25, 13-15) at the Korat Chatchai Hall in Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand in the Asian Volleyball Confederation (AVC) Cup for Women on Monday.

The Iranian team, who started the competition with a same win over Kazakhstan on Sunday, will face Australia on Tuesday.

Mahsa Kadhoda contributed 30 points

for Iran, while Alyssa Valdez led the Philippines with 24 points.

"It was a very tough match against the Philippines. We learned that they are strong defensively. They will fight until the last. We tried hard and I dare say that to beat the Philippines is very difficult. I told my girls if they want to continue, we have to beat them," Iran coach Javad Mehregan said.

"I'm very happy with my players for the win as they trained hard. I think my

players are strong mentally and can stand playing a tough match like this," he added.

The 2018 AVC Cup for Women is the sixth edition of the Asian Women's Volleyball Cup, a biennial international volleyball tournament organized by the Asian Volleyball Confederation (AVC) with Thailand Volleyball Association (TVA).

The tournament is being held in Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand, from 16 to 23 September 2018.



## Aitor Karanka gives latest update on Nottingham Forest's move for Karim

Aitor Karanka says Nottingham Forest will remain patient in their efforts to land Karim Ansarifard – and insists he has faith in his current squad to deliver both the performances and goals they need.

The Reds boss has previously confirmed his interest in the Iranian international, who is a free agent after having his contract cancelled by Olympiacos.

But he remains calm over the situation, despite seeing Daryl Murphy and Hissal Soudani both currently sidelined by minor injury problems.

"I do not know, from Thursday I have been really busy preparing for this game," said Karanka, when asked if a deal was close to being confirmed for the 28-year-old.

"I do not know everything that the club is working on behind the scenes. We have to wait on that one."

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Lewis Grabban was Forest's only fit striker as they produced an encouraging display in their 0-0 draw in Swansea.

Murphy (calf) could return to the squad for the Sheffield Wednesday game on Wednesday night, while Soudani is expected to be out for another week or so, with a knee problem.

When asked if their injuries made it more urgent to bring another striker in, Karanka said that his priority was to

encourage another performance of the same quality from his side when they face the Owls.

"My urgency is for us to play the way we did at Swansea. That is my priority," he said.

"I trust my players, I trust the work we are doing and I know that there will come a point when we will play this way in every game we play.

"That is my priority; that is my urgency. I have said always that I have the squad that I wanted to have and, if somebody else does arrive and it is a good opportunity for us, I would be really pleased."

And Karanka believes his other two forward options will also soon be back in action

"Daryl had a problem yesterday in his calf and he was not ready for today. But I hope he will be ready for Wednesday. If he is not ready for Wednesday, I hope he will be ready for Saturday," he said.

"Hissal Soudani, I hope he will be back as soon as possible, but it does not seem as though he will be back for the games coming up this week.

"I hope he will be back for the week after that."

(Source: Nottinghampost)

## Persepolis dramatically advance to ACL Semis after beating Al Duhail

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Persepolis football team from Iran came from behind to beat Al Duhail of Qatar 3-1 in the second leg of the AFC Champions League quarter-final on Monday.

In the match held in Tehran's 80,000-seater Azadi Stadium, the Reds showed a remarkable performance against one of the Asian best teams.

Captain Karim Boudiaf gave the visitors the lead in the 33rd minute following a set-piece situation.

Persepolis returned to the match in the 57th minute after Jalal Hosseini left footed shot from the center of the box went to the top left corner. Al Duhail defender Sultan Al Brake scored an own goal in the 76th minute.

Godwin Mensha made it 3-1 in the 78th minute after dribbling past Al Duhail goalkeeper Amine Lecomte.

Persepolis will play the winners of Qatar's Al Sadd and Iran's Esteghlal in the semifinals.

## Pochettino: 'Crazy' to rest Harry Kane against Inter Milan

Tottenham Hotspur manager Mauricio Pochettino has said it would be "crazy" not to play Harry Kane against Inter Milan in the Champions League on Tuesday.

England striker Kane struggled to make an impact in Saturday's Premier League home defeat to Liverpool but has denied that he is suffering from burnout after the World Cup.

And Pochettino, speaking at a news conference ahead of the game at the San Siro, said Kane -- who has scored twice in the Premier League this season -- would be starting.

"I think we would be crazy to think different. I don't know what you expect from me, or what you think my answer should be," he said.

"He's one of the best strikers in the world. I don't care that he wasn't great [against Liverpool]. He's going to score goals and he's going to perform in the way that we want and expect, no problem."

Pochettino said he did not feel Kane was struggling after the World Cup, adding: "If you say it's only Harry, I don't like it when people point the finger at some players.

