



Riyadh investigating cases of Iranian hajj victims **2**



Terrorism endangering region: Shamkhani **2**



Siamand Rahman named Best Asia-Oceania Powerlifter **15**



“Blockage”, “Are You Volleyball?!” named best Yari filmfest **16**



Massive funeral for terror victims

Most of those involved in Ahvaz attack arrested: intelligence chief

See page 2

U.S. dream of zero Iranian oil won't come true: Zanganeh

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said on Monday that the Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee (JMMC) meeting's outcome was a negative response to the demands of U.S. President Donald Trump, ISNA reported.

“The U.S. seeks to reduce Iranian oil

exports to zero even for a month, but that dream would not come to reality,” Zanganeh was quoted as saying.

Speaking on the sidelines of the 12th international exhibition of Iran Plast, the official noted that OPEC is an independent organization and is not a branch of the U.S. Department of Energy. **→4**

U.S. fully disrupting medicine supply to Iran

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — The United States has completely disrupted the supply of medicine to Iran despite claiming that its sanctions do not include medicine, Masoud Pezeshkian, the deputy speaker of the parliament, said on Monday.

“It's an act of moral cowardice to cause a patient to lose his/her life through warfarin (a medication) shortage,” Pezeshkian said. “If you have problems with politicians, then how come you wreak vengeance on innocent people?” he asked empathically.

The top lawmaker, a heart surgeon who served as health minister in the Khatami administration, also called on Iranian authorities to back the domestic pharmaceutical industry in order to supply the basic medical needs of the country.

“The primary sanctions taught us to meet the needs of our people as far as we can; the current sanctions must be teaching us to become self-sufficient as much as possible,” the highly-respected reformist lawmaker noted.

Russia to give Syria S-300

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu says Russia will supply Syria with a modern S-300 system within two weeks and block the communication of planes bombing the country from the Mediterranean.

The announcement on Monday came a week after Russia blamed Israel for the downing of a Russian military

plane in Syria, which killed 15 service members.

The downing has forced Moscow to take “adequate retaliatory measures to increase the safety of Russian military fighting international terrorism in Syria,” Shoigu said in a televised address. **→13**



ARTICLE
Ebrahim Fallahi
Tehran Times journalist

OPEC defies Trump's call for more oil, now what ?

The 10th gathering of the Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee (JMMC) of OPEC and non-OPEC members on Sunday ended, as Iran insisted, without any direct decision on additional supply boost.

The committee finally stood by their June decision for maintaining the 100 percent compliance levels declaring that the market is balanced enough and no more production is needed at the moment.

Although the JMMC's decision implies that the countries with spare capacity will be able to offset Iran's future shortfalls but it could also be interpreted as a negative response to the U.S. pressures for “Zero Iranian oil”.

Now the question is what this decision means for the evolving parties and how it projects on the OPEC, non-OPEC nations and their oil policies in the future.

■ OPEC and expectations

In the weeks prior to the meeting, Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh had repeatedly blamed Saudi Arabia and Russia for their soft stances against Trump requests saying that “they are turning OPEC into a political organization”.

The U.S. president Donald Trump, on the other hand, added to the pressures on his OPEC allies to take actions for reducing the oil prices [and in fact for replacing Iranian oil more hastily].

“We protect the countries of the Middle East, they would not be safe for very long without us, and yet they continue to push for higher and higher oil prices! We will remember. The OPEC monopoly must get prices down now!” Trump wrote on Twitter.

Anticipating obedience from the allies' side, Iran further slammed OPEC for being a “tool” for U.S. and Iranian oil minister refused to attend the JMMC's meeting on Sunday showing his dissatisfaction with OPEC and Russia's overtolerance in dealing with the U.S. interferences in the oil market. He even went further, declaring that “would strictly block any decision against Iran's interests”, though he didn't explain how. **→4**

Mattis leaving will not change U.S. approach toward Iran: Former Senator

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
By Javad Heirannia

TEHRAN — Bennett Johnston, an American politician in the Democratic Party and lobbyist who represented Louisiana in the United States Senate is the opinion that “Mattis is very well regarded by both democrats and republicans, so to fire him would be an unpopular thing and would probably be harmful to republicans in the

midterm elections.”

“Mattis leaving will not make a great deal of difference in his approach toward Iran,” Johnston, The Chairman of the American-Iranian Council, tells the Tehran Times.

Following is the text of the interview:

■ According to some reports, Trump plans to oust Defense Secretary James Mattis after the congressional election. What are the reasons for this?

A: There are many reports that Mattis has, in effect, not followed the orders of the president. Whether this is the real reason, or whether there is any animosity between the two is unknowable. The apparent relationship between them is friendly, but by most indications Mattis will be gone by the second term.

■ Why would Trump postpone this decision until after congressional elections? And how important are these elections for him? **→7**

U.S., Israel, Saudi and UAE want to “Syrianize” Iran: Prof. Entessar

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
By Payman Yazdani

TEHRAN — Commenting on Ahvaz attack Prof. Entessar says U.S., Israel, Saudi Arabia and UAE's principal goal is to create chaos in Iran to disintegrate the country.

A terrorist attack during a military parade on people in Ahvaz, North West of Iran left tens of innocent civilians killed and injured.

Hours after the attack Saudi backed Al-ahvazi separatist terrorist group and ISIL claimed the responsibility for the terrorist attack.

To shed more light on the issue we reached out to Prof. Nader Entessar Emeritus of Political Science in University of South Alabama.

Following is the full text of his interview:

■ Do you see any foreign elements behind this attack?

A: It is too early to identify the real culprits behind the recent terrorist attack in Ahvaz. I hope that the appropriate authorities in Iran are taking this matter very seriously and conduct a thorough and professional investigation and eschew issuing contradictory and vacuous statements. Once the investigation is completed, Iran

must take swift and decisive action to respond to this heinous terrorist attack.

■ Saudi Arabia and UAE didn't condemn the terrorist attack. Why?

A: These two countries have become sworn enemies of Iran in recent years, and by that, I don't mean just the Islamic Republic but the country of Iran. Therefore, I was not surprised that they have not condemned the Ahvaz terrorist attack. Besides, they may indeed be responsible for funding and organizing the terrorist attack. Thus, they should not be expected to condemn it. **→7**

Next election is a referendum for Trump: Pillar

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
By Javad Heirannia

TEHRAN — Professor Paul Pillar, who was CIA intelligence analyst for 28 years, tells the Tehran Times that “No doubt other participants in the coming Security Council meeting--and not just Iran, which needs to be given an opportunity to speak--will raise the point that the United States under Trump has been in violation

of an agreement that became enshrined in a Security Council resolution that passed by a unanimous vote.”

Pillar also says, next election is “very important for Donald Trump not only to try to retain Republican control of Congress but also a show of approval or disapproval of himself.”

Following is the text of the interview:

■ According to the News, Trump plans to oust the Defense Secretary James Mattis after the Con-

gressional election. What are the reasons for this?

A: It is not unusual for cabinet members to leave after a couple of years in office. Mattis probably would consider two years to be a respectable tenure, and he could leave around the beginning of next year with such a departure genuinely described as voluntary rather than an ouster. It a strain for anyone to serve in a senior position in Trump's administration, and Mattis probably will be happy to go. **→7**



We'll surely give terrorist elements harsh beating: Leader

TEHRAN — Leader of the Islamic Revolution said on Monday that security forces will severely punish the culprits behind the terrorist attack in Ahvaz. Speaking two days after the deadly terror attack in Ahvaz, Ayatollah Khamenei said, “Surely, we will give harsh beating to elements of this act.”

“Reports have it that the act was carried out by those very people who are saved by the Americans wherever they are stuck in Syria or Iraq, and whose hands delve Saudi and Emirati pockets,” Ayatollah Ali Khamenei told a group of athletes who recently represented Iran in the Jakarta Asian Games.



ARTICLE
Sarbaz Roohulla Rezaei
Peace and Justice activist
@roohullarezaei

Five episodes from the Shia Muslims of Kashmir

■ Episode 1; 1988

We all rushed into the house of Sheikh Sahib. Elders with women and children. A big house that had access to different alleys from the back door to exist if Sunni mob was going to enter the house and we were able to escape. Youth standing in the yard with sticks in hands while some were returning from the street with bloody heads and legs. Being an 8 year old boy, I was able to hear the voice of the Shia - Sunni fight in the street, though totally unaware of cause. Soon I got to know about the death of Ziaul Haq the president of Pakistan during a plane crash and the rumor about his Shia pilot and a suicide attack conspiracy to kill the General. Eventually the rumors turned Kashmir into a Shia Sunni conflict zone.

■ Episode 2; 1992

How could one forget the days, spent of heavy gun upraors? Doors shut as we rushed into to the house crack-down and engulfed by the heavy Indian armed personals eagerly searching for militants. When the army personals opened the door with a huge echoing noise, simultaneously a panic sigh spread in the house. I was shivering and hiding between the arms of my mother, peeping at the helmets of the soldiers strolling in the yard. I was deadly amazed to see the reborn scenario, since years had spent with no Shia-Sunni conflict in Kashmir. Soon several Shia youth joined the Sunni militant groups fighting against Indian army and the news of their martyrdom showered the valley in a blink.

■ Episode 3; 2005

Every other day there was a news about blasts in Shia mosques and Imam Bargahs of Pakistan by Sunni militant groups. The same militants who were mostly shouting for the freedom of Kashmir open handedly. Years after the occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq by US Army and the sectarian war triggered so high that made the situation of Shia-Sunni dynamics so sensitive in Kashmir as well.

“You want us to fight for making Kashmir a part of Pakistan where Shia are massacred? No way!” **→7**

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Mogherini, Le Drian meet Zarif in New York

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini and French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian separately met with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif in New York on Monday, IRNA reported.

During their meetings, the sides discussed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) – the Iran nuclear deal – and the meeting of the foreign ministers of countries party to the deal in New York.

Zarif was accompanied by his deputy on political affairs Abbas Araqchi, while Mogherini's deputy, Helga Schmid, was also present at the meeting.

The Iranian foreign minister arrived in New York on Sunday along with President Hassan Rouhani to attend in the 73rd UN General Assembly session.



Riyadh investigating cases of Iranian hajj victims

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Saudi Arabia is taking legal action on the cases of Iranian pilgrims who were killed in Al-Haram Mosque as well as in a hajj stampede in September 2015 in the city of Mina, the Leader's representative for hajj affairs has said.

Saudi Arabia has been following up on the cases despite the frosty relations between Tehran and Riyadh, Ali Ghazi-Askari said, ISNA reported on Monday.

He said the office of Saudi Arabia's representative in New York has sent a letter asking for the names of the martyrs and survivors of the two incidents, expressing the hope that the victims' blood money be paid in the near future.



Iran-Austria parliamentary friendship group visits Vienna

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Hossein Amiri-Khamkani, head of the Iran-Austria parliamentary friendship group, left Tehran for Vienna at the head of a 4-member group, Mehr reported on Monday.

During their visit, the Iranian lawmakers are set to meet their Austrian counterparts as well as other Austrian officials to discuss matters of mutual interests.

They also plan to visit Vienna's public transport system and drinking water system.

In recent years, Iran and Austria have developed friendly parliamentary relations in addition to the expansion of political and economic ties.



Lawmaker: Key corrupt individuals to be hanged soon

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Head of the special Majlis committee to fighting economic corruption announced on Monday that key individuals involved in financial corruption will soon be hanged in Azadi Square, ISNA reported.

"I talked with the Judiciary spokesman today and he announced the news of executing God's command against financially corrupt individuals, which will be done soon in Azadi Square," Amir Khojasteh said.

Khojasteh also emphasized that fighting economic corruption is one of the most important issues of the country and that top-down anticorruption initiatives are needed.



Tehran to host regional security meeting

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — The first meeting among regional countries' national security officials and consultants is scheduled to be held in Tehran on Wednesday, ISNA reported.

According to the Supreme National Security Council, Russia, China, India and Afghanistan are expected to attend the meeting. The meeting will focus on dialogue for regional security.

Ways to fight terrorism and extremism as well as new threats of terrorism in West Asia will be discussed at the conference.

Security officials attending the meeting will also hold bilateral talks with one another.



Pakistan first to condemn Ahvaz attack: consulate

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Pakistan was the first country which condemned the Ahvaz terrorist attack and Pakistan's Ambassador Riffat Masood was also the first foreign diplomatic representative in Iran who shared the grief with brotherly Islamic country of Iran, Pakistan's consulate in Mashhad has said in a statement.

The consulate said it had arranged a candle light ceremony remembering the victims of the September 22 terrorist attack in Ahvaz.

It added that a large banner has been displayed outside the consulate displaying statements of the Pakistan Foreign Office and ambassador condemning the terrorist act and expressing solidarity with the Iranian nation.

Iranians mourn Ahvaz terror victims in massive funeral

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — On Monday, large numbers of people participated in a funeral ceremony for 24 people who were martyred in a terrorist attack two days before in the southwestern city of Ahvaz, capital of Khuzestan province.

The people took part in the ceremony to sympathize with the bereaved families, show their disgust of terrorism and demonstrate unity.

Monday had been declared as the national day of mourning. Schools, banks and offices were closed in Khuzestan province.

In addition to local officials, a number of officials also took part in the funeral.

Two representatives of Leader of the Islamic Revolution; Defense Minister Amir Hatami; Intelligence Minister Mahmoud Alavi; Health Minister Hassan Ghazizadeh Hashemi; Deputy Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Hossein Salami were among officials who attended the ceremony.

General Salami said that the people's mass participation shows integrity and unity of the Iranian society.

He also blamed the U.S.-Israel-Saudi Arabia the triangle for the terrorist attack.

In an interview with ISNA news agency, Ali Younesi, the former intelligence minister, also held the West-Arab-Israel triangle for the terror act.

General Salami also warned that Iran will take a hard revenge of the organizers of the attack.

Mohsen Rezaee, secretary of the Expediency Council, said that it is "obvious" for Iran how the terrorists were "supported" and "trained".



© Tehran Times/Mehdi Mehrankhoo

Rezaee, the former IRGC chief, also said Iran will take revenge in a way that "nobody will dare to take such actions again".

Intelligence Minister Mahmoud Alavi who had worn traditional clothes of Khuzestanis said that the enemies should know that such actions make the Iranians "more united".

Alavi insisted that Iran will not be silent towards such "anti-human crimes".

Most of those involved in Ahvaz attack arrested: intelligence chief

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Iranian Intelligence Minister Mahmoud Alavi announced on Monday that the most of those persons behind the Saturday terrorist attack in Ahvaz have been arrested.

Alavi said security forces will track down all elements involved in the terror act to "send this message to the world that the Islamic Iran is not a place for committing such anti-human crimes and that the criminals will soon pay cost for their actions."

In the terrorist attack on a military parade in Ahvaz, the capital of southwestern province of Khuzestan, 24 people,

including women and children, were killed.

The announcement by the intelligence came as people took part in large numbers for the funeral of the victims of the attack.

The government had declared Monday as the national day of mourning.

Nozar Nemati, the deputy commander of the Army, also confirmed that almost all those who had had a hand in the Ahvaz assault have been detained.

■ **IRGC official: Terrorists to 'repent' their act**

Mohammad Jokar, the deputy IRGC chief for parliamentary affairs, also said on Monday that response to terrorists

involved in the attack will definitely make them "repent".

Jokar added, "What is clear is that the terrorist will receive a crushing response for the terrorist attack in Ahvaz."

There has been no case that "terrorists do an action and not receive a response", he said.

The Islamic Revolution Guard Corps issued a statement on Sunday saying a "deadly and unforgettable revenge" awaits the terrorists.

"Considering (the Guards') full knowledge about the centers of deployment of the criminal terrorists' leaders..., they will face a deadly and unforgettable vengeance in the near future," the statement said.

Trump's Iran policy counterproductive, say 50+ ex-U.S. officials

More than 50 former U.S. senior officials and national security experts have urged the Trump administration to change course on Iran, warning that the current approach could lead to war.

In a statement released on Sunday, the former U.S. officials argued that pulling out of the JCPOA makes achieving U.S. objectives with Iran much more difficult, Lobe Log reported.

They said applying pressure and unilateral sanctions without viable diplomatic options is "highly unlikely to produce the desired outcome" and could lead to a "more dangerous, destructive and enduring regional conflict with Iran."

"The Administration's emphasis on coercion and threats of military action without diplomatic engagement provides no exit ramp to avoid collision," the former officials emphasized.

The Administration's suggested policy of regime change in Iran reflects wishful thinking and a flawed interpretation of intelligence about Iran's vulnerability, the statement read.

"A more balanced strategy that



couples pressure with effective diplomacy, coming not just from the U.S. but from around the world, will be necessary to achieve U.S. objectives," it added.

"A decision by the Administration to move toward a more balanced approach, including agreeing to comply with the JCPOA, would be welcomed by the international community and put the U.S. on a better path to achieve its objectives," the statement concluded.

Terrorism endangering region: Shamkhani

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Ali Shamkhani, secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, said on Monday that terrorism is endangering the entire Middle East and causing the region to face a crisis.

"The danger of terrorism and its roots, especially Takfiri ideology which is being promoted, have caused crisis in the region and impeded the Islamic countries' progress," he said during a meeting with Azerbaijan's Interior Minister Ramil Usubov in Tehran.

Shamkhani also criticized the U.S. and the Zionist regime of Israel's divisive policies in the region.

"It is essential to be vigilant and increase interaction and constructive dialogues to foil destructive efforts being made by ill-wishers to cause division among regional countries," the top security official noted.

Pointing to the White House's action in re-imposing sanctions against Iran by quitting the 2015 nuclear agreement, he said that such policies will just lead to more isolation of the U.S.

Commenting on Tehran-Baku relations, Shamkhani said that Iran and Azerbaijan



have many capacities to expand ties in various areas.

For his part, Usubov said that Azerbaijan welcomes expansion of relations with Iran.