"It's always collective and we need to help him, to give the ball in a better position for him. But it's a collective thing, not just Harry.

"It's not a problem. Of course there is a challenge with nine players [having been] involved until the end of the World Cup, but I'm not going to complain.

"When you win, you win. When you lose, yes of course you need to talk about different things, but I'm not worried.

(Source: ESPN)

## Ganjzadeh wins gold at Karate 1-Premier League

**TASNIM** — Sajad Ganjzadeh from Iran claimed a gold medal at the Karate 1-Premier League tournament in Berlin, Germany on Sunday.

The Iranian karate practitioner defeated Gogita Arkania from Georgia 4-1 in the final match of the male kumite +84kg.

Ganjzadeh had earlier defeated Brian Irr from USA 3-2 and beat Turkey's Yamanoglu Alparslan 4-3.

The Iranian representative then defeated Kosovo's Herolind Nishevchi 4-3 and Croatian Andjelo Kvesic 4-3 before the final match.

Iran's Zabiollah Poorshab at -84kg and Amir Mehdizadeh at -60kg claimed two bronze medals in the competition.

## Iran futsal captain Hassanzadeh joins Shenzhen Nanling

**TASNIM** — Iran national futsal team captain Ali Asghar Hassanzadeh joined Shenzhen Nanling Tielang of China.

The 30-year-old player helped Iran's Mes Sungun to win the 2018 AFC Futsal Club Championship last month.

Hassanzadeh had won the AFC Futsal Championship four times in 2008, 2010, 2016 and 2018.

He is regarded as one of the greatest Asian futsal players in history and has been named AFC Futsal Player of the Year three times (2014, 2016, and 2017).

Hassanzadeh also was a nominee for World Futsal Player of the Year in 2015.

## Takhti Cup to include in UWW ranking system in all styles

**IRNA** — United World Wrestling (UWW) will include the final results of Iranian wrestling tournament Takhti Cup in 2019 ranking system in all styles.

UWW devised the ranking system in 2018 to compare athletes in different wrestling styles.

It also provides a basis for scheduling the qualifiers round of wrestling events in a way that they are less likely to face each other in preliminary rounds.

Only top continental and world tournaments are included in the ranking events lists.

In 2018 debut ranking system, only the Greco-Roman category of this Iranian tournament was considered for the ranking, but the 2019 list includes Takhti Cup in all categories.

The latest edition of Takhti Cup was held January 25 - 26, 2018 in the city of Mahshahr, southern Iran where the host won the title with 182 points.

Senior World Championship and Olympic games assign highest points to the winners, followed by Continental Championships and Select Ranking Events.

Points in all tournaments will be awarded based on finish plus the number of competitors present in each weight category. Nations may only enter three athletes in any single weight class.



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Iranian scholar working on Persian-Ottoman Turkish dictionary

CULTURE d e s k TEHRAN – An Iranian scholar is working on a dictionary that will contain over 15,000 Ottoman Turkish words and phrases originating from the Persian language.



Iranian scholar Farrokh Mostofi

“I never missed the book market of Istanbul on any of my trips to the city,” Farrokh Mostofi told the Persian service of MNA on Sunday. “Rare antique books are offered at the bazaar, and every time, I have purchased some of them dating back to the Ottoman period for my library in Tehran,” he added. “I found many words with Persian origins in these books,” he noted. In his studies on the books, Mostofi found that there had been almost 50,000 Persian words and phrases in Ottoman Turkish before Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey, launched his Turkish language reform. “I collected over 15,000 words from that number for my book, and wrote an etymology for each one,” he said, adding that the dictionary covers those words that were more common during the Ottoman Empire. The collection is scheduled to be published this year in late autumn. Mostofi said that the Atatürk language reform not only caused extensive damage to Turkish literature, but also opened a literary gap between the past and present. “Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan noticed the gap a few years ago and ordered to have it filled in,” he stated. “Four centers are currently doing research on the Ottoman Turkish and Persian alphabet in order to connect them with their literature from the past.”

“Silence” to compete in Portland Deaf Film Festival

A R T d e s k TEHRAN – “Silence” by Iranian director Maryam Pirband will be competing in the Portland Deaf Film Festival in the U.S., the organizers have announced.



A poster for “Silence” by director Maryam Pirband

The film is about a young mother who has a difficult job. She cleans the outside of tall buildings when she is supported by ropes. One day something strange happens to her, and she saves a human life. The organizers of the one-day festival that will be held on October 6 have said that their “mission is to create a space in which the deaf community’s talents are showcased and embraced through visual media.”