He added that Azerbaijan is interested in using Iran's experiences in countering terrorism and condemned Saturday's terrorist attack in the southwestern city of Ahvaz which left 24 people killed and many more injured.

Iranian Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli also met separately with the Azeri official.

Rouhani: Iran to declare its policies at UN

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said on Sunday that Iran seeks to declare its policies at the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly.

"Our purpose is to express the Islamic Republic of Iran's policies to the world in the upcoming meetings," he said upon arrival in New York.

He also said that the U.S. has violated its commitments under international agreements, especially its exit from the 2015 nuclear deal, and the UN summit provides an opportunity to discuss Washington's violations in a better way.

Before departure to New York, he said that the current



European powers back Iran deal ahead of UN summit

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — A number of European leaders have expressed support for the 2015 nuclear deal ahead of the United Nations General Assembly.

Their remarks come as Iranian President Hassan Rouhani traveled to New York on Sunday to, as he has said, make a stand against the unilateral U.S. exit from the deal.

On Sunday, British Prime Minister Theresa May said Iran is in compliance with its com-

mitments under the nuclear accord, stressing that the agreement should be kept alive.

Speaking to CBS, May said that her country believes that the accord, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), "should stay in place".

The British leader emphasized that other signatories to the deal - repudiated by the United States - "believe that it should stay in place".

U.S. President Donald Trump in May an-

nounced he was quitting the deal and reimposing sanctions on Iran, in contempt of the JCPOA requiring no sanctions should be placed on Tehran.

A first round of American sanctions took effect in August, targeting Iran's access to the U.S. dollar, metals trading, coal, industrial software, and auto sector. A second round, forthcoming on November 4, will be targeting Iran's oil sales and its Central Bank.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le

Drian also told Le Monde in an interview published on Sunday that as long as Iran stays committed to the JCPOA, his country will also honor it.

Le Drian further stressed the need for "normal" trade relations with Iran, especially over medical and agricultural products, stressing that the U.S. needs to tell which economic sections will be affected by its unilateral sanctions on the Islamic Republic.

World leaders gather at UN challenged by unilateralism

With rising unilateralism challenging its very existence, the United Nations convened its annual meeting of world leaders on Monday and tried once more to tackle problems together as a community of nations. The gathering will address threats ranging from Middle East conflicts to the effects of global warming – and also encourage the glimmer of hope over the nuclear standoff in North Korea.

This year, 133 world leaders have signed up to attend the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) session, a significant increase from last year's 114.

The UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called the expected large turnout "eloquent proof of the confidence of the international community in the United Nations," though other UN officials and diplomats said it's in response to growing concerns about an increasingly turbulent world.

The 7-year-old foreign instigated conflict in Syria and the 3-year-old House of Saud regime war in Yemen that has sparked the world's worst humanitarian crisis – and is now seriously threatening large-scale famine – will certainly be in the spotlight, along with meetings on other Mideast and African hot spots.

Guterres said last week that one of his overriding concerns in an increasingly globalized world is the threat to having the UN's 193 member nations work together, which is the foundation of the UN.

"Multilateralism is under attack from many different directions precisely when we need it most," the UN chief told reporters on Thursday. "In different areas and for different reasons, the trust of people in their political establishments, the trust of states among each other, the trust of many people in international organizations has been eroded and ... multilateralism has been in the fire."

Guterres challenged diplomats at last week's opening of the 73rd session of the General Assembly by saying: "At a time of fragmentation and polarization, the world needs this assembly to show the value of international cooperation."

Whether it will be able to remains in question. At this year's gathering of presidents, prime ministers, monarchs and ministers, populist leaders will include the United States President Donald Trump, President Andrzej



Duda of Poland and premier Giuseppe Conte of Italy along with the foreign ministers of Hungary and Austria.

The U.S. Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley told reporters that Trump, who champions an "America First" policy, wants to talk about "protecting U.S. sovereignty," and she reiterated Washington's opposition to the 2015 Paris climate agreement on curbing global warming and a newly agreed international compact aimed at regulating migration.

"We really value sovereignty of the country," Haley said. "It is not saying multilateralism can't work, but it's saying sovereignty is a priority over all of that, and we always have to make sure we're doing that – and there are many countries that agree with us."

Before stepping down as the UN humanitarian chief Aug. 31, Zeid Ra'ad al-Husseini expressed serious concern that populism, intolerance and oppression are "becoming fashionable again."

"It all builds, because once you start down the path of intolerance, it's very difficult to stop it, unless at the end of the day you have conflict," he said. French President Emmanuel Macron is expected to be a key voice joining Guterres in the coming week in speaking out against this trend and supporting multilateralism as key to promoting peace.

The week's activities kicked off with a peace summit on Monday morning honoring the 100th birthday this year of South African

anti-apartheid leader Nelson Mandela. A statue of Mandela will be unveiled at the UN headquarters and leaders are expected to adopt a declaration recognizing the years 2019-2028 as the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace. Trump is hosting an event on Monday on "The World Drug Problem" and Haley said 124 countries have signed a global call to action. Activists on drug policy note it was never negotiated, and one group, the Harm Reduction Coalition, called it "an instance of heavy-handed U.S. 'with us or against us' diplomacy."

The increasingly strident U.S. rhetoric against Iran is expected to be a feature in the U.S. speeches.

Trump pulled the United States out of the 2015 Iran nuclear agreement in May and the foreign ministers of the five remaining powers who support the deal – Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany – are expected to meet privately with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif.

The General Assembly's "General Debate," as the ministerial session is called, officially opens on Tuesday with Guterres' report on the state of the world, to be followed soon after by speeches from Trump, Macron and late in the morning by President Hassan Rouhani of Iran.

The U.S. holds the rotating presidency of the UN Security Council (UNSC) in September and has scheduled two ministerial

meetings, the first on Wednesday presided over by Trump.

It was initially to focus on Iran but has now been broadened to the topic of "non-proliferation" of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. "I'm sure that is going to be the most-watched Security Council meeting ever," Haley told reporters.

The U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo will preside over the second meeting on Thursday on North Korea, an issue the Security Council was united on in imposing increasingly tough sanctions. But that unity now appears to be at risk over enforcement of sanctions and the broader issues of how to achieve denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and when sanctions should be lifted against North Korea.

Guterres welcomed the recent "positive meeting" in Pyongyang between the leaders of North and South Korea but warned "there will not be success in intra-Korean negotiations if simultaneously there is not success in the American and North Korean" negotiations to rid the Korean Peninsula of nuclear weapons.

The UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said the United Nations has received 342 requests for meetings during the high-level week.

They include sessions on conflicts in Syria, Libya, Yemen, Mali and Central African Republic as well as the plight of Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, aid for Palestinians, education for girls, modern slavery, environmental threats, efforts to end poverty, and the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

Asked what are the big issues, Russia's UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia told the Associated Press: "All of them are big issues – non-proliferation, cooperation, the world peace architecture – it's every year, but this year it's maybe more topical than ever."

Uruguayan Ambassador Elbio Rosselli said the biggest issue for his country is multilateralism. "It's a vow that all of us ought to keep reinforcing particularly at this juncture where so many undercurrents and contrary views are surfacing on different scenarios," he told AP. "The validity of this institution is more than ever necessary, and for that we need the recommitment of all states."

(Source: AP)

Jeremy Corbyn criticizes Britain's role in arming the Saudi regime

A Labor government would go to the United Nations "tomorrow" to present a resolution to end the war in Yemen, Jeremy Corbyn said at a vigil for those affected by the brutal conflict.

He criticized the Government's role in arming the House of Saud regime as he and several senior shadow ministers joined members of Liverpool's Yemeni community on Sunday evening.

The Labor leader said that the Government must stop arms sales to the Saudi regime to help bring an end to violence and suffering.

He told a crowd of around 50 people the humanitarian disaster in the country was "a human-made condition" brought about by "the bombardment of the people of Yemen by the Saudi forces and, I'm sad to say, some of those weapons are provided by Britain."

He said that the UN had been set up to bring wars to "a conclusion by a political process", adding: "The members of the security council have a very special responsibility in this. We cannot run away and we cannot hide."

"If it were a Labor government Emily (Thornberry, the shadow foreign secretary) would be at the UN tomorrow presenting a resolution on how we would bring about an



end to that conflict."

"This Government has failed, failed in its duty to resent a resolution to the UN that can bring about an end to this conflict."

Yemen's war has been raging since March 2015 and earlier this month Britain expressed "serious concern" over the loss of life in recent weeks.

It came after the Government received severe opposition criticism for selling arms to the Saudi regime-led coalition attacking Yemen.

An air strike by the Saudi regime-led coalition that killed dozens of people in Yemen in August was branded an apparent war crime by Human Rights Watch.

At least 51 people, including 40 children, were killed and 79 others, including 56 children, were wounded in the air strike which hit a bus in a busy market.

Corbyn praised the aid work of the Department for International Development (DfID) in the country, but said that "it doesn't seem to add up that we provide aid to the victims while providing weapons that are used for the bombing in the first place."

He went on: "A child dying of cholera, people being killed in schools, people being killed at wedding parties that is abominable and unnecessary and utterly wrong in the 21st century."

Corbyn was joined at the vigil by Thornberry, local MP (Member of Parliament) Stephen Twigg, who chairs the International Development Committee, and Fabian Hamilton, the shadow minister for peace and disarmament.

(Source: Irish Examiner)

Hezbollah's status linked to region, Syria: Aoun

The Lebanese resistance movement of Hezbollah's weapons have become an issue related to resolving the Syrian crisis and the situation in the region, President Michel Aoun said in an interview published on Monday.

Previously Hezbollah's leader had warned Israel of a fate it "has never expected" if it chooses to wage a new war, reminding the regime that the Lebanese resistance movement is now in possession of precision rockets to Tel Aviv's dismay.

Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah made the comments during a Thursday speech in Beirut to a large crowd of mourners marking Ashura, the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein, the third Shia Imam.

He further said the balance of power in the region has changed in favor of the anti-Israel axis of resistance, and that Tel Aviv has failed in all its attempts to prevent Lebanon's Hezbollah from achieving precision rockets.

"No matter what you do to cut the route, the matter is over and the resistance possesses precision and non-precision rockets and weapons capabilities," Nasrallah said.



"All your attempts to prevent Hezbollah from possessing accurate missiles are foiled," he added.

The Hezbollah chief further warned Israel against opting for yet another act of aggression against his country and said, "If Israel imposes a war on Lebanon, Israel will face a fate and a reality it has never expected on any day."

He also pointed to the growing power of the resistance front, stressing that the Israelis

"had pinned their hopes on the course of developments in Syria and Iraq, but they know that the axis of resistance has returned stronger than ever, and new countries have now joined it."

Therefore, he added, the Israeli regime is afraid of any conflict in the region, especially against Lebanon, and is well informed that any war would have dire consequences.

Tel Aviv is well aware that its weaknesses

have been revealed to Hezbollah, and is well aware of our strengths, he added. "Israel is aware that technology alone cannot be decisive in a war."

The Hezbollah chief further expressed the movement's support for the Islamic Republic of Iran in the face of "all kinds of economic and political pressure," saying that "it is our duty to stand by Iran" as a new wave of anti-Iran American sanctions is returning.

He further reiterated the movement's support for the Palestinian cause, reiterating Hezbollah's objection to the so-called "deal of the century" which the United States administration is drawing up on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Nasrallah also noted that Hezbollah firmly stands by the Yemeni nation, which has been under attack by the House of Saud regime and a coalition of its allies.

"We reiterate our support to peaceful people of Bahrain whose scholars and youths have been jailed and suppressed by the Bahraini regime," he added.

(Source: agencies)

U.S. airstrikes have killed 3,300 civilians in Syria: observatory



A pro-opposition monitoring group says the United States airstrikes have killed 3,331 civilians in Syria since they began four years ago.

"Among those killed are 826 children and 615 women," said head of the so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) Rami Abdel-Rahman.

The U.S. and its allies have been bombarding what they call the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group positions inside Syria since September 2014 without any authorization from the Damascus government or a United Nations mandate. Such air raids began in Iraq in August of the same year.

The aerial assaults, however, have on many occasions resulted in civilian casualties and failed to fulfill their declared aim of countering terrorism.

The Britain-based group's report comes as Washington claims that its airstrikes killed just 1,061 civilians in both Syria and neighboring Iraq until July 30, 2018.

Rights groups have censured the U.S. and its allies for not pursuing investigations of civilian casualties rigorously enough.

In June, Amnesty International announced that the U.S. attacks in Syria's Raqqa last year broke international law by endangering the lives of civilians and may amount to "potential war crimes."

"The artificially low number of civilian casualties the coalition acknowledges stems in part from poor investigation procedures that fail even to involve on-the-ground research," it said back then.

The U.S. officials dealing with the Syria issue said early this month that "the administration is now resolved to stay in Syria longer than President Donald Trump previously indicated."

The U.S. marines recently held eight days of unprecedented military exercises with militants in southern Syria in what the U.S. military spokesman Colonel Sean Ryan described the drills as "a show of force."

The drills were held at the U.S. military outpost in Tanf, located 24 km to the west from the al-Tanf border crossing between Syria and Iraq in Homs.

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

(Source: Press TV)

PMU accuses U.S.-led forces of attacking its base in Iraq's Anbar

Iraqi Popular Mobilization Units (PMU/Hashd al-Sha'abi) have accused the United States-led coalition purportedly fighting the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group of attacking its base in the country's western province of Anbar as government troops and their allies are seeking to purge the war-ravaged country of remnants of the ISIL Takfiri terrorist group.

Commander of the volunteer forces in Western Anbar, Qassim Mosleh, told the Arabic-language al-Furat news agency that Danish forces launched eight artillery rounds at a base belonging to the pro-government fighters in the Sa'ada area of al-Qa'im district, located nearly 400 kilometers northwest of the capital Baghdad, on Sunday evening. Mosleh added that the projectiles slammed into an area close to the base, describing the incident as a "deliberate attack." No PMU fighter was dead or injured as a result. Meanwhile, six ISIL terrorists were killed when Iraqi fighter jets carried out an airstrike against a militant position in the eastern province of Diyala.

Commander of the Tigris Operations Command, Mazhar al-Izawi, told Arabic-language al-Sumaria television network that the military aircraft struck an area on the outskirts of Khanaqin district, emphasizing that the assault was mounted following accurate intelligence reports.

Separately, four Iraqi army troopers lost their lives when they engaged in an exchange of gunfire with ISIL Takfiris northwest of Mosul. Lieutenant General Hazem Tawfiq told Arabic-language Basnews news agency that government forces launched a large-scale counter-terrorism operation in Badush Mountains, combing the area for ISIL remnants.

Tawfiq added that the offensive led to skirmishes with a group of extremists who had been hiding in a tunnel. The militants managed to flee after the clashes.

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, who is also the commander-in-chief of Iraqi forces, pledged on June 30 to hunt down ISIL terrorists across Iraq after a series of attacks and abductions carried out by the terrorist group.

"We will chase the remaining cells of terrorism in their hide-outs and we will kill them, we will chase them everywhere, in the mountains and the desert," Abadi said.

Abadi declared the end of military operations against ISIL in the country on December 9, 2017. On July 10 that year, the Iraqi prime minister had formally declared victory over ISIL in Mosul, which served as the terrorists' main urban stronghold in the conflict-ridden country. In the run-up to Mosul's liberation, Iraqi army soldiers and volunteer PMU fighters had made sweeping gains against ISIL. Iraqi forces took control of eastern Mosul in January 2017 after 100 days of fighting, and launched the battle in the west on February 19 last year. The ISIL terrorist outfit began a terror campaign in Iraq in 2014, overrunning vast swathes in lightning attacks.

(Source: Press TV)

Trump says he expects second N. Korea summit 'quite soon'

The United States President Donald Trump said on Monday he expected to meet again soon with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, saying he saw "tremendous progress" in easing tensions. "It looks like we'll have a second summit quite soon," Trump told reporters at the United Nations.

"As you know Kim Jong Un wrote a letter -- a beautiful letter -- asking for a second meeting and we will be doing that," added Trump, who met with Kim in Singapore in June.

He said that Secretary of State Mike Pompeo -- whose last planned visit to Pyongyang was abruptly scuttled by the White House -- would arrange the summit "in the immediate future."

Trump's remarks come one year after he stunned the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) with a blistering attack on North Korea in his speech, threatening to "totally destroy" the communist state and mocking the projectile-building Kim

as "rocket man." But Trump has since billed his diplomacy with North Korea as a key diplomatic success, saying that risks of a conflict have receded.

"Tremendous progress on North Korea," Trump told reporters at the UN headquarters in New York.

"That was a very dangerous time. This is one year later, a much different time."

(Source: AFP)

STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	168624.5
IFX	1949.69

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	49,310 rials
GBP	54,920 rials
AED	11,430 rials

Source: isna.ir

COMMODITIES

WTI	\$72.15/b
Brent	\$80.02/b
OPEC Basket	\$77.13/b
Gold	\$1,203.75/oz
Silver	\$14.36/oz
Platinum	\$836.70/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

NEWS IN BRIEF



Fara Bourse index up 71% in H1

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — IFX, the main index of Iran’s over-the-counter (OTC) market, known also as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), has increased 71 percent to stand at 1,879 points during the first half of current Iranian calendar year (March 21-Setember 22). IRNA reported.

According to the data released by Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO), some 59,165 billion securities worth 368 trillion rials (about \$8.7 billion) were traded during the six-month period.



1,900 semi-finished projects transferred to private sector in a year

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — An official form the Management and Planning Organization of Iran (MPO) announced that 1,900 unfinished projects across the country were privatized during the last Iranian calendar Year (ended March 20, 2018). IRIB reported on Monday.

Addressing a conference at Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), Mohsen Rajaei explained that from the total of 3,000 unfinished projects, of which 2,300 ones were provincial and 700 ones were national, some 1,900 provincial and 65 national ones were divested to the private sector in the said time.

U.S. dream of zero Iranian oil won’t come true: Zanganeh

1 → “Trump claiming that the security and survival of the Persian Gulf states depends on the U.S. support and endeavors was the biggest insult to that nations and even the U.S. allies”, Zanganeh added.

The 10th meeting of the Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee (JMCC) of OPEC and non-OPEC members was held in Algiers on Sunday to discuss developments in the oil market.

The Committee reviewed the monthly report prepared by its Joint Technical Committee (JTC) and the short-term developments in the global oil market, including prospects for 2019.

The meeting was attended by ministers and representatives of 20 oil producing countries of the Declaration of Cooperation (DoC).

India reassures equity investors as liquidity fears grow

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said on Monday the government is ready to ensure credit is available to non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), just a day after the market regulator and the central bank sought to calm skittish investors.

Jaitley’s assurances followed panic selling in the equity market on Friday that pushed the benchmark Nifty more than three percent lower in less than 30 minutes.

It later recovered to end the day down 0.81 percent.

The sell-off was sparked by news that a large fund manager sold short-term bonds issued by Indian NBFC Dewan Housing Finance Corp at a sharp discount, raising fears of wider liquidity problem among NBFCs.

The news came amid soured market sentiment after one of the biggest names in the NBFC sector - Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services (IL&FS) - defaulted on a series of its coupon payments. In a tweet on Monday Jaitley said, “The Government will take all measures to ensure that adequate liquidity is maintained/provided to the NBFCs.”

Jaitley’s message came on the heels of assurances from both the Reserve Bank of India and market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India, which sought separately on Sunday to reassure investors they were closely monitoring developments in financial markets and stood ready to act if needed.

Indian equity markets have hit record highs this year despite sell-offs in domestic bonds and weakness in the rupee that has made it Asia’s worst-performing currency this year.

(Source: Reuters)

Over \$107m worth of state-run shares to be divested in a month

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iranian Privatization Organization (IPO) will offer 4.5 trillion rials (over \$107 million) of state-run shares to the private sector in the current Iranian calendar month of Mehr (September 23-October 22), according to an official in the IPO.

Seyed Jafar Sobhani, the advisor to the head of IPO, said the value of state-run shares transferred to the private sector during the first half of the current year (March 21-Setepeer 22) was more than that

of the whole previous year, IRIB reported on Monday.

As reported last week, IPO has offered 20 trillion rials (about \$476 million) of state-run shares to the private sector since the beginning of the present calendar year.

Privatization in Iran witnessed 100 percent growth during the first five months of this year (March 21-August 22) compared to the same period of time in the previous year, IPO Head Mir Ali Ashraf Abdollah Pouri-Hosseini has previously announced.

OPEC defies Trump’s call for more oil, now what ?



be any obligations for restricting radical actions from oil producing countries like Russia or even U.S., so they are trying to replace OPEC with another organization called OPEC Plus, which has more market share and less power.”

So, this time the organization [or safe to say Saudi Arabia] needed to show the “other side” that OPEC still has its power and despite some obedience, it is not going to fully play by the rules dictated.



In late May, IPO published the list of the enterprises that their shares are planned to be transferred to the private sector by the end of current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2019).

As previously reported, in its planned budget for 1397, the Iranian government expects to earn some 106 trillion rials (about \$2.5 billion) of income from divesting shares of sate-run companies to

the private sector.

The government envisioned a large privatization program in the Fifth Five-Year National Development Plan (2010-2015), aiming to privatize about 20 percent of the state-owned firms each year. Under the present interpretation of the Article 44, some state-owned companies have been privatized to reduce their financial burden on the country’s budget and also increase their productivity.

On the other hand, members with spare capacity also left the Sunday meeting satisfied, no production boost still means a tighter market and consequently higher prices for them and, in case of further cuts in Iran or Venezuela’s oil outputs or exports they would be given the chance to pump more, so no rush!

Iran supporting the “strong” OPEC
All the turmoil aside, Iran immediately voiced it’s satisfaction with the outcomes of the Algeria meeting.

Zanganeh praised the Sunday meeting’s outcome as a “negative” response to U.S. demands saying that the “U.S. dream” to cut Iranian oil exports to zero would not come true.

“The U.S. seeks to reduce Iranian oil exports to zero even for a month, but that dream would not come to reality,” ISNA quoted Zanganeh as saying on Monday.

So apparently after OPEC’s grand gesture toward the U.S. [despite its reasons], Iran is willing to stick by a strong OPEC which defies U.S., even at the expense of its market shares.

“If there is a fall not only from Iran, but anybody else, it is the responsibility of OPEC and non-OPEC to balance the market,” Reuters quoted Hossein Kazempour Ardebili, who represents Iran on OPEC’s board of governors saying on Sunday.

First Announcement

IN THE NAME OF GOD

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING

EXTENSION OF INTERNATIONAL TENDER NO. 97-02/104

Tender Holder:
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

Subject of Two-Stage Tender:
Audio Mixer for Project of Tehran & Provinces (Tehran IRIB Center) according to the tender documents

Deadline of Receiving Documents:
As of publishing second announcement of advertisement latest by the business hour dated on **Monday October 01, 2018.**

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

Type and Amount of Guarantee for Participating in Tender:
The amount of **USD 51,190** which should be in the form of extendable bank guarantee

Time and Place of Delivering Priced Bid:
The sealed A, B & C packages/envelopes should be submitted within one main envelope marked with tender number no later than **15 p.m. on Wednesday October 31, 2018** and submitted to the Secretariat of Commission of Tenders.

Time and Place of Opening Envelopes
The date of opening envelopes A&B is at **8:30 a.m. on Sunday November 04, 2018** in the office of Vice President of IRIB Planning and Financial Resources and opening of envelope C will be after technical evaluation.
It should be noted that bidders should hold license from the authorized bodies.

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

Public Relations Dept. of IRIB

Oil at 4-year high after OPEC rebuffs Trump, fails to raise output

Oil prices jumped more than 2 percent to a four-year high on Monday after OPEC declined to announce an immediate increase in production despite calls by U.S. President Donald Trump for action to raise global supply.

Benchmark Brent crude hit its highest since November 2014 at \$80.94 per barrel, up \$2.14 or 2.7 percent, before easing back to around \$80.65 by 1000 GMT. U.S. light crude was \$1.25 higher at \$72.03.

"This is the oil market's response to the OPEC+ group's refusal to step up its oil production," said Carsten Fritsch, commodities analyst at Commerzbank in Frankfurt.

OPEC leader Saudi Arabia and its biggest oil-producer ally outside the group, Russia, on Sunday ruled out any immediate extra increase in output, effectively rebuffing a call by Trump for action to cool the market.

"I do not influence prices," Saudi Energy Minister Khalid al-Falih told reporters as OPEC and non-OPEC energy ministers gathered in Algiers for a meeting that ended with no formal recommendation for any additional supply boost.

Trump said last week that OPEC "must get prices down now!", but Iranian Oil Minister



Biijan Zanganeh said on Monday OPEC had not responded positively to Trump's demands.

"It is now increasingly evident, that in the face of producers reluctant to raise output, the market will be confronted with supply gaps in the next 3-6 months that it will need

to resolve through higher oil prices," BNP Paribas oil strategist Harry Tchilinguirian told Reuters Global Oil Forum.

Commodity traders Trafigura and Mercuria said on Monday that Brent could rise to \$90 per barrel by Christmas and pass \$100

in early 2019, as markets tighten once U.S. sanctions against Iran are fully implemented from November.

J.P. Morgan said U.S. sanctions on Iran could lead to a loss of 1.5 million bpd, while Mercuria warned that as much as 2 million bpd could be knocked out of the market.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries as well as top producer Russia has been discussing raising output to counter falling supply from Iran, although no decision has been made public yet.

A source familiar with OPEC discussions told Reuters on Friday that OPEC and other producers have been discussing the possibility of raising output by 500,000 bpd.

"We expect that those OPEC countries with available spare capacity, led by Saudi Arabia, will increase output but not completely offset the drop in Iranian barrels," said Edward Bell, commodity analyst at Emirates NBD bank.

U.S. commercial crude oil inventories are at their lowest since early 2015 and although U.S. oil production is near a record high of 11 million barrels per day (bpd), subdued U.S. drilling activity points toward a slowdown in output. (Source: Reuters)

Oil industry needs to invest \$11 trillion to meet demand through 2040, OPEC says

The oil industry will need to shell out about \$11 trillion over the next two decades to meet the world's growing appetite for crude, OPEC says in its annual outlook.

The cost of keeping the globe fueled up assumes that OPEC's vision for the future comes to pass. In that vision, oil demand continues to grow and crude still makes up the lion's share of the energy mix, even as more electric vehicles hit the road.

OPEC has warned for years that oil producers shouldn't get complacent about investing in future production. Spending on new output fell significantly in 2015 and 2016 during an historic oil price downturn.

"While investments picked up slightly in 2017 compared to the previous two years, and the expectations are for higher levels again in 2018, it is vital that as an industry we ensure there is timely and adequate investment so as not to lead to a supply shortage in the future," OPEC Secretary General Mohammad Barkindo said in OPEC's World Oil Outlook 2018.

The report forecasts global oil demand will grow by 7.3 million barrels a day between 2017 and 2023, eventually hitting 104.5 million barrels a day. By 2040, OPEC sees the

world consuming nearly 112 million barrels a day.

That growth will be front-loaded. After growing by 1.6 million barrels a day through 2020, demand growth will slow to just 200,000 bpd between 2035 and 2040.

The biggest driver will be a boom in the number of vehicles on the road, especially in China, India and other parts of Asia. The world's vehicle fleet will more than double to 2.4 billion vehicles by 2040, OPEC forecasts.

By that time, OPEC thinks there will be about 320 million electric vehicles on the road, or about 13 percent of the worldwide fleet.

The United States will play a major role in meeting growing demand for petroleum over the next decade, according to OPEC.

The group forecasts U.S. output of crude oil and other liquids will grow from 14.4 million barrels a day last year to 20.2 million barrels a day in 2025. That growth will mostly come from the nation's shale fields, where drillers use advanced technology to free oil and gas from rock formations.

However, OPEC thinks American production will top out sometime in the back half of the 2020s and ultimately fall

back to about 17 million barrels a day by 2040.

It's worth noting OPEC ministers incorrectly predicted in 2014 that the oil price downturn would force high-cost U.S. shale producers to shut down production. Instead, shale drillers drove down their costs and OPEC was forced to cut output to end the rout.

Strong growth from the United States, Brazil, Canada and Kazakhstan in the coming years won't leave much room for OPEC to put more barrels on the market, according to the forecast. However, the cartel thinks it will start growing its output around 2025. After playing second fiddle to the United States, OPEC projects its output will grow by about 8 million barrels a day to nearly 40 million barrels a day between 2025 and 2040.

Meanwhile, the world's current top producer, Russia, will probably see its production remain flat at about 11.2 million barrels a day through 2023. That's because Russian investment will likely go towards preventing further production declines, and sanctions against Moscow will prevent the industry from investing in shale, deepwater and Arctic drilling. (Source: CNBC)

Major traders are talking about \$100 oil again

Major oil trading houses are predicting the return of \$100 crude for the first time since 2014 as OPEC and its allies struggle to compensate for U.S. sanctions on Iran's exports.

With Brent crude already jumping to an almost four-year high on Monday, that's exactly the kind of price surge President Donald Trump has been seeking to prevent by pressuring the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries to raise production. Yet the cartel and its allies gave mixed signals at a meeting in Algiers on Sunday, ultimately showing little sign they would heed U.S. demands to rapidly push down crude prices.

OPEC's reticence, combined with signs of accelerating supply losses from Iran, created a bullish mood the annual gathering of the Asian oil industry, traders, refiners and bankers in Singapore on Monday.

"The market does not have the supply response for a potential disappearance of 2 million barrels a day in the fourth quarter," Mercuria Energy Group Ltd. co-founder Daniel Jaeggi said in a speech at the S&P Global Platts Asia Pacific Petroleum Conference,

knows as APPEC. "In my view, that makes it conceivable to see a price spike north of \$100 a barrel."

■ Harsher sanctions

When Trump in May announced plans to reimpose sanctions on Iran's oil exports, the market estimated a cut of about 300,000 to 700,000 barrels a day, said Trafigura Group co-head of oil trading Ben Luckock. However, the consensus has now moved to as much as 1.5 million barrels daily as the U.S. is "incredibly serious" about its measures, he said.

Iran's production "is going to be significantly less than it was, and probably lower than most people expected when the sanctions were announced," Luckock said at the APPEC event. He sees \$90 oil by Christmas and \$100 in early 2019.

Brent crude, the benchmark for more than half the world's oil, rose 2.5 percent to \$80.79 a barrel at 9:44 a.m. in London, the highest since November 2014.

OPEC isn't just grappling with U.S. sanctions cutting Iranian supply. Output in Venezuela is also slumping due to an economic

crisis. The biggest source of new global supply, U.S. shale, is also experiencing growing pains as pipeline bottlenecks and workforce issues hamper growth.

■ OPEC waits

For all these urgent supply pressures, the world's largest oil producers adopted a sit-back-and-wait approach at their meeting in the Algerian capital on Sunday. Saudi Arabia, Russia and the United Arab Emirates insisted they had the spare capacity to satisfy the market's needs, but wouldn't tap it preemptively.

"Our plan is to meet demand," said Saudi Energy Minister Khalid Al-Falih. "The reason Saudi Arabia didn't increase more is because all of our customers are receiving all of the barrels they want." The kingdom does expect to pump more in September and increase again in October, he said, without pledging specific volumes.

The bullish sentiment also infected Wall Street bankers and hedge funds, with some caveats.

Francisco Blanch, head of commodities

research at Bank of America Corp., said in a note to clients on Monday that signals from OPEC mean "the likelihood of an oil spike and crash scenario akin to the one observed in 2008 has increased."

A decade ago, Brent crude surged to nearly \$150 a barrel, only to crash just months later as high fuel prices and the global financial crisis triggered a slump in demand. This time, the deepening trade war between the U.S. and China threatens economic growth in Asia and turmoil in emerging countries could amplify the impact of higher prices on global demand growth.

Bank of America's main scenario is for oil prices next year of around \$80 a barrel, according to the note. Citigroup Inc. sees crude at that level in the fourth quarter, but sees risks that it will go higher.

"Balances are precarious and the lack of spare capacity could see crude pricing well above \$90 or even \$100, should all of the potential risk in the market materialize," analysts including Ed Morse said in the note. (Source: Bloomberg)

No chance of meeting EU renewable goals if infrastructure neglected

As Europe continues to confront threats to its energy security and the challenges that climate change will pose to energy provision, we must do everything we can to ensure all EU citizens have a secure supply of energy year-round that is sustainable and not harmful to our environment.

The EU has agreed a 2030 renewables goal of 32 percent. Negotiations on the Electricity Market Design package will continue this autumn with one of the aims of the package being to provide for a higher percentage of renewables in our energy system.

And the Commission is already looking beyond 2030 in its work on a long-term emissions reduction strategy.

Yet we have no chance of meeting our goals if we neglect our energy infrastructure.

■ Grids, interconnectors and infrastructure

Grids, interconnectors and any other infrastructure that help us integrate more renewables and allow energy to flow unhindered across an integrated European energy market are essential.

This is why we have agreed on a 10 percent interconnection target for 2020 and a 15 percent target for 2030. We are also currently debating the next Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) funding program, in which the commission proposes spending €42.3bn on infrastructure projects in the period 2021-2027, 47 percent more than in previous years. Of this total, €8.56bn will go to energy projects alone.

We can already see what a lack of investment in our energy network means. Germany has had issues bringing power generated in the north of the country to where there is much demand in the south.

The grid is not always able to deliver enough electricity to meet demand, causing problems with the grids in Germany itself and sometimes even for its neighbors.

Recent developments such as the new 1,000 MW power line between Germany and Belgium are positive and could



be a model for more interconnectedness and investment.

Another promising development was the outcome of the second energy interconnections summit in Lisbon on 27 July, where the European commission and national leaders from France, Spain and Portugal agreed to increase interconnectedness in the region, attempting to open up a part of the EU that has historically been isolated in terms of energy.

While it is essential that the European Union provides funding for Projects of Common Interest (PCIs) through the CEF to help bring them into being, this cannot be the only way these projects are realized.

We cannot rely on public money alone; the taxpayers and energy consumers cannot pay for it all. Private investment has an essential role to play in helping us to build the necessary infrastructure.

It also frees up public CEF money to go to projects that cannot easily secure private investment.

Projects like ElecLink and Aquind, both interconnectors between France and the UK, the planned connection be-

tween France and Spain across the Bay of Biscay, and the Celtic Interconnector between France and Ireland, to name a few, are all interconnectors that have PCI status and must be supported in one way or another if we want to see them completed in the next few years.

A recent decision by the European Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER) not to allow a private interconnector to use its returns to repay its investors sets a worrying precedent for future private investment in our PCIs and risks scaring investors away from projects that we need to be carried out.

While the European Commission insists on connectivity with one hand, one of its agencies is frustrating it with the other.

Member states themselves must also ensure that such projects are allowed to proceed and not hindered by national laws that contradict EU energy legislation.

National transmission system operators have their role to play, but so do private projects. Vested interests must not be allowed to strangle innovation or competition.

PCI projects are infrastructure projects recognized by the European Commission as being vital to helping integrate our energy market.

We need to be supporting PCIs in any way we can. While this not always mean public money, it does mean allowing a regulatory environment in which private projects can proceed.

With the pressing challenges facing us in terms of an integrated energy market and a decarbonized economy, we cannot afford to ignore any avenue that helps us along the way.

We need to invest in all of our energy infrastructure, using both public and private means, and make sure we are not placing roadblocks which prevent us meeting our climate and energy commitments. (Source: euobserver.com)

S&P Global Platts eyes Dated Brent crude price assessment reform

Commodity price reporting agency S&P Global Platts is canvassing reforms to its Dated Brent crude oil price assessment that would include delivered shipments to Rotterdam, the company said on Monday.

Platts is inviting feedback to proposals by Dec. 10, 2018.

Platts' Dated Brent crude price assessment is a key benchmark in global oil markets, underpinning many refined fuel products and also financial crude oil futures contracts.



However, falling North Sea crude oil output, including at the Brent field, has forced Platts to add other crudes into its price assessments.

In its latest proposal, Platts suggested including North Sea crude on a Cost, Insurance and Freight (CIF) basis into Rotterdam.

"Platts is seeking feedback on the possible inclusion into the Dated Brent CIF Rotterdam assessment of grades like Statfjord, Gullfaks, CPC Blend, WTI Midland, Qua Iboe and Forcados," the company said in a statement.

Vera Blei, Platts' global director of oil markets, said the proposal "reflects the reality that the North Sea market is now balanced between FOB (Free On Board) production, oil stored, and oil on the water ready for delivery into receiving terminals."

Allowing the CIF Rotterdam crudes to be reflected in its price assessments, could more than double total volume of crudes underpinning the Dated Brent assessment, Blei said during the opening of the annual Asia Pacific Petroleum Conference (APPEC) in Singapore.

Platts said it was also seeking feedback on the relevance of other sources of light sweet crude oil delivered into North West Europe. (Source: Reuters)

It's up to German business to opt to buy Russian gas: Sigmar Gabriel

In an interview with Der Spiegel, former German foreign minister Sigmar Gabriel, outlined his point of view on the ongoing Nord Stream project, as well as lambasted those who distort the letter of the law for the sole purpose of penalizing Russia.

The European Commission doesn't forbid the construction of the gas pipeline Nord Stream 2, as this project doesn't contradict European Law, former German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel told the German magazine Der Spiegel in an interview.



"I don't support those who pervert the law for the sake of punishing Russia. And as long as Moscow adheres to European regulation, it is up to German economy to decide who it should buy gas from," the politician asserted.

Separately, the former German foreign minister vehemently opposed the Der Spiegel journalist's statement that "it is not politically smart" to always rely upon the criteria of lawfulness.

"You should think again about what you've said. If we rely on 'wits' and not the law, we will be just a step close to abuse of power. The terms of agreements must be met. We accuse Vladimir Putin of changing laws, when this is politically justified. We have no right to do so," Sigmar Gabriel stressed.

During the course of the interview, the former German diplomat also explained why he, while he was a foreign minister, without Chancellor Angela Merkel's approval, suggested easing sanctions against Russia in exchange for placing a UN peace-support mission in Eastern Ukraine.

"I noted unambiguously then that this is my personal point of view and it is different from the government's official stance. But I bet this is exactly what's going to happen. If Russia agrees to take heavy weaponry from there and put there 'blue helmets', it will logically lead to the sanctions being reversed," Gabriel noted.

The journalist in his turn reminded the politician of the conditions needed for the Western sanctions to be withdrawn, namely the restoration of Ukrainian territorial integrity.

"We must continue to pursue this, but anyone who wants jam on it is sure to lose," the ex-minister retorted.

Nord Stream 2 AG is owned by Public Joint Stock Company Gazprom, while its investors include France's Engie, Austria's OMV AG, UK-Dutch Royal Dutch Shell, and Germany's Uniper and Wintershall. The pipeline is designed to bring gas from Russia to Germany via the Baltic Sea. While the project is lauded by a number of European countries as promising, it is strictly opposed by others, including Ukraine, which believes it will suffer transit revenue drops when Nord Stream 2 starts operating.

U.S. President Donald Trump also bashed the initiative, when responding to journalists' questions before meeting his Polish counterpart Andrzej Duda. He said the U.S. deems it "inappropriate" and "very bad for the German people" that European country is paying Russia "billions and billions of dollars." Washington is meanwhile taking measures to block the Nord Stream 2 project. Most specifically, the CAATSA law (Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act), adopted last year, stipulates a possibility of slapping unilateral limitations on companies, which, among others, are directly involved in the gas pipeline project. (Source: Sputnik)

NEWS IN BRIEF

**Pakistan PM to India: shun arrogance, hold talks**

INTERNATIONAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — The relations between India and Pakistan have their own ups and downs. After recent peace overtures between the two warring countries, the accusations and counter-accusations are back.

A few days after India canceled the talks between the foreign ministers of India and Pakistan on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York, Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan said that his government's offer of "friendship" to India should not be considered as its weakness.

Earlier, in a strongly-worded statement posted on Twitter, Khan had expressed his dismay over the cancellations of talks by New Delhi. "Disappointed at the arrogant and negative response by India to my call for the resumption of the peace dialogue. However, all my life I have come across small men occupying big offices who do not have the vision to see the larger picture," he stated.

India had cancelled the talks, a day after accepting Pakistan's proposal, citing the killings of police personnel in Kashmir by militants and the release of postage stamps to commemorate the death of Kashmiri militant commander Burhan Wani.

**Donald Trump refuses to meet Afghan President**

INTERNATIONAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Afghan President Ashraf Ghani has reportedly cancelled his visit to New York to attend the UN General Assembly (UNGA) session after Donald Trump refused to meet him, said a media report.

An official in Afghanistan's ministry of foreign affairs (MoFA) was quoted saying by Pajhwok Afghan News that it was expected that President Trump and President Ghani would meet on the sidelines of the UNGA meeting in New York.

He said a delegation in this regard recently visited the U.S., but President Trump turned down the request, saying that Ghani could meet vice president Mike Pence.

Afghanistan's National Security Council spokesman Qader Shah said he was unaware of the development while the President Ghani's office rejected the claim. Deputy presidential spokesman Shah Hussain Murtazavi said the president was not intending to attend the UNGA meeting.

Dr. Abdullah will underline the need for countering terrorism and narcotics, and for enhancing regional and international cooperation with Afghanistan in this regard, the statement added. The CEO would explain Afghanistan's preparations for the parliamentary and district council elections.

**'Pakistan not in financial emergency'**

INTERNATIONAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — As the speculation grows over whether Pakistan will approach the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a bailout or explore other options, Pakistan's finance minister has quashed the apprehensions.

Asad Umar, a key aide of Prime Minister Imran Khan, has dispelled the perception that Pakistan is facing a financial emergency and needs immediate bailout. In an interview with a foreign media outlet, Umar said there is no need to rush to the IMF for a bailout.

"Pakistan is not in an emergency situation that requires it to rush to the IMF to seek a bailout," he said. "We have neither stopped imports nor imposed financial sanctions."

However, he hastened to add that Pakistan is aware of the challenges. "We need to take well-measured decisions. As a situation emerges, we take steps to manage it. We don't want to take decisions in emergency," said the finance minister.

Regarding the scheduled visit of IMF's staff mission to Pakistan on September 27, Umar said, "We are in discussion with them, but this is not to negotiate for a loan. Our purpose is to do our homework, in case we want to approach them at some stage."

He had earlier said that Pakistan will take a decision to go to IMF for a bailout by the end of September. The apprehensions of financial emergency are looming large in Pakistan.

**Malaysian PM returns to world stage**

INTERNATIONAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad is set to make a return to the world stage. Mahathir, 93, arrives in New York on Tuesday to attend the 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

It has been nearly 15 years since the firebrand Malaysian premier addressed the UN general assembly - on Sept 25, 2003, about a month before he retired as Malaysia's fourth prime minister.

He had then called for a restructuring of the UN, saying that the world had "lost its way". "There is a Malaysian saying that when one loses his way, he should go back to the beginning. We need to go back to the beginning," he said famously.

Fifteen years down the line, Mahathir will take the UN podium again on Friday, where he will be speaking in capacity as Malaysia's seventh prime minister.

Malaysia's Foreign Minister Saifuddin Abdullah, speaking to media persons, said Mahathir would lay out the framework of the PH government's foreign policy in his UN speech.

Saifuddin said the fundamental principles of Malaysia's foreign policy would be maintained and ASEAN would figure on top of the agenda. Malaysia will also continue to practice the policy of neutrality and strive for friendly relations with all countries, he added.

'17 years after U.S. invaded Afghanistan, problems remains endemic'

INTERNATIONAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — The staggering failures of the U.S. and its allies in war-ravaged Afghanistan have been documented by many global think tanks and written about by many seasoned regional observers.

Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), the U.S. watchdog in Afghanistan, in its quarterly reports has been documenting how the billions of dollars spent by the U.S. in Afghanistan were being lost to corruption, waste and futile efforts.

The quarterly SIGAR reports illustrate the failure of U.S. led coalition forces to bring peace to Afghanistan, to eliminate terrorism, and to dismantle the burgeoning opium economy.

John Sopko, who has served as the special inspector general of the watchdog for past six years, is clearly disillusioned. He admits that the 17-year-old war in Afghanistan has been a failure. In an interview with Canada's Global News, Sopko bluntly noted that 17 years after Western nations invaded Afghanistan, problems remain endemic. The capabilities of Afghan security forces remain questionable, corruption remains endemic and rampant, and opium production continues to fuel insurgency, complicating matters.

"You go to bed with dogs, you wake up with fleas," said Sopko. "That happened in



Afghanistan." "These are problems we still have to face. Some of them we contributed to. On corruption, we threw gasoline on the fire," he said, referring to former warlords empowered by the U.S.

An escalation in terrorist attacks and fighting between the Afghan security forces and insurgents in different parts of the country has pushed the death toll of civilians this year

to a record high — 1,692 civilians killed by June 30, according to the UN. And despite Trump administration upping the ante, sending more troops to Afghanistan, the security situation on the ground remains unchanged.

In August, Taliban forces overran and briefly captured the strategic city of Ghazni. Today, Taliban is believed to be controlling a large chunk of area in provinces. SIGAR

estimates only around 56 percent of the country's districts under government control, and a third of Afghanistan "contested."

In its July quarterly report, SIGAR reported the Afghan National Army was at 86 percent of its authorized strength, 31,084 soldiers short of its goal. But sources say the actual numbers could be even worse.

The ambitious counter-narcotics campaign of the U.S. led coalition is another grim story of disaster. The United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reported that the area of poppy cultivation in Afghanistan increased to a record 328,000 hectares in 2017, up 63 percent compared with a year earlier.

Opium production skyrocketed 87 percent to a record 9,000 metric tons. This despite the billions of dollars pumped into the campaign.

Sopko is not the only foreign official disappointed with the state of affairs in Afghanistan. Gen. Nicholson, the outgoing commander of the U.S. led coalition forces in Afghanistan, in his farewell speech recently, also seemed disillusioned, appealing all sides to end the protracted war.

"It is in the best interest of the U.S., its allies and the people of Afghanistan if the foreign forces withdraw from Afghanistan. Seventeen years of war have only brought death and destruction, without any results," said Shahzad Zaman, a Kabul-based analyst.

India, Pakistan, Afghanistan condemn Ahvaz attack, call for joint efforts against terrorism

By Syed Zafar Mehdi

TEHRAN - The deadly terror attack in Iran's southwestern city of Ahvaz on Saturday has drawn strong condemnations from across the world, including Iran's neighbors India, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

In a statement, India strongly condemned the "dastardly terrorist attack" and conveyed condolences to the people and the government of Iran. "We convey our heartfelt condolences to the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the families of the victims, and wish speedy recovery to those injured," said the statement issued by external affairs ministry.

Pakistan's foreign office also issued a statement, condemning the terrorist attack. "Pakistan strongly condemns the terrorist attack on a military parade in Ahvaz, Iran in which several lives were reportedly lost," it stated. "Our deepest condolences to the families who have lost their loved ones in this heinous attack. Pakistan condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations."

Afghanistan also strongly condemned the attack. "The government of Afghanistan believes that terrorism is a regional and global phenomenon and there is a need for all (regional) countries to fight against this through cooperation," the statement read. It further added that the Afghan government believes that terrorism doesn't know any borders and terrorists "are enemies of humanity".

Former Afghan president Hamid Karzai took to Twitter to condemn the attack and called upon the regional countries to help bring peace in the region.



Indonesia also condemned the attack and expressed "deepest condolences and sympathy" with the victims of the attack and their families, said a statement issued by country's foreign ministry.

The Islamic Party of Malaysia (IPM), in a statement, also condemned the Ahvaz attack and said the Muslim world must strongly denounce the U.S. and its allies for "perpetuating this attack".

In Kashmir, people took to streets to condemn the attack and blasted the U.S. and its allies in the Arab world for aiding and abetting such crimes against humanity.

Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah and Palestinian resistance movement Hamas, in separate statements, also

condemned the Ahvaz attack. "The attack was carried out by satanic hands in a bid to destabilize Iran and punish the Islamic Republic for being a sovereign state and refusing to be subordinate to U.S.," read a statement by Hezbollah.

The attack, which claimed at least 25 lives, including children and the veterans of Iran-Iraq war, took place during a military ceremony to mark the National Defence Week. The attack was carried out by four heavily-armed terrorists linked to groups sponsored by Saudi Arabia and its allies.

The ceremony is held every year to mark the start of the Iran-Iraq war that broke out after the forces of then Iraqi president Saddam Hussain crossed the Iranian border on Sept 22, 1980 and occupied two of its bordering towns.

Following the attack, Foreign Minister Javad Zarif said Iran holds the "regional terror sponsors and their U.S. masters" responsible for the attack, and said the terrorists were "recruited, armed and paid by a foreign regime," stopping short of naming the country.

The chief of the staff of Iran's armed forces Major General Mohammad Bagheri vowed to track those responsible for the attack anywhere in the world. "I assure the great Iranian nation that their sons in the armed forces would chase the terrorists and would not rest until uprooting this despicable phenomenon."

President Hassan Rouhani, shortly before boarding a flight for New York to attend the UN General Assembly, said it's "absolutely clear" who is behind the dastardly attack. "Those who have caused this catastrophe were Saddam's mercenaries as long as he was alive and then changed masters," he said.

U.S. losing its technological and economic might

By Mudasar Sheikh

TEHRAN — According to Alibaba group co-founder Jack Ma, U.S. has spent \$14.2 trillion on 13 wars during the past 30 years. Bloomberg recently reported that the U.S. spending will exceed its revenues by \$804 billion in the fiscal year through September and till 2020. U.S. budget deficit is estimated to surpass \$1 trillion and country's debt has already crossed \$21 trillion mark.

All is not well with the world's so-called 'superpower'. Many top U.S. lawmakers and entrepreneurs have expressed concerns over new economic recession which may hit the country at the end of 2019 or in the first quarter of 2020.

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) Brigadier General Hossein Salami was right when he said recently that the U.S. has lost its capacity both militarily and economically to enforce any aggression against Iran. These are not conspiracy theories but experts sharing their views regarding the slow and painful demise of the U.S. war machinery.

The U.S. holds shadowy business practices by China responsible for its economic misery and Iran's influence in the Middle East for the destruction of the region. But according to Jack Ma and Richard Duncan actually, Trumps tax overhaul, trade war, aggressive quantitative tightening and excessive spending on wars are primary reasons for the U.S. decline and the destruction of sovereign nations like Syria, Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan.

Back in 1973 when Henry Kissinger struck a deal with the Saudi monarchy that resulted in the birth of petrodollar scam, it provided the U.S. with access to the unlimited money supply. Since then U.S government is running huge budget deficits without any substantial inflation and the same money power has been used to oppress the legitimate governments across the globe. With the American military might facing embarrassing defeat in Afghanistan, Syria and in Yemen, now its



Ponzi scheme (creditism) of unlimited money supply that fuels America's war machine is threatening its economy.

Since 1973 the nature of the global economy has shifted from capitalism to creditism where economic growth depends on accelerating credit growth. During 1970s, U.S. dollar standard replaced the Bretton woods quasi-gold standard and soon after that U.S started to run extraordinary larger trade deficits. The U.S imports skyrocketed and in reaction, the exporting countries were flooded with U.S. dollars.

Corporate CEOs, Bankers and U.S government enormously benefitted from this fraudulent system and allowed the U.S. military industrial complex to finance their war machine throughout the globe. These budget deficits and paper money creation created a bubble which lasted for three decades and finally burst in 2008. Later a \$3.5 trillion dollar quantitative easing injection saved the global economy from falling into the recession.

Now the Fed has reversed its course of action by introducing quantitative tightening

which is creating the shortage of U.S dollars into the global economy which in turn has strained the emerging market economies. The future prospect is even worse as the recent statement by Fed chairman Jerome Powell indicated a stricter quantitative tightening policy. According to economist Richard Duncan and strategists from JP Morgan, the quantitative tightening can land the U.S. and global economy into a new recession.

Currently, the U.S economy is facing a precarious situation where the private sector does not earn enough to pay the interest on already borrowed loans. On the other hand, government sector can expand its debt but they have actually decided to contract it by adopting the quantitative tightening thus creating the liquidity crisis in the U.S and all around the globe whose effects are quite obvious to notice from the depreciating currencies in the emerging market economies.

According to economist Edward Griffin, U.S. has exported its inflation to other countries through the contemporary fraudu-

lent monetary system. The Ponzi scheme of numbers cannot last forever and there is an unavoidable default in its way unless the U.S. shifts its focus from endless wars and oppression to a more productive approach. Given the hard-nosed policies of Trump administration the chances for transition to a peaceful approach seems very unlikely.

U.S. deficit spending combined with bad economic decisions is threatening its economy and on the other hand, U.S. dollar is just a few short years away from losing its global dominance according to the investor, Jim Rogers. The U.S. has already lost its manufacturing capacity by offshoring its production facilities that have also transferred the technical expertise and other skills to developing nations like China.

In a new era of artificial intelligence and blockchain technology, dollar hegemony has little to do with global superiority and the leaders of these emerging technologies will decide the direction of the global economy and politics.

According to some experts, artificial Intelligence is a new yardstick to measure the country's economic prosperity. In a report by CB Insight regarding AI trends for 2018 China has surpassed U.S. with respect to the preferred destination for AI investments and in the case of deep learning, China has registered six times more patents than its rival U.S. American startup ecosystem research organization "Startup Genome" in 2018 reported that China holds four times more patents in artificial intelligence and three times in blockchain as compared to the U.S.

Huge manufacturing base and the largest population of China is going to provide an edge to the country in emerging AI and Blockchain based economy. It has been estimated that productivity will contribute \$6.6 trillion and the share of consumption side will be \$9.1 trillion in a total \$15.7 trillion economic growth that is expected from AI and Blockchain. So, the focus is shifting from the U.S. to China.

Mattis leaving will not change U.S. approach toward Iran: Former Sen

➔ A: Mattis is very well regarded by both democrats and republicans, so to fire him would be an unpopular thing and would probably be harmful to republicans in the midterm elections. So, they would want to wait until after it, if he is to be fired.

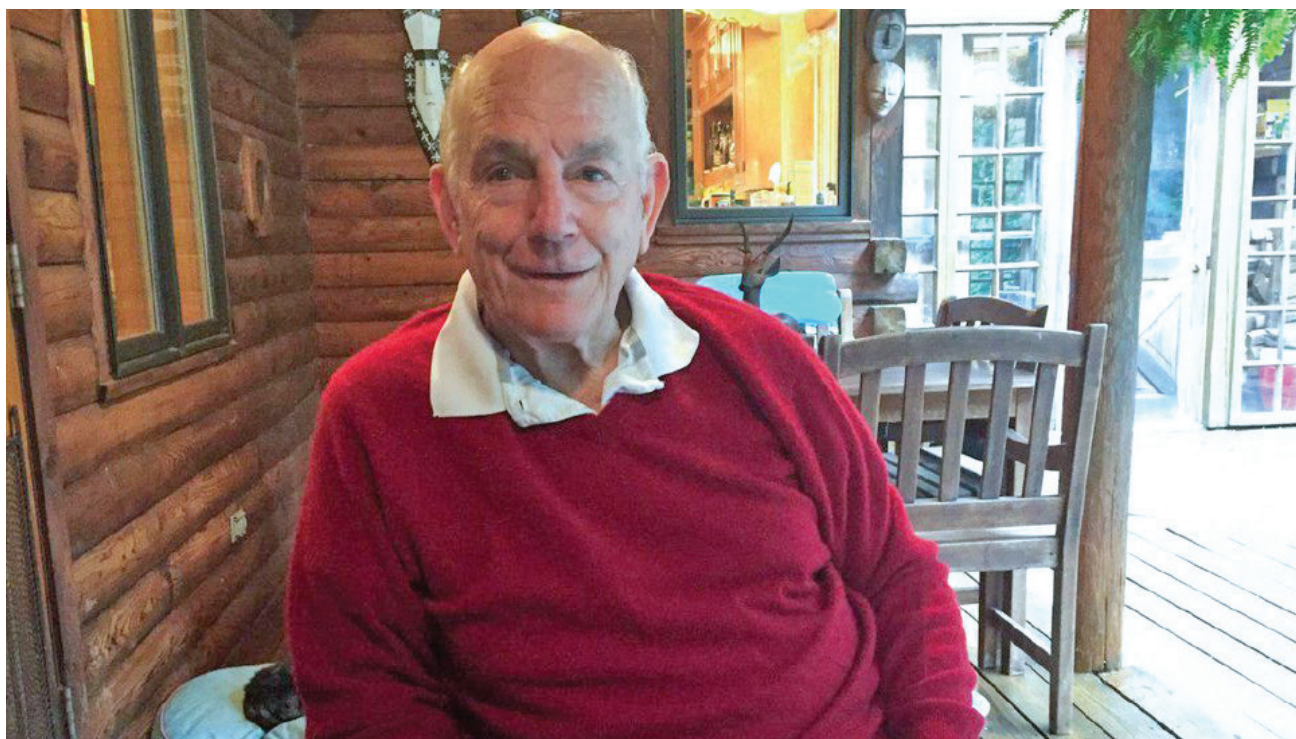
The congressional elections are very important for Trump because if the democrats take over then they have the power of investigation and the power of subpoena, and so, as frequently happens in American politics the party out of power may have the House, and therefore the ability to make life miserable for the president.

■ Some analysts argue that Trump's approach to Iran will intensify after the congressional elections if Defense Secretary Mattis is ousted, since Mattis is a moderating force on foreign policy. What is your opinion?

A: Well, the president has taken a strong position already on Iran. And Mattis - if he disagreed with the president, which we think he did - wasn't able to dissuade the president. So, I don't know what more the president will do than he already has done putting on these strong sanctions. I think an attack on Iran would be unthinkable. My guess is that Mattis leaving will not make a great deal of difference in his approach toward Iran.

■ Trump is scheduled to chair a meeting at the United Nations Security Council about Iran. We can imagine what charges he will make regarding Iran. From a political point of view (not a legal one), should the country that has violated the nuclear deal have authority to preside over this meeting?

A: Well, I do not believe that the presi-



dent will preside over that meeting. I think it would highlight the difficulties with our allies, France, Germany, England, etc, and so I think he will rethink that question. It is clear it is not a good thing to do and will not occur in my opinion.

■ Do you have anything else to add about

the upcoming elections?

A: The midterms will change things a lot. They won't necessarily change Trump's mind, but the theatrics will be changed completely. My guess is that the Muller investigation report will not come out until after the midterms and if as expected the democrats take

over the House, then the question of what is contained in the Muller investigation will become central and the House will then have to make its decision on whether to call for impeachment. My guess is that the House will not impeach unless there is a very strong case revealed by the Muller investigation.

U.S., Israel, Saudi and UAE want to "Syrianize" Iran: Prof. Entessar

➔ ■ How do you assess the U.S. administration's reaction to the attack which it did not explicitly call the action as a terrorist act?

A: I did not expect the Trump administration to call the attack a terrorist act. If you recall, a similar attack occurred last June when a group of Takfiris gunned down innocent Iranians in the Majlis area, the Trump administration seemed to be giddy about it and intimated that Iran had it coming to it. No terrorist act against Iran

will be called a terrorist act by the U.S. administration no matter how dastardly it may be.

■ What can be the real goal of the attack perpetrators at this time?

A: The Ahvaz terrorist attack should not be considered an isolated incident. Here are two interconnected axes operating against Iran today. One is the Washington axis and the other one is the Saudi Arabia-Israel-UAE axis. Although they may pursue different tactics against Iran, they

have one overall strategy towards Tehran. Their principal goal is to create chaos in Iran and thus hasten the demise of the Iranian government and even the disintegration of the country. In short, these two axes want to "Syrianize" Iran by any means necessary. At times, they may focus on economic strangulation of the country, at other times they may organize terrorist attacks inside the country, while at other times they may rely on a combination of highlighting their soft war strategy with "hard war" tactics.

Five episodes from the Shia Muslims of Kashmir

➔ This was the common argument among Shia fellows of Kashmir at that time. Shias were apparently known as the allies of India. If a check post or Yatra camp was to run, a Shia locality or Village was commonly the best option during that time span.

After a Shia-Sunni conflict was burning a neighborhood and mostly Indian army could undoubtedly been seen supporting the Shia minorities. Shia Sunni gaps were widened in such a way that the news of an assault on a Sunni mosque and massacre of Sunni Muslims was hardly touching the Shia community of Kashmir.

■ Episode 4; 2016

Burhan Wani a 23 year old Sunni militant, with a bright face and moderate religious personality who even cared about his Hindu neighbors and surely nourished in a well-educated and cultured family gunned down by Indian security forces. A militant well-known to the social media users of Kashmir. His death attracted the lakhs of people and at a sudden became national hero for all Kashmiri lifetime, regardless of their sect. Authentic sources noted More than 60000 people joined his funeral. And resulted in more than 100 days of consecutive sheer shutdown in the whole Kashmir valley.

Shias of Kashmir mostly following the Imam Khamenei were also receiving green signals from the speeches of the Iranian supreme leader when the name of Kashmir was mentioned beside the names of the oppressed nations of world, from Palestine to Yemen and Myanmar. The brutal crash down of the protesters during 4 months with hundreds of pellet gun victims, boiled the blood of Shia



Last Friday of Ramadan in 2018 majority of Shia gatherings in support of Palestine were accompanied with anti-India slogans and pro freedom chants that was a new trend.

even though there were few cases of victims from Shia community. Placards and banners were erected in solidarity throughout several Shia localities but still the correlation between Shias and the new uprising of Kashmir was not apparent.

■ Episode 5; 2018

Step to updates of the time, pinches one's mind to ponder especially of Kashmiri Muslims collectively. The rise of Hindu nationalism under the rule of BJP and Islamophobic atmosphere in India, besides India-US and Israel connections

and the continuous human rights violations inside Kashmir, changed the boiling Shias of Kashmir into the steams of slogans that were heard for the first time loudly during international Quds Day possessions of the valley. Last Friday of Ramadan in 2018 majority of Shia gatherings in support of Palestine were accompanied with anti-India slogans and pro freedom chants that was a new trend.

This first step was completed with the second one in Muharram events. Pictures of Burhan Wani were carried by Shia mourners in different events receiving positive reactions from Sunni the fellows of the valley. Being deprived from the traditional processions of 8th Muharram under the pretext of security, this year Kashmiri Shia insisted on pouring into the main streets ending to the city center of Srinagar that resulted in several clashes with security forces. Dozens were arrested and beaten and many are still in detention. But the huge mob managed to reach the destined place and took front on the main streets of Capital city Srinagar and commemorated and performed the Azadari rituals after three decades of continuous ban by Indian authorities.

The message was crystal for all sides: Shia masses of Kashmir valley have chosen a new track. They will never play the game of Pakistan meanwhile cannot remain indifferent towards the ongoing crisis inside the valley and will make use of any opportunity to show their stands: from Quds Day to Muharram processions. The situation is a result of international and domestic political dynamics of India and more is expected.

Roohulla@gmail.com

Next election is a referendum for Trump: Pillar

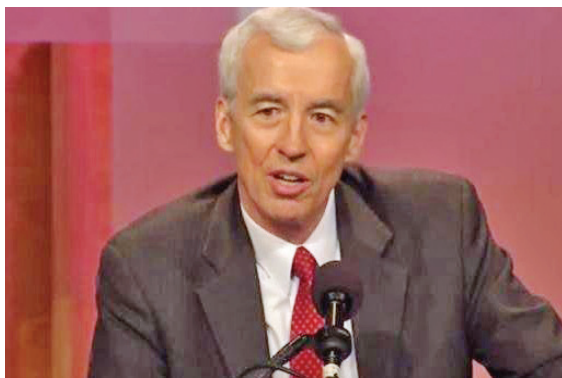
➔ From Trump's perspective, the president probably is feeling constrained by Mattis steering him away from damaging policies, and Trump may be somewhat jealous of the favorable press that Mattis gets.

■ Why does Trump postpone this decision after Congressional elections? And how much congressional elections are important for him?

A: This election will be even more of a referendum on the presidency than most mid-term elections are. Opinion polls show that more than ever before, voters' intentions to vote for a Republican or a Democrat correlate highly with their views, positive or negative, of the president. So this election is very important for Donald Trump not only to try to retain Republican control of Congress but also a show of approval or disapproval of himself. For Trump the latter consideration is even more important than how the Republican Party fares.

■ Some analysts argue that the Trump approach to Iran will intensify after the congressional elections, because James Mattis is a more reasonable person than other foreign policy and security policy makers. What is your opinion?

A: A trend generally in Trump's presidency has been



toward personnel changes that have put into office people who agree with the president more or who will restrain him less than did the officials they replaced. Although Mattis has his own strong views about Iran, which he sees as a threat, he has opposed some of Trump's more destructive policies, such as the reneging on the nuclear agreement, the Joint

Comprehensive Plan of Action. Mattis has a lot of prestige, and his departure is likely to mean Trump's policy toward Iran will become at least as intense and as hostile as it is now.

■ Trump is scheduled to Chairing a meeting at the United Nations Security Council about Iran. We can imagine what charges he will make to Iran. From a political point of view, does have the person who has violated the nuclear deal the authority to preside this meeting? Of course, I am not referring to the legal aspect.

A: Chairmanship of the Security Council reflects a simple rotating of that duty among all member states, and it never has rested on judgments about a specific state's adherence to international agreements, international law, or even actions of the Security Council itself. No doubt other participants in the coming Security Council meeting--and not just Iran, which needs to be given an opportunity to speak--will raise the point that the United States under Trump has been in violation of an agreement that became enshrined in a Security Council resolution that passed by a unanimous vote. Trump's advisers reportedly have warned about this turn the meeting could take, and now the United States is saying the subject will cover nonproliferation and not just Iran.

Few like Hurr have courage to face dilemma



By Easar Mehdi

Political Analyst

ISLAMABAD — History is replete with the stories of oppressors (mustaqbirin) intimidating and subjugating the oppressed (mustazafin). History also bears eloquent testimony to the fact that the oppressed always prevail over the oppressors. The epic tragedy of Karbala, which covers a whole gamut of social, political and religious dimensions, is a shining example of that.

The events and circumstances that culminated in the greatest tragedy recorded in history are relevant and significant in every age and time. The conflict between the competing notions of good and bad and the ontological struggle of truth against the falsehood is omnipresent.



Karbala is an illustration of the everlasting conflict between good and evil. It is a source of that luminous spark that washed from our hearts the murkiness of the days of tyranny and suffocation. It calls for action in the spirit of the Quranic verse: "surely Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change it on their own". It promises change upon action. It promises Islam.

Karbala is a fearless voice that still echoes in the annals of history, a storm that chafes and shakes the tyrants, a free conscience that stirs within man the spirit of revolution, a brilliant torch of resistance against tyranny and a seat to declare a manifesto for what the philosopher Bertrand Russell calls a free man's worship.

One of the astounding features of Karbala is its multidimensional aspect that presents a theme and a character for every aspect of human society. One such character is Al-Hurr ibn Yazid al Tamimi who is like us in many ways. He is an employee of Yazid, a commander of his army. He prays five times a day, fulfils all essential obligations of a Muslim. He qualifies as a good Muslim and carries out his duties responsibly.

He obeys Yazid's command by obstructing Imam Hussain's (AS) path and is given the task, along with Omar Ibn Saad, to assassinate Imam Hussain (AS). He was all set to perform his 'duty', not because of his personal rivalry with Imam (AS), but because of the requirement of his profession, of the demands by his employer.

He, like all of us today, was concerned about his bread and butter, his professionalism and career, no matter who governs and controls the people and the state. He was paid handsomely for his services, his professionalism and had the freedom to offer prayers and practise his religion. Of course, this was at the heavy cost of his true freedom!

Hurr, after profound thought and keen observation of Imams (AS) character and the truth of his mission, was deeply influenced, what the Danish existential philosopher Soren Kierkegaard calls, Abrahams anguish. This situation demanded an Abraham in him. And we all know Hurr was the first to jump into this fire in Karbala, only to last forever.

Hurr chose Imam Hussain (AS) over Yazid; he chose action over reaction; he chose truth over falsehood. More significantly, like Ammar and Yasir, he chose Holy Prophet (pbuh) over Abu Jahl. He chose to be free. He chose to be Hurr!

While describing the emancipatory goals of Imam Hussain's (AS) revolt, Dr Ali Shariati, writes about him, "And Hurr has not played with words and concepts, but with love and blood. If one grasps the depth of Imam Sadiq's saying that all days are Ashura, all places are Karbala and all months are Moharram, one readily feels the extension, and all human beings are Hurr!" For every human being faces this dilemma, this Abrahamic anguish, this urge to choose between good and bad, right and wrong, oppressed and the oppressor, Hussain and Yazid, in this life. He may either choose to be a Hurr (literally meaning free in Arabic) or a 'no one.'

French existentialist Jean Paul Sartre is right in saying that existence rules and precedes essence. A man exists by being in this world and finds essence through choice. It is by virtue of this choice, in fact the free choice, that a man finds his essence. This essence makes him the rightful claimant of being a perfect man (Insaan-e-Kamil).

Hurr's choice made him a hero that keeps watering the revolutionary spirit of Islam. He was the first to nourish the cry of Hussain's (AS). No! He was the first martyr of Karbala.

The distinctive effect and approach of Karbala is peculiar only because of Imam Hussain's (AS) presence, a persona that remains overwhelmingly absent from the leadership manuals that guide leaders of the Muslim world. What ails the struggles in conflict zones of present-day world where people face oppression is the lack of the spirit of Karbala, absence of leaders like Hussain (AS) and Hurr to make the remarkable choice.

Karbala's teachings are a sacred mountain that is still an uncharted territory - unearthed and unfathomable in its entirety. It is a timeless event that will perpetually call the faithful and the believers to stand up against tyranny and injustice!

Author is a PhD scholar in the Department of International Relations at South Asian University, New Delhi. He can be reached at eesar.mehdi@gmail.com.

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subway

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modern furn, balcony
parking spot

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Suitable for Foreigners

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Apt in Darakeh
95 sq.m, 1 Bdr., fully furn
almost new, parking spot

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Ms.Diba: 09128103206

Apt in Farmanieh
4th floor, 220 sq.m, 3 Bdrs furn
elevator, storage
spj, parking spot

\$3000

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Apt in Zafaranieh
14th floor, 146 sq.m, furn & unfurn
3 Bdrs., equipped kitchen, laundry
3 parking spots with security
shopping center and restaurants
in ground floor of complex, play
ground for kids, panoramic

Ms.Diba: 09128103206

Villa

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2 side entrances

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Ms.Diba: 09128103206

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Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Duplex Villa in Fereshteh
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swimming pool

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Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Luxury Villa in Farmanieh
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7 Bdrs., 2 level, renovated garden
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Ms.Diba: 09128103206

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Ms.Diba: 09128103206

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Ms.Diba: 09128103206

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Ms.Diba: 09128103206

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Parking spot, spj

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Ms.Diba: 09128103206

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Niavaran (\$2500) 250sq.m, 3bdrs S/p, S, J, & pkg	Sa'adat abad (\$2000) 250sq.m, 3bdrs, S/p, S J, balcony, pkg, & F.F	Jordan bldg 5storey, 15bdrs pkgs (\$6000)

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Why a regular bedtime may benefit your heart and metabolism

New research — which is now published in the journal Scientific Reports — examines and highlights the importance of regular bedtimes for optimal heart and metabolic health.

Going to bed at the same time each night may keep both your heart and metabolism healthy. The cardiometabolic health risks linked to sleep deprivation are numerous.

These health risks include weight gain, insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease.

Going to bed and waking up at the same time every day, however, is also vital for health.

A study from last year reported that “social jet lag” — that is, the difference in sleep and waking times between the week-end and the weekdays — can also raise the risk of heart disease.

Previous studies have also suggested that obesity and diabetes may be on the cards for those who hit the snooze button on weekends.

Now, new research from the Duke University Medical Center in Durham, NC, adds to the mounting evidence suggesting that regular bedtimes are key to a person’s heart health and the good functioning of their metabolism.

Jessica Lunsford-Avery, Ph.D. — an assistant professor in psychiatry and behavioral sciences from the Duke University Medical Center — led the new study.

■ Bedtimes and cardiometabolic health

Lunsford-Avery and team examined the sleeping patterns of almost 2,000 adults aged 54–93, who had no history of sleep disorders.

The volunteers all wore sleep tracking devices that picked up on the slightest variations in bedtime patterns. The adults wore the devices for 7 days and kept a sleep diary.

Losing just 1 night of sleep raises the risk of diabetes.

The researchers examined the link between bedtime patterns and markers of cardiometabolic risk, and they calculated a 10-year projected risk of heart disease, obesity, hypertension, and type 2 diabetes markers, such as high blood sugar and hemoglobin A1.

Overall, volunteers with irregular bedtimes had a higher body mass index (BMI), higher levels of blood sugar, higher blood pressure, and higher levels of hemoglobin



Overall, volunteers with irregular bedtimes had a higher body mass index (BMI), higher levels of blood sugar, higher blood pressure, and higher levels of hemoglobin A1C, and they were more likely to have a heart attack or stroke in the following decade than individuals with regular sleeping patterns.

A1C, and they were more likely to have a heart attack or stroke in the following decade than individuals with regular sleeping patterns.

Also, the volunteers who went to bed and woke up at varying times had a higher risk of depression and stress than their more disciplined counterparts.

“[S]leep irregularity may represent a target for early identification and prevention of cardiometabolic disease,” conclude the authors. However, they also point out that their study is observational and cannot say anything about causality.

“From our study,” reports Lunsford-Avery, “we can’t conclude that sleep irregularity results in health risks, or whether health conditions affect sleep. Perhaps all of these things are impacting each other.”

“Perhaps there’s something about obesity that disrupts sleep regularity,” she states. “Or, as some research suggests, perhaps poor sleep interferes with the body’s metabolism which can lead to weight gain, and it’s a vicious cycle.”

“With more research,” says Lunsford-Avery, “we hope to understand what’s going

on biologically, and perhaps then we could say what’s coming first or which is the chicken and which is the egg.”

Either way, the new findings help establish who is at risk of developing serious cardio-metabolic conditions.

“Heart disease and diabetes are extremely common in the United States, are extremely costly and also are leading causes of death in this country. To the extent we can predict individuals at risk for these diseases, we may be able to prevent or delay their onset.”

(Source: Medical News Today)

30 million Americans now have diabetes

1 in 7 Americans has diabetes, and many don’t even know they have the blood sugar disease, a new report shows.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 14 percent of U.S adults have diabetes 10 percent know it and more than 4 percent are undiagnosed.

“Diabetes remains a chronic health problem in this country, affecting some 30 million people,” said lead researcher Mark Eberhardt, an epidemiologist at CDC’s National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS).

A number of factors may be responsible for the increases in diabetes, he said. This includes an aging population, since diabetes strikes the elderly more often.

In addition, the obesity epidemic is also driving the growing number of people with diabetes, Eberhardt said.

People need to be tested for diabetes even if they think they don’t have it, he said. The data showed that a third of those in the study didn’t think they had diabetes, but tests showed they did, Eberhardt said.

According to the American Diabetes Association, the vast majority -- about 95 percent -- of diabetes cases are type 2, which is often (but not always) tied to overweight or obesity. About five percent of diabetes cases are type 1, which can arise early in life and is not linked with lifestyle factors.

According to the report, nearly 16 percent of men have diabetes, and about 12 percent of women. Moreover, the odds of developing diabetes, both diagnosed and undiagnosed, increases with age.

In terms of populations, diabetes is more common among Hispanics (20 percent) and blacks (18 percent) than whites (12 percent).

The overweight and obese are also more likely to develop diabetes, the researchers found. Only 6 percent of underweight or normal-weight adults had the disease, while 12 percent of overweight adults and 21 percent of obese adults did.

Although treatment for diabetes is available, Eberhardt said, the public health goal should be taking steps to prevent the disease. “Sometimes prevention is the best treatment,” he said.

For the study, the researchers used data from the U.S. National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey.

Dr. Joel Zonszein, director of the Clinical Diabetes Center at Montefiore Medical Center in New York City, expressed exasperation with the lack of progress in curbing the diabetes epidemic.

“We need to stop talking the talk and start walking the walk,” he said. Preventing diabetes starts with individuals making healthy lifestyle choices. These include a healthy diet and plenty of exercise.

Zonszein agreed that preventing diabetes should be the goal, but because diabetes is largely a matter of lifestyle it will take major changes in the American culture to accomplish that goal.

To get people to make healthy choices is going to take a drastic change in society, he said. Some of these changes might include taxing sugary drinks and getting people to eat less processed foods and fast foods.

Dr. William Cefalu, chief scientific and medical officer at the American Diabetes Association, said doctors haven’t been able to make that happen in the real world.

(Source: Health Day News)

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

Over 1,200 foreign tourists spectate Muharram rituals in Yazd



A file photo depicts foreign travelers visiting Muharram mourning rituals in Yazd, October 1, 2017.

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** — A total of 1,235 international tourists visited Iran’s central Yazd province in the first ten days of the month of Muharram (Sep. 11-20), during which millions of Iranians commemorated martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (AS) and his loyal companions.

“Tourists from 22 countries watched such spiritual tourism services. They were from France, Germany, Belgium, China, Turkey, Russia, the Netherlands, Brazil, Switzerland, Italy, New Zealand, Spain, the UK, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Romania, Australia and Thailand,” ISNA quoted Yazd province’s tourism chief Seyyed Mostafa Fatemi as saying on Monday.

The holidaymakers attended various ceremonies such as Tazieh, a passion play inspired by historical and religious narrations, and Sineh-Zani [beating the chest]. They also conversed with people and religious figures while taking shots of mourners to document the events.

Shia Muslims throughout the world commemorate the 7th-century martyrdom of the Prophet Muhammad’s (PBUH) grandson Hussein (AS) at the Battle of Karbala. The occasion falls during the month of Muharram in the Islamic calendar.

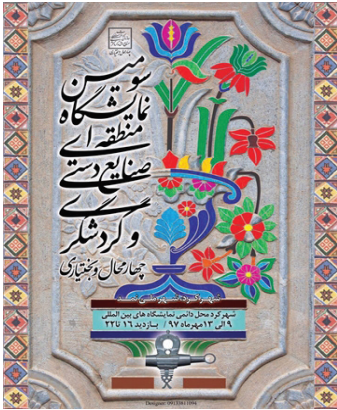
Shahr-e Kord set to host major crafts exhibit in October

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** — Craftspeople who are natives of over ten Iranian provinces will promote skills in a major exhibit running from October 1 to 5 in Shahr-e Kord, the capital city of western Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari province.

“The event will be attended by exhibitors and artisans from provinces of Isfahan, Khuzestan, Fars, Lorestan, Markazi, Qom, Hamedan, Yazd, Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari and Kohgiluyeh-Boyerahmad amongst others,” CHTN reported.

The exhibit will feature arrays of souvenirs, personal ornamentation, woodwork, illuminated manuscript, miniature, textile printing, enamel, leatherwork, handwoven textile, calligraphy, traditional musical instrument, metalwork, marquetry.

The event will also highlight felt products for which Shahr-e Kord is nationally famous.



Ultramarathon to promote tourism in hottest place on earth

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — A number of national and international runners will compete in the 3rd Iranian Silk Road Ultramarathon to be held across Iran’s UNESCO-registered Lut Desert, known as one of the hottest places on earth.

A total of 18 runners from Italy, Germany, South Africa, Japan, New Zealand and Iran are scheduled to attend the event which will be held from September 29 to October 7.

Seven years of satellite temperature data analyzed by NASA has shown that the Lut Desert is the hottest spot on Earth. Based on the research, it was hottest during 5 of the 7 years, and had the highest temperature overall: 70.7°C in 2005.

“Undoubtedly, holding such events makes the region more popular,” Mehr quoted Kerman province’s tourism chief Gholamreza Farrokhi as saying on Sunday.

“This tourism event will be commenced from Mahan Air’s campsite which is located in Malekabad village of Shahdad [District], and will pass through Shafiabad castle, valley of Dolphins, Gandom Beryan, Rudshour, Howz-e Nader caravanserai and will end in Zavar village; a course of 250 kilometers.”

Farrokhi went on to say that some 40 tour guides, off-road associates, and native people will be engaging the event.

According to organizers, the race is scheduled in two formats: the “Integral 250 km” that comprises 6 stages of 35/45 km per day with a long section of 70 km, and the “Lite 150 km” that is composed of 6 stages of 20/30 km per day with a long section of 40 km.

Athletes who run the Lite will have the advantage of being directly transported to the first checkpoint to run the daily stage. The two races, however, will share the same



A view of Shahdad District within Iran’s UNESCO-registered Lut Desert.

path, the same tented camps and will have the same time duration.

At the end of each stage the athletes will arrive at tented camp that will host them for the night. Athletes of 250 km will run from 8:30 am to 3pm approximately, from field to field.

The race will take place in total safety, with medical and nursing staff present at checkpoints about every 10 kilometers path and tented camps. At checkpoints will also feature an assistant who will take the split time of the runners.

The big and sprawling Kerman province

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

Ardebil travel potentials to be showcased at Van exhibit



Detail shows the Sheikh Safi al-Din Khanegah and Shrine Ensemble.

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — A collection of historical objects, handicrafts as well as tourism potentials related to the northwestern Ardebil province will go on show at the Van Tourism and Travel Fair running in the Turkish city from September 28 to 30, CHTN reported.

“Residents of Ardebil province frequently travel to Van [so that] it is essential that attractions of the province to be introduced to residents of Van and

other Turkish cities,” Ardebil’s tourism chief Nader Fallahi said.

“It also presents a good opportunity for promotion of investment capacities,” he added.

Sprawling on a high, windswept plateau, Ardebil is well-known for having lush natural beauties, hospitable people and its silk and carpet trade tradition, it is also home to the UNESCO-registered Sheikh Safi al-Din Khanegah and Shrine Ensemble.

Iran highlights tourism potentials, traditions at Tokyo fair



A poster for the 2018 Tourism Expo Japan

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran participated in Tourism Expo Japan, which was held in Tokyo Big Site aka Tokyo International Exhibition Center from September 20 to 23.

Iran’s ambassador to Japan Morteza Rahmani-Movahed opened his country’s pavilion that featured travel destinations, handicrafts, traditions and rituals, Mehr reported.

Some 1300 travel companies from 130 countries took part in the event organized by

the Japan Travel and Tourism Association.

On September 15, Tadashi Shimura who presides over the Japan Association of Travel Agents said, “Japanese tourists are more interested in monumental and historical buildings yet prefer eco-lodges to hotels.”

He made the remarks during a meeting with Rahmani-Movahed, when the ambassador proposed holding an exhibit of Iran’s handicrafts and tourism potentials in Japan.

How travel agencies avoided extinction and became a luxury service

A map of the world, push-pinned into drywall; clocks that mark the times in Tokyo, Paris, and London; a cheesy poster of a family at the beach — this is the aesthetic usually associated with brick-and-mortar travel agencies.

For those of us who grew up with Expedia, Kayak, Booking.com, and Hopper, the travel agency seems an anachronism — a vestige of unnecessary middleman services that were eliminated by the World Wide Web.

But, surprisingly enough, the travel advising industry is thriving. And millennials are increasingly turning to agents, as opposed to the internet, for help planning their vacations.

According to a 2017-’18 study by the travel and hospitality marketing firm MMGY Global, 33 percent of millennials are looking forward to hiring travel agents in the next two years. And according to data from the American Society of Travel Agents, recently rebranded the American Society of Travel Advisors, millennials are more likely than baby boomers or Gen Xers to say that hiring a travel expert was worth it. ASTA also found that a whopping 55 percent of millennials are more likely to hire travel experts and let others take care of planning a trip, compared to 42 percent and 28 percent for Gen Xers and boomers, respectively.

To be clear, no millennial is seeking travel advice from a My Big Fat Greek Wedding-style agency. Today’s agencies and advisers look quite different. They have sleek websites that feature an infinite scroll of Instagram-worthy, far-off destinations. They provide ready-to-purchase package deals that are only a few clicks away from being yours, along with one-on-one services with advisers. But most importantly, they perpetuate the idea that a vacation can change you, a concept millennials find increasingly appealing.

It’s about emotional and physical health and wellness; it’s about exclusivity; it’s about having experiences off the beaten path. Welcome to “transformative travel,” where a trip is the only thing standing between you and Your New Self.

■ Transformation as a product

Lenli Corbett, 35, had always wanted to visit South Africa but didn’t know where to start. She wanted to go on a safari, dive with sharks, and learn about Nelson Mandela and the history of apartheid. But she also wanted to do more low-key activities like scour local grocery stores and see how those in Cape Town and Johannesburg buy produce, something



Virtuosos is a service that pairs travelers looking for a luxury vacation with travel advisors

she tries to do in every country she visits. This list of things seemed unwieldy, especially with no advice and guidance from friends or family.

Then she read an article about the travel agency Explorer X. She wanted the personalized trip; she wanted to be transformed. She reached out to Explorer X co-founder Michael Bennett, and together, they planned a vacation that satisfied her bucket list but also ensured she met locals who could give her suggestions and help her navigate the country as a solo traveler.

During one of Corbett’s long layovers, Explorer X set up a trip to the Apartheid Museum, where Corbett was driven into town by a man named Donald who had grown up in South Africa and voted in the first democratic election when Nelson Mandela was elected. On her way to Cape Town, Corbett had another particularly helpful guide who drove her to a nearby market when her boat to Robben Island was canceled.

The local guides, Corbett says, made it feel more like an “experience” rather than someone just taking you around to show you sights. This is what agencies are selling: the idea that you’re not “sightseeing” in a country but “experiencing” it.

According to a poll by Skift, a business-to-business media company that reports on the travel industry, 54 percent of respondents said transformation was an important aspect of traveling. In Skift’s 2018 report “The Rise of Transformative Travel,” Beth McGroarty, director of research and public relations at the Global Wellness Institute, says travel is now seen as a “shortcut” or “shake-up.” The global travel economy is shifting from a focus on “esteem” to “self-actualization,” and travelers are buying services that they perceive as being able to induce quick and complete change.

Anyone who has been on dating app lately can attest to the fact that today, travel is not a privilege but a hobby; someone who doesn’t prioritize travel may be viewed as small-minded, uninterested in external and internal exploration. Millennials don’t want to relax and forget life, they want to learn how to live a more fulfilling one. That’s what travel agencies like Explorer X are selling — a catalyst for a more fulfilling life.

Bennett and his Explorer X partner Jake Hauptert also founded the Transformational Travel Council. At Explorer X, advisers (which they call “travel mentors”) can simply provide guidance to those who want to plan their own trip (for “only” \$500), or can create a custom trip for clients (also starting at \$500). Corbett’s custom trip to South Africa rang in at about \$6,000. “We want to get the focus off the bucket list and get back to the roots of travel and see what they are trying to get out of a trip,” Hauptert says.

Explorer X does this by talking through the goals and intentions of trips with their clients (hence the word “mentor”) and by setting them up with local guides, something that users report is even more valuable than the other benefits of booking with an agent. Corbett said the convenience a travel agent provides, like figuring out flight transfers and airport pickups, is nice, but the network of locals Michael offered was what made the service really worth the cost.

“That changed our whole trajectory of the company to be more focused on impactful and inspiring stuff like that,” he says. “We believe that millennials want that even more. Millennials are seeking to learn and grow and gain more value from an experience.”

(Source: VOX)



ROUND THE GLOBE

Kinabalu Park

Located in the State of Sabah, Malaysia, on the northern end of the island of Borneo, Kinabalu Park World Heritage property covers 75,370 ha.

Dominated by Mount Kinabalu (4,095m), the highest mountain between the Himalayas and New Guinea, it holds a distinctive position for the biota of Southeast Asia.

Geologically, Kinabalu Park is a granite intrusion formed 15 million years ago and thrust upward one million years ago by tectonic movements and shaped by forces that continue to define its landscape. Despite its geological youth it is exceptionally high in species with living relics of natural vegetation remaining, over 93% of the Park area.



The altitudinal range of the property, 152m – 4,095m, presents a wide array of habitats from rich tropical lowland and hill rainforest (35% of the park) to tropical montane forest (37%), and sub-alpine forest and scrub at the highest elevations. Ultramafic (serpentine) rocks cover about 16% of the park and have vegetation specific to this substrate. The property has been identified as a Centre of Plant Diversity for Southeast Asia; it contains representatives from at least half of all Borneo’s plant species and is exceptionally rich in species with elements from the Himalayas, China, Australia, Malaysia, and pan tropical floras.

With records of half of all Borneo’s birds, mammals and amphibian species and two-thirds of all Bornean reptiles the property is both species-rich and an important center for endemism.

(Source: UNESCO)

Climate study ‘pulls punches’ to keep polluters on board

Warnings about the dangers of global warming are being watered down in the final version of a key climate report for a major international meeting next month, according to reviewers who have studied earlier versions of the report and its summary.

They say scientists working on the final draft of the summary are censoring their own warnings and “pulling their punches” to make policy recommendations seem more palatable to countries – such as the U.S., Saudi Arabia and Australia – that are reluctant to cut fossil-fuel emissions, a key cause of global warming. “Downplaying the worst impacts of climate change has led the scientific authors to omit crucial information from the summary for policymakers,” said one reviewer, Bob Ward, policy director at the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment.

“However, if governments do not recognize the full scale and urgency of the risks, they may underestimate how critical it is to meet the goal of the Paris agreement on climate change. And that could have very serious knock-on effects in the battle to limit the impact of global warming.”

■ Global average temperature
The Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5C and its summary for policymakers were commissioned by governments following the UN meeting in Paris in 2015, when it was agreed to act to limit increases in global



average temperature to less than 2C above pre-industrial levels and to try keep that increase nearer to 1.5C.

The report – to be presented at a meeting in Korea in early October – will make clear that allowing temperatures to rise by 2C will

have devastating consequences, including rising sea levels, spreading deserts, loss of natural habitats and species, dwindling ice-caps and increases in the number of devastating storms.

Other cuts from the summary include the

sentence: “Poverty and disadvantage have increased with recent warming (about 1C) and are expected to increase in many populations as average global temperatures increase from 1C to 1.5C and beyond.”

■ Significant population displacement

The original summary also stated “at 2C warming, there is a potential for significant population displacement concentrated in the tropics”. Again this is not mentioned in the report for policymakers. The “scientists who produce reports like these try to summarize the latest knowledge, but they have a reputation for being conservative about the worst risks of climate change,” Ward said. “This time they have outdone themselves in pulling their punches, however.”

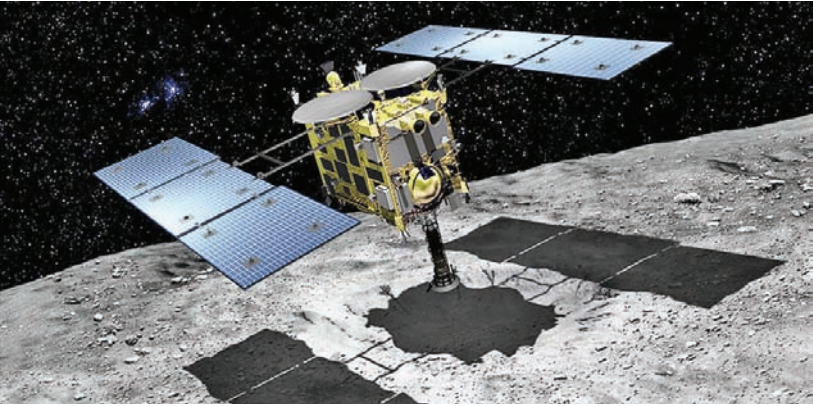
An IPCC spokesman said member governments would work to ensure the summary for policymakers was consistent with the findings in the main report. “They may change the wording of text there to clarify, remove material from the summary for policymakers, or bring material from the main report that was not there at the start of the session.

Any text in the summary for policymakers ... is based on the assessment in the main report. Even if it is removed from the summary for policymakers, the finding it is based on remains in the main report.”

(Source: The Guardian)

“Downplaying the worst impacts of climate change has led the scientific authors to omit crucial information from the summary for policymakers,” says researcher.

How to grow crops on Mars if we are to live on the Red Planet



Preparations are already underway for missions that will land humans on Mars in a decade or so. But what would people eat if these missions eventually lead to the permanent colonization of the red planet?

Once (if) humans do make it to Mars, a major challenge for any colony will be to generate a stable supply of food. The enormous costs of launching and resupplying resources from Earth will make that impractical.

Humans on Mars will need to move away from complete reliance on shipped cargo, and achieve a high level of self-sufficient and sustainable agriculture.

Previous work has suggested the use of microbes as a source of food on Mars. The use of hydroponic greenhouses and controlled environmental systems, similar to one being tested onboard the International Space Station to grow crops, is another option.

■ Plant life on Mars
This month, in the Journal Genes, we provide a new perspective based on the use of advanced synthetic biology to improve the potential performance of plant life on Mars.

Synthetic biology is a fast-growing field. It combines principles from engineering, DNA science, and computer science (among many other disciplines) to impart new and improved functions to living organisms.

Not only can we read DNA, but we can also design biological systems, test them, and even engineer whole organisms. Yeast is just one example of an industrial workhorse

microbe whose whole genome is currently being re-engineered by an international consortium.

The technology has progressed so far that precision genetic engineering and automation can now be merged into automated robotic facilities, known as biofoundries.

The gravity on Mars is around a third of that on Earth. Mars receives about half of the sunlight we get on Earth, but much higher levels of harmful ultraviolet (UV) and cosmic rays. The surface temperature of Mars is about -60 and it has a thin atmosphere primarily made of carbon dioxide.

■ Toxic to humans
Unlike Earth's soil, which is humid and rich in nutrients and microorganisms that support plant growth, Mars is covered with regolith. This is an arid material that contains perchlorate chemicals that are toxic to humans.

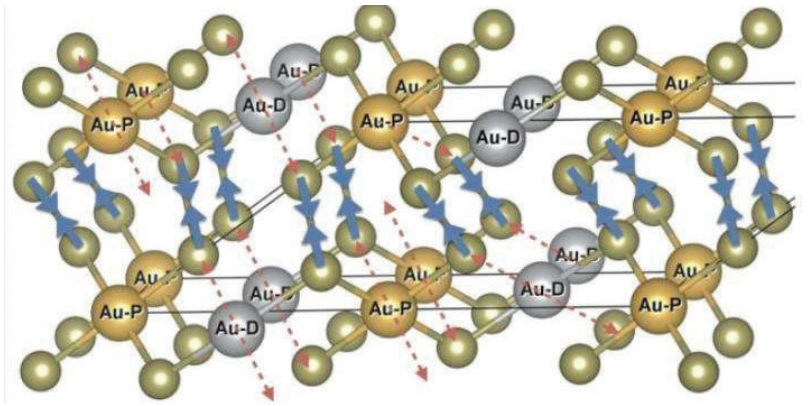
Also – despite the latest sub-surface lake find – water on Mars mostly exists in the form of ice, and the low atmospheric pressure of the planet makes liquid water boil at around 5.

Plants on Earth have evolved for hundreds of millions of years and are adapted to terrestrial conditions, but they will not grow well on Mars.

This means that substantial resources that would be scarce and priceless for humans on Mars, like liquid water and energy, would need to be allocated to achieve efficient farming by artificially creating optimal plant growth conditions.

(Source: space.com)

Scientists solve the golden puzzle of calaverite



Scientists from Russia and Germany have shed light on the crystalline structure of calaverite, foretelling the existence of a new gold compound previously unknown to chemists. The results of their study were published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

A gold tellurite with the chemical formula AuTe2 displays high modulation in the positions of gold and tellurium atoms in its crystals. This means that calaverite's crystal lattice cannot be explained by H t t's law, which describes the crystals of most minerals.

Calaverite and other incommensurate crystals have long been a mystery for crystallographers. In the 1970s, scientists found a way of describing their structures using 4-D space instead of the customary 3-D space in their calculations. However, researchers have been clueless as to the reasons for the weird behavior of calaverite crystals.

Research teams from the RAS Institute of Metal Physics (led by Professor Sergey Streltsov), the University of Cologne (led by Professor Daniil Khomsky), Skoltech and the Moscow Institute of Physics Technology (MIPT) (led by professor Artem Oganov) cracked the mystery of incommensurate calaverite crystals, gaining insights into the electronic spectra obtained in the experiments and their superconducting capability created by pressure or additives.

■ Extremely unstable
The “simple reasoning suggests that

gold should be divalent in this compound in much the same way as iron is in FeS2, known as “fool’s gold.” Any chemist understands that divalent gold is extremely unstable and tends to become monovalent and trivalent, but there lies the rub: First, 3+ is too high a valence. Second, there is no way to place monovalent or trivalent gold (assuming it exists in the first place) on calaverite’s triangular lattice with the pattern repeating in each direction.

Therefore, nature dictates the compromise by smoothly changing the valence of gold in the crystal. Tellurium’s environment responds to the change and this results in bizarre crystal lattices,” explains Sergey Streltsov

The scientists also relied on the USPEX, an advanced evolutionary algorithm created by Artem Oganov and intensively used by crystallographers worldwide to predict all the known stable tellurides of gold and a new telluride, AuTe, unknown until now.

“There’s quite a story behind calaverite. Apart from its marked impact on the Gold Rush, the mineral has been a headache and a great paradox for crystallographers for decades. The deeper you dug into it, the more new questions came up. Our team has succeeded in interlacing all the oddities of calaverite within a simple model, so experimenters can now hunt for the new compound we predicted, AuTe, which I’m sure is full of new riddles,” says Professor of Skoltech and MIPT Artem Oganov.

(Source: phys.org)

NASA launches satellite to monitor Earth’s vast frozen landscape

NASA has successfully launched a new satellite to monitor and measure Earth’s frozen poles. The ICESat-2 satellite will orbit the planet from an altitude of 290 miles, gathering data to estimate the height changes of the Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets.

The instrument on board, the Advanced Topographic Laser Altimeter System (ATLAS), will be able to monitor shifts in the ice to within four millimeters -- allowing scientists to get an unprecedented view of this remote and harsh environment.

“With this mission we continue humankind’s exploration of the remote polar regions of our planet and advance our understanding of how ongoing changes of Earth’s ice cover at the poles and elsewhere will affect lives around the world, now and in the future,” Thomas Zurbuchen, associate administrator of NASA’s Science Mission Directorate, said in a statement.

The satellite launched from California’s Vandenberg Air Force Base and after 75 minutes started transmitting signals back to NASA. It is currently traveling at a speed of 17,069 miles per hour, orbiting the globe from pole to pole.

By understanding the changes to the polar ice caps, scientists will be able to better forecast future sea level rise based on melting rates. It will also help them understand how sea ice loss is affecting the ocean and atmosphere, as well as getting a grip on the mechanisms causing the ice to decrease.

“For us scientists the most anticipated part of the mission starts when we switch on the laser and get our first data,” said Thorsten Markus, ICESat-2 project scientist at NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center. “We are really looking forward to making those data available to the science community as quickly as possible so we can begin to explore what ICESat-2 can tell us about our complex home planet.”

(Source: Newsweek)

Brown researchers teach computers to see optical illusions

Optical illusions can be fun to experience and debate, but understanding how human brains perceive these different phenomena remains an active area of scientific research. For one class of optical illusions, called contextual phenomena, those perceptions are known to depend on context.

Sometimes the outer color makes the inner color appear more similar, such as a neighboring green ring making a blue ring appear turquoise -- but sometimes the outer color makes the inner color appear less similar, such as a pink ring making a grey circle appear greenish.

A team of Brown University computer vision experts went back to square one to understand the neural mechanisms of these contextual phenomena.

“There’s growing consensus that optical illusions are not a bug but a feature,” said Thomas Serre, an associate professor of cognitive, linguistic and psychological sciences at Brown and the paper’s senior author. “I think they’re a feature. They may represent edge cases for our visual system, but our vision is so powerful in day-to-day life and in recognizing objects.”

For the study, the team lead by Serre, who is affiliated with Brown’s Carney Institute for Brain Science, started with a computational model constrained by anatomical and neurophysiological data of the visual cortex. The model aimed to capture how neighboring cortical neurons send messages to each other and adjust one another’s responses when presented with complex stimuli such as contextual optical illusions.

These feedback connections are not present in most deep learning algorithms. Deep learning is a powerful kind of artificial intelligence that is able to learn complex patterns in data, such as recognizing images and parsing normal speech, and depends on multiple layers of artificial neural networks working together.

(Source: eurekalert.org)

Sprayable antennas turn surfaces into ultra-thin, transparent transmitters

If a device connects wirelessly to other things, chances are high that it has an antenna in it. But as crucial as these components are, the rigid metals they’re made of can limit what devices they can be built into. To help with that, researchers at Drexel University have developed a new kind of antenna that can be sprayed onto just about any surface.



The antenna is made up of an incredibly thin, metallic material known as “MXene” (pronounced “Maxine”). This stuff is a two-dimensional form of titanium carbide that’s highly conductive, which allows it to transmit and direct radio waves.

Previously, we have seen MXene put to work in experimental batteries that recharge in seconds. In this case, the Drexel team created a powdered form that can be dissolved in water to form an ink or paint. That can then be sprayed onto a surface, effectively turning it into a 2D antenna in whatever shape is needed.

“Current fabrication methods of metals cannot make antennas thin enough and applicable to any surface, in spite of decades of research and development to improve the performance of metal antennas,” says Yuri Gogotsi, lead researcher on the project.

“We were looking for two-dimensional nanomaterials, which have sheet thickness about hundred thousand times thinner than a human hair; just a few atoms across, and can self-assemble into conductive films upon deposition on any surface. Therefore, we selected MXene, which is a two-dimensional titanium carbide material that is stronger than metals and is metallically conductive, as a candidate for ultra-thin antennas.”

The team tested the new MXene antennas and found that despite their incredible thinness, their performance is comparable to existing antennas.

(Source: newatlas.com)

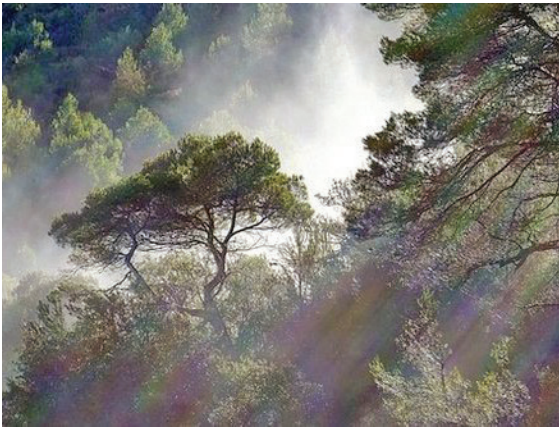
We are bombarded by thousands of diverse species and chemicals

Scientists have measured the human ‘exposome,’ or the particulates, chemicals and microbes that individually swaddle us all, in unprecedented detail.

Using a re-engineered air-monitoring device, scientists from the Stanford University School of Medicine have peered into that plume and discovered a smorgasbord of biological and chemical minutia that swirl in, on and around us. Their findings show, in unprecedented detail, the variety of bacteria, viruses, chemicals, plant particulates, fungi, and even tiny microscopic animals that enter our personal space -- a bombardment known as the human “exposome.”

“Human health is influenced by two things: your DNA and the environment,” said Michael Snyder, PhD, professor and chair of genetics at Stanford. “People have measured things like air pollution on a broad scale, but no one has really measured biological and chemical exposures at a personal level. No one really knows how vast the human exposome is or what kinds of things are in there.”

That curiosity -- to see, for the first time, what a person’s exposure looks like at an individual level and how much it varies among people -- was what motivated the study, Snyder said. But studying the exposome also provides an opportunity to clarify environmental influencers of human health that are otherwise obscure, he said. For example, rather than simply



blaming pollen, those with seasonal allergies would be able to identify exactly what they’re allergic to by monitoring their exposome data and symptoms throughout the year.

■ Weather-related patterns
The study’s findings also reveal information about geographic- and household-chemical spikes and weather-related patterns, and likewise show the wide range of chemical and

biological particulates that can be found between individuals -- even within a relatively small geographic region, such as the San Francisco Bay Area.

The study will be published online Sept. 20 in Cell. Snyder is the senior author. Postdoctoral scholar Chao Jiang, PhD; research scientist Xin Wang, PhD; research associate Xiyang Li, PhD; and postdoctoral scholars Jingga Inlora, PhD, and Ting Wang, PhD, are co-lead authors.

For two years, the scientists collected data from 15 participants who traversed more than 50 different locations. Some people were monitored for a month, some for a week, and one (Snyder) for two full years. To capture bits of each individual’s exposome, a small device that straps snugly to the participant’s arm “breathes” in tiny puffs of air -- about one-fifteenth the volume of an average human breath.

The device, about the size and shape of a large matchbox, accompanies participants everywhere and is equipped with a sub-micron filter that traps particulate matter in the device. The data -- bacteria, viruses, chemicals, fungi and anything else sucked up by the device -- is brought back to Snyder’s lab and extracted for DNA and RNA sequencing, as well as chemical profiling to identify all the collected organisms and chemicals that the person is exposed to.

(Source: Science Daily)

Female school service drivers to cater for girl students

W O M E N **TEHRAN** — A new law approved here on Tuesday by Tehran's City Council gave priority to women drivers for girls' school services.

The law was approved by absolute vote of the council of 18 members for all primary and secondary schools, ISNA quoted Tehran city councilor Nahid Khodakarami as saying.



Normally with the beginning of the school year (September 23) heavy, slow-moving traffic builds up in the street of Tehran, especially in early mornings when parents are trying to take their children to school and many want to go to work or university.

In order to address the issue and curb traffic congestion, governmental organizations give their employees the opportunity of a flexible working hour arrangement, so that instead of starting work at 7 a.m. or 8 a.m. employees can attend work at 9 a.m. for the next two weeks.

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Back to school chicken

"My mother-in-law gave me this recipe, and we just love it. She used to make it for my husband and his friends when it was time to go back to school after summer break. Serve over rice."

Ingredients



2 tablespoons peanut oil
2 tablespoons soy sauce
1 egg white
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
3 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves, thinly sliced
3 cloves garlic, chopped
1 cup chicken broth
1 (14.25 ounce) can baby corn, drained
1 cup snow peas
1 cup peanuts
3 bunches green onions, chopped
1 tablespoon sesame oil

Directions

Whisk peanut oil, soy sauce, egg white, cornstarch, and red pepper flakes together in a large bowl. Add chicken, toss to coat, and marinate for 30 minutes. Remove chicken from marinade, shake to remove excess, and discard marinade.

Cook and stir garlic in a large skillet or wok until fragrant, about 1 minute. Stir marinated chicken pieces into skillet; cook and stir until cooked through, about 5 minutes.

Stir chicken broth, baby corn, snow peas, peanuts, green onions, and sesame oil into chicken mixture and cook until heated through, about 10 minutes.

LEARN ENGLISH

Weather Report

A: Those are today's top stories. Now let's go to John for the weather. John, what does the forecast look like for our weekend travelers?

B: I'm **afraid** we're in for a rough weekend, Mark. There is a storm system moving through the East Coast. It will be **drizzling** all day today, and there's a 60 percent **chance** of **thunderstorms** this evening. It will be warm and humid all weekend. In the Midwest, expect strong winds and a low of around 40 degrees.

A: That's pretty chilly for the summer! Will it rain on Saturday?

B: Unfortunately, yes. It will be clear early Saturday morning but there is a high chance of showers and thunderstorms later in the day. There is a severe thunderstorm warning for some parts of the Southeast. Folks in those areas might see some **hail** and flooding, especially in areas that have been experiencing record high rainfalls.

A: That certainly sounds like a dreary Saturday.

B: It gets better on Sunday, though. The storm systems move east and the skies will clear up at night. It will still be rather cool, with highs in the low 50s. The West Coast will be experiencing some unusually chilly weather, but at least the sun will come out. I advise weekend travelers to be careful, especially while driving. Back to you, Mark.

A: Thanks John, and there you have it! Looks like it's a weekend to stay at home!

Key vocabulary

afraid: scared

drizzle: light fall of rain

chance: probability

thunderstorm: fall of rain accompanied by lightning and thunder

hail: rain that is frozen into chunks of ice

Supplementary vocabulary

tornado: a violent, rotating column of air

hurricane: a powerful, spiraling storm that brings heavy winds and rain

blizzard: a severe storm condition characterized by low temperatures, strong winds, and heavy snow

Blackout: loss of lighting or communication; power outage

heatwave: a prolonged period of excessively hot weather, which may be accompanied by high humidity

(Source: irlanguage.com)



Without water,
everything
withers

Housewives provided with social security insurance

W O M E N **TEHRAN** — Iranian housewives are covered by social security insurance according to insurance regulations of self-employed persons, Social Security Organization reported on Saturday.

In order to provide insurance services for people of all walks of life, the social security organization presents housewives insurance services according to premium payments and contracts, IRNA quoted Mansour Atashi, an official with the Organization, as saying.

Housewives, under the age of 50, are permitted to apply for the insurance services, Atashi said elaborating housewives who have at least 10 years of premium payment will receive the insurance services regardless of their age.

The premium rates and insurance benefits for housewives is same as the insurance policies of self-employed people, he added.

The Social Security Organization is a state-run insurer organization which provides coverage of wage-earners and salaried workers as well as voluntary coverage of self-employed persons, it was established in 1975, after the Social Security Law was approved.

The organization currently covers 42 million people, providing 18 types of health and social insurance services in case of unemployment, retirement, disability and death, loss of caretaker and social vulnerabilities, accidents and injuries, health care and medical insurance.



No school for autistic girls in Tehran

W O M E N **TEHRAN** — Despite existing five schools special for autistic boy students in Tehran, there still exists no school for girls suffering the disease, said Seyed Mohammad Ali Miri, an official with Iran Autism Association here on Sunday.

The first school for autistic girls was planned to be opened by the new school year (September 23) in Tehran, IRNA quoted Miri as saying.

The Special Education Organization is planning for formation of a school for autistic girls, the official said, however, it was not accomplished.

Since the prevalence of autism is higher in boys the greater number of special schools for autistic boys is logical, he added, explaining that the prevalence of autism in boys is four to one comparing with girls.

Currently, students with autism are studying at 25 public schools and 15 private schools, he stated.

One of the best schools for children suffering autism, equipped with the standards facilities in Iran, has been set up in Ahvaz province, southwestern Iran, and the second one is under construction, he remarked, adding that some autism schools are under construction in other provinces, including Qazvin, Kermanshah, and Khorasan Razavi.

Also, some of the northern provinces of the country are looking forward to build autism schools.

Autism is a complex neurobehavioral condition that includes impairments in social interaction and developmental language and communication skills combined with rigid, repetitive behaviors. Because of the range of symptoms, this condition is now called autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

According to the latest statistics, out of every 65 births in the world, one child suffers autism spectrum disorder.

In Iran, out of every 150 births, one child suffers autism spectrum disorder.

Is France becoming a dangerous place for women?

In 2018, France has seen a 22 percent jump in the number of attacks on women. The same dynamics can be observed with sexual violence. National Federation of Solidarity of Women director Francoise Brie discussed the situation in an interview with Sputnik France.

On the night of September 12, the husband of 36-year-old Estelle stabbed her 14 times for "tuning the TV up too loud," the newspaper Le Parisien reported. Mortally wounded, the woman collapsed in front of her two children.

"This shocking crime lays bare a serious problem. According to Interior Minister Gerard Collomb, 123 women were killed in France in 2016 by partners or former partners; such killings occurred once every three days... This year, reports about violence against women have gone up 22 percent, while the number of cases of sexual violence committed against women in the first seven months of the year is 23.1 percent higher than during the same period of last year," Francoise Brie said.

"This is a very disturbing situation," she added.

She quoted Collomb as saying that family violence has increased significantly and that "people feel free to speak out."

The minister was referring to the #MeToo movement and its French suc-

cessors, which launched the #BalanceTonPorc hashtag ("ReportThePig"), thanks to which many women opened up about having fallen victim to violence.

"I believe that these figures reflect the active position of women, much more often than before, telling about what happened to them. They're uniting to take advantage of the French system of filing lawsuits and punishing violence against women," Francoise Brie emphasized.

For many years the victims remained silent. Most rapists are close to the victims.

According to the "Habitat and Security" study ("Cadre de vie et sécurité"), conducted between 2012 and 2017, "an average of 225,000 women aged 18 to 75 were annually subjected to physical and/or sexual violence by a former or current sexual partner. Only 19 percent of such cases end up in court.

A similar situation also applies to sexual violence.

"On average, an estimated 84,000 women between ages 18 and 75 fall victims of rape and attempted rape during the year," the study said.

According to Francoise Brie, in 45 percent of cases, the abuser is the spouse or former spouse of the victim and in 46 percent of cases it is the person with whom the victim is familiar. However, only nine percent of women turn to the police.

In the latest such case, a young girl was gang raped outside a nightclub in Toulouse. The attackers filmed everything on video and posted it on social networks, which eventually led to a police investigation.

Many victims of sexual violence complain about police not taking their words seriously and sometimes even blaming the victim for the incident.

In February 2018, the feminist organization "Groupe F" published the stories of several victims complaining about police inaction.

According to Francoise Brie, the Interior Ministry has created a "platform for complaints about sexual violence and actions considered as discriminatory towards women."

"Thanks to this platform, it will be possible to file an application without coming to the police station," Brie said.

She sees this as a good decision, "provided that it will be combined with other measures."

In her opinion, fighting "sexist stereotypes," which she believes provide a fertile ground for violence against women, is especially important.

A campaign was launched in France in September to increase public awareness of violence against women. In addition, on-street harassment and sexist insults are now punishable by law, a measure which



has been actively promoted by Marlene Schiappa, State Secretary of Equality between women and men.

In a recent interview with Le Parisien, she said that it is necessary to "impose a social ban and conduct instructional work."

Will this be enough? As Sputnik's look on the situation with violence in France indicates, violence towards women is being scrutinized amid a spike in the overall level of aggressiveness in France.

"In light of the above, bans and social education may not be enough to cope with this dangerous phenomenon," Francoise Brie concluded.

(Source: Sputniknews.com)

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ج

\$65m allotted to address social vulnerability among students

The social affairs organization, affiliated to the Ministry of Interior, has allotted some 270 billion rials (nearly \$65 million) to address social vulnerabilities among students, the organization's director has said.

The scheme called "social care system for students" with a Persian acronym of NAMAD was first piloted in 130 schools in Nazarabad county, Alborz province in the last [Iranian calendar] year (March 2017-March 2018), ISNA news agency quoted Taqi Rostamvandi as saying on Saturday.

It has also been launched in more than 100 schools in six other provinces, Rostamvandi said.

PREFIX/SUFFIX

“eu-“

■ **Meaning:** good

■ **For example:** 'Pass away' is a **euphemism** for 'die'.

PHRASAL VERB

Cross something off

■ **Meaning:** to draw a line through one or more things on a list because you have dealt with them or they are not needed any more

■ **For example:** Whenever I buy something, I cross it off the list.

IDIOM

Be a far cry from something

■ **Explanation:** to be very different from something

■ **For example:** The company lost £3 million, which is a far cry from last year's £60 million profit.

Russia to give Syria S-300; plane incident to harm Israel ties

➔ "A modern S-300 air defense missile system will be transferred to the Syrian armed forces within two weeks," he said, adding the system will significantly increase the Syrian army's combat capabilities.

Meanwhile, the Kremlin said the downing of the Russian plane in Syria will harm relations with Israel, reiterating that Israeli pilots had acted deliberately.

"According to information of our military experts, the reason (behind the downing) were premeditated actions by Israeli pilots which certainly cannot but harm our relations," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told journalists.

The Russian Il-20 reconnaissance aircraft disappeared from radars on September 17 as four Israeli F-16 warplanes were attacking state institutions in Syria's Latakia Province, which is home to the Russia-run Hmeimim airbase.

Moscow says Israeli F-16 jets used the landing Russian plane as a "cover" which resulted in the Il-20 being struck by a Syrian air defense missile.

Shoigu said Russia will equip Syrian anti-aircraft units with Russian tracking and guidance systems in order to identify Russian aircraft.

"In regions near Syria over the Mediterranean Sea, there will be radio-electronic suppression of satellite navigation, on-board radar systems and communication systems of military aviation attacking objects on Syrian territory," he said.

"We are certain that the realization of these measures will cool the 'hot heads' and will keep them from poorly thought-out actions which threaten our servicemen," Shoigu added.

Russia first indicated supplying Syria with the S-300 in April but abandoned the plan apparently under lobbying by Israel. The missile system fires missiles from trucks and is designed to shoot down military aircraft



and short- and medium-range ballistic missiles.

■ **Putin to Assad: Russia will give Syria S-300 air defense system**

Meanwhile, Russian President Vladimir Putin told Syrian President Bashar al-Assad on Monday that Moscow would supply its ally with an S-300 anti-aircraft missile system, Assad's office said.

"President Putin ... informed President Assad that Russia will develop the Syrian air defense systems," the Syrian presidency said in a statement.

■ **Russia warned Israel before downing**

Elsewhere, Russia had warned senior Israeli officials that attacking targets in Syria would harm Moscow's interests ahead of last week's incident during which a Russian military plane was downed in Syria, the Haaretz daily revealed on Monday.

The paper quoted security officials as saying that Moscow had recently conveyed a message to Tel Aviv that attacking Syrian

targets was against its goal to strengthen Syrian President Bashar Assad's legitimate government and end the fighting in the country.

According to the report, Israel has refused to change its policy in Syria despite the Russian message.

The Russian Defense Ministry presented its latest findings on the Il-20's downing on Sunday, blaming "misleading" information from the Israeli air force command for the downing of the Russian plane by Syria's S-200 missile defense system and holding the Israeli regime fully responsible for the tragic event.

"We believe that the Israeli air force and those who were making decisions about these actions are fully to blame for the tragedy that happened to the Russian Il-20 plane," Major General Igor Konashenkov said.

Russia also accused Israel of using a hotline, set up between the two sides to avoid airborne collisions, to mislead Russia about its plans.

Konashenkov said an Israeli officer had told them about an operation in northern Syria while the jets were actually in Latakia, in the country's west.

"The misleading (information) by the Israeli officer regarding the location of the strikes made it impossible to guide the Il-20 to a safe location," he said.

Konashenkov also said the Israeli fighter jets deliberately used the Russian plane to shield them from Syrian air defense missiles after Israel hit targets near the coastal city of Latakia.

He also complained that Israel has, over the years, waited until the last minute to notify Russia of its operations, putting Russian aircraft at risk.

According to Haaretz, Israel fears that Russia can influence its military activity through demanding greater warning time, deciding to close the airspace or requiring that more advanced air defense systems be put in place as a signal to Israel, among other things.

The Israeli military on Sunday rejected Konashenkov's remarks, claiming that mechanisms to coordinate with Russia had been used properly ahead of the Il-20's downing.

"The Israel air force did not hide behind any aircraft and the Israeli planes were in Israeli airspace when the Syrian [missiles] hit the Russian plane," read the military statement.

Russian jets have been conducting air raids against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) and other terror outfits inside Syria at Damascus's request since September 2015.

On the contrary, Israel frequently attacks military targets in Syria in what is considered as an attempt to prop up militant groups that have been suffering heavy defeats against government forces.

(Source: agencies)

Corbyn says will back second Brexit vote if party wants it

British opposition leader Jeremy Corbyn said that he would back a second Brexit referendum if his Labor Party votes to pursue the move, heaping pressure on Prime Minister Theresa May, whose plans for a divorce deal with the European Union have hit an impasse. Corbyn, a veteran Eurosceptic, has resisted growing demands to back a new "People's Vote" on the decision to quit the European Union, keen to keep those party members on board who voted in favor of Brexit at a 2016 referendum.



But the political landscape has changed since May's plans for Brexit – the biggest shift in British policy for more than four decades – were resoundingly rebuffed by the EU on Thursday, with any outcome of the negotiations even more uncertain than ever.

With talk of a new election swirling after May's "Chequers" plan was all but shredded at an EU summit last week and chances of a disorderly departure that could damage the economy rising, the opposition party is under pressure to set the Brexit agenda.

At Labor's annual conference in the northern city of Liverpool, Corbyn, who in 1975 voted "No" to Britain's membership of the then-European Community, said he would act on the result of a debate in Labor on a second Brexit vote.

But he was clear that he preferred a new election. "Our preference would be for a general election and we can then negotiate our future relationship with Europe but let's see what comes out of conference," he told the BBC's Andrew Marr Show, saying Labor was ready to vote against any deal.

"Obviously I'm bound by the democracy of our party." Labor is expected to discuss several motions on Brexit at its conference, and it remains unclear what the proposal on a second referendum might be – it could be a clear backing of a vote or something less black-and-white.

Corbyn has long said that a "People's Vote" is not off the table for his party, and a source close to the leadership urged caution over an as-yet unknown motion, repeating the Labor leader's stance that he does not support a second referendum.

Len McCluskey, a Corbyn ally and leader of Britain's biggest trade union Unite, further muddled the water when he said any such second referendum "shouldn't be on: 'Do we want to go back into the European Union?'" adding people had voted in 2016 when Britain backed leaving the EU by a narrow 52-48 percent.

Corbyn wanted his conference to be an opportunity to sell his alternative vision for Britain's economy, pressing his argument for the renationalization of rail, mail and utilities and to rally the party for a possible early election. But with Britain due to leave the EU in March, Brexit was likely to dominate the four-day conference.

Thousands of supporters of a second vote marched through Liverpool's streets Sunday to make their feelings known. After weeks of both EU and British officials making positive noises about the prospects of clinching a divorce deal and one on a future trading relationship, the mood turned sour on Thursday in Salzburg, Austria when EU leaders came out, one by one, to criticize "Chequers" as unrealistic.

A tacit deal to try to offer her some support before she heads to what is going to be a difficult annual conference of her Conservative Party later this month was broken by some British diplomatic missteps.

May says she will hold her nerve in the talks, pressing the EU to come up with an alternative proposal to her Chequers plan, named after the prime minister's country residence where a deal was hashed out with her top ministers in July.

But the impasse with the European Union has prompted some to predict an early election – a notion Brexit Minister Dominic Raab said was "for the birds."

While saying she will stick to her guns, May might have little chance but to change tack after a party conference where the deep divisions over Europe that have riven her Conservatives for decades will be in plain sight.

A senior pro-EU Conservative lawmaker, Nicky Morgan, said May would have to give ground on trade and customs arrangements with the EU to overcome the biggest hurdle to a withdrawal accord – the prevention of a hard border between the British province of Northern Ireland and Ireland, a member of the European Union.

And if Labor's Corbyn does come out with clear support for a second referendum, the pressure on the Conservatives to get any deal through Parliament will only grow.

"We would vote it down if it didn't meet our tests in order to send the government, if it is still in office, straight back to the negotiating table," Corbyn said.

"And if there is a general election and we are in office we would go straight to the negotiating table."

(Source: Reuters)

Kavanaugh accuser set to testify Thursday

The United States California state professor Christine Blasey Ford has agreed to testify on Thursday morning before a U.S. Senate panel about her sexual assault allegations against Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh, her lawyers said Sunday. "Despite actual threats to her safety and her life, Dr. Ford believes it is important for Senators to hear directly from her about the sexual assault committed against her," her lawyers said in a statement.

"She has agreed to move forward with a hearing even though the committee has refused to subpoena Mark Judge," who has been identified as a witness to the incident.

Plans to hold a high-stakes hearing this week with testimony from Ford had teetered with uncertainty earlier on Sunday.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, a Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee, said lawyers for Ford contested two GOP (Grand Old Party) conditions of the proposed on Thursday hearing – that Ford and Kavanaugh will be the only witnesses and that an independent counsel will ask the questions.

"If they continue to contest those two things, there won't be a hearing," Graham said. "We're not going to let her determine how many people we call" and on outside counsel. "I hope she comes."

A final accord could bring close days of brinkmanship that have roiled Washington ahead of midterm elections and threatened to jeopardize Kavanaugh's confirmation to the court, even as some Republicans say the additional hearings may do little to change their support for him.

Graham, speaking on "Fox News Sunday," promised a fair hearing in which both Ford and Kavanaugh "will be challenged" but said "unless there's something more" to