Meredith Corp to sell Time media brand to Marc and Lynne Benioff

New York (Reuters) — Meredith Corp (MDP.N) said on Sunday it entered into a definitive agreement to sell the Time media brand to Marc and Lynne Benioff for \$190 million in cash. The U.S. media company said the Benioffs were purchasing Time personally and the transaction was unrelated to Salesforce.com Inc (CRM.N), where Marc Benioff is chairman, co-chief executive and founder. Marc and Lynne Benioff will not be involved in the day-to-day operations or journalistic decisions, which will continue to be led by Time’s current executive leadership team, the company said. As part of the transaction, Meredith will provide short-term business continuity services and entered into a multi-year agreement with the Benioffs to provide services such as consumer marketing, subscription fulfillment, paper purchasing and printing. Meredith plans to use proceeds from the transaction to pay down debt and expects to reduce its debt by \$1 billion during fiscal 2019. Meredith acquired Time in a deal valued at \$2.8 billion as part of its purchase of Time Inc in January, shortly after which announced it was selling Time Inc’s news and sports brands.

Iranian actor to make director debut with Evgeny Schwartz “Dragon”

A R T d e s k TEHRAN – Iranian stage actor Mehran Aslani will make his directorial debut with Russian writer Evgeny Schwartz’s 1943 play “The Dragon” that mocks Stalin’s government and totalitarianism. The play will go on stage at the Nasser Khosrow Theater in Tehran on September 23, Aslani told the Persian Service of FNA on Monday. Paniz Khoshnik, Mohammad Moghani, Armin Eftekharzadeh, Yashar Hosseinzadeh, Atena Rasulzadeh, Arshia Ghaffari, Mehdi Asadi, and Aslani are the members of the cast. Aslani said that the play will be performed in Iran for the first time and added his teachers have been greatly surprised by the choice for his directorial debut. The original play has 21 characters, but Aslani reduced the number to eight in order to make it easier to be performed. “I have taken a bit of risk because I love this play and we will go ahead with the help of my colleagues,” Aslani noted. “The Dragon” tells the story of the knight Lancelot, who sets out to slay the dragon. However, in his quest, he stumbles upon a community governed by a bureaucratic hierarchy using the dragon as an excuse to cover their own abuse of power.

Milani sues E1 Gallery over early closure of her exhibition



Filmmaker Tahmineh Milani (C) is seen with visitors to her painting exhibition at Tehran’s E1 Gallery on September 7, 2018. (Honaronline/Maryam Ramezanlu)

A R T d e s k TEHRAN – Filmmaker Tahmineh Milani has filed a lawsuit in a Tehran court against E1 Gallery over closing her painting exhibition early, the Persian service of ISNA reported on Monday. Last Sunday, E1 Gallery in Tehran wrapped up Milani’s exhibition prematurely following an allegation of plagiarism from a painting by Russian-born, Israel-based illustrator Jenny Meilihove. A group of young artists accused Milani of plagiarism by copying from a painting by Meilihove for her first painting exhibition that ran only for three days. The artists and critics attended the opening ceremony of the exhibition, holding copies of artworks by a number of prominent

Iranian artists and asked the visitors to go the exhibitions displaying works by “real artists”. The suit is also against those people who brought chaos to the exhibition, Milani’s attorney, Abdolmajid Vaziri, said. Following the plagiarism allegation, in a post published on her Instagram, Milani wrote, “Friends, I noticed the similarity between my work and a work by Ms. Meilihove.” “I’m so sorry and I will withdraw the painting from the showcase and compensate for the loss. The image of a postcard I had received in the past recorded on my unconscious and the result was the painting.” She said that she would apologize to the artist and added that all the money raised by the exhibit will go to charity.

Dragons, handmaids and housewives – it’s time for the Emmys

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) — “Game of Thrones” or “The Handmaid’s Tale”? “Atlanta” or “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel”? The best drama and comedy series races for television’s highest honors are too close to call ahead of Monday’s Emmy awards, where the field is so packed with quality contenders that some shows may leave empty-handed. Monday’s ceremony isn’t just about the winners. “Saturday Night Live” stars Michael Che and Colin Jost host for the first time on an evening where barbs about U.S. President Donald Trump and other topical issues are expected to feature. “They are outrageous political satirists and if they don’t shine on stage in that way, people will be disappointed,”

said Tom O’Neil, editor of awards website goldderby.com. The Emmy Awards will be handed out in Los Angeles on Monday in a ceremony broadcast live on NBC. HBO’s (T.N) crowd-pleasing medieval series “Game of Thrones” goes into Monday’s ceremony with a leading 22 nominations, but awards pundits say it faces a strong challenge from streaming service Hulu’s bleak “The Handmaid’s Tale” for the best-drama series Emmy. The latest season of “Game of Thrones” aired almost a year ago and may suffer for being out of sight and out of mind, IndieWire Executive Editor Michael Schneider said. “‘Handmaid’s Tale’ is a newer show. It won last year

(in its first season) and it still feels very timely and part of the conversation,” he said. “Handmaid’s Tale” star Elisabeth Moss could also be a repeat Emmy winner. Yet the drama actress field is particularly strong with contenders Claire Foy as the quietly formidable Queen Elizabeth in Netflix (NFLX.O) royal series “The Crown”, Keri Russell in her final turn as a ruthless Russian spy living as an ordinary American housewife in FX’s (FOXA.O) “The Americans”, and Sandra Oh, who could become the first woman of Asian descent to win a best-actress drama series Emmy, in BBC America’s “Killing Eve”.

“The Predator” bites off \$24 million bow

LOS ANGELES (Variety) — “The Predator” was able to fend off “The Nun” at the domestic box office. Shane Black’s “The Predator” launched with a tepid \$24 million from 4,037 North American locations. That was easily enough to top the weekend box office, but not enough to land a franchise-best debut. That distinction still belongs to 2010’s “Predator” with \$24.7 million (not including the two “Alien vs. Predator” crossover films). Overseas, “The Predator” earned \$30.7 million for a global start of \$54.7 million. It will need to generate big business internationally to justify its \$88 million production budget. Warner Bros. “The Nun” dropped to second place, picking up \$18 million in its second weekend for a domestic tally of \$85 million. Meanwhile, Lionsgate’s “A Simple Favor” debuted at No. 3 with \$16 million on 3,102 screens. Another new offering, Matthew McConaughey’s “White Boy Rick”, along with “Crazy Rich Asians” rounded out the top five. Though “The Predator” opened at the lower end of estimates, it doesn’t seem surrounding controversy tainted the sci-fi film. Prior to its

premiere, “The Predator” drew ire after 20th Century Fox announced it deleted a scene featuring registered sex offender Steven Wilder Striegel. The studio said it was “not aware” of Striegel’s background when he was hired. Black has since apologized for casting Striegel, who is a friend of his. Chris Aronson, head of domestic distribution at Fox, said the scandal didn’t influence weekend numbers. “I don’t think it dissuaded anyone who wasn’t predestined to go. I think it had minimal, if any, impact,” he said. The fourth installment — starring Olivia Munn, Boyd Holbrook, Trevante Rhodes, Jacob Tremblay, Keegan Michael Key, and Sterling K. Brown — has generated mediocre reception. It holds a bleak 34 percent average on review aggregation site Rotten Tomatoes, along with a C+ CinemaScore. Anna Kendrick, Blake Lively, and Henry Golding star in “A Simple Favor”, which fared well with females and adults. Women accounted for 67 percent of audiences, while 86 percent were 25 or older. Paul Feig, known for his work on “Freaks and Geeks” and “Bridesmaids”, directed the neo-noir mystery drama.



A poster for “The Dragon”

Japan’s Murakami withdraws from consideration for alternative Nobel award



Japanese writer Haruki Murakami, laureate of Hans Christian Andersen Literature Award 2016, is seen outside H. C. Andersen’s house in Odense, Denmark October 30, 2016. (Scanpix Denmark/Henning Bagger/via Reuters)

TOKYO (Reuters) — Japanese author Haruki Murakami has asked for the withdrawal of his nomination for an alternative to the Nobel Prize in Literature, postponed this year over a sexual misconduct scandal, saying he wanted to concentrate on his writing. One of Japan’s most successful literary exports, Murakami’s Nobel prospects are the subject of intense annual scrutiny in his home country. Murakami expressed gratitude at the nomination, but said he wanted to “concentrate on writing, away from media attention”, the organizers of the New Academy Prize in Literature said while announcing his withdrawal on

social media site Facebook. It gave no further details of Murakami’s decision. The replacement award was set up by a group of Swedish cultural figures after this year’s Nobel Prize in Literature was postponed following a sexual misconduct scandal at the Swedish Academy. The other nominees for the alternative prize are British-born author Neil Gaiman, Guadeloupe-born Maryse Conde and Vietnam-born Kim Thuy. They have all “expressed enthusiasm for their nomination,” the organizers’ statement added. The winner will be announced in October.



Actor Boyd Holbrook looks at the Predator statue at the premiere of “The Predator” during the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) in Toronto, Ontario, Canada September 6, 2018. (Reuters/Mario Anzuoni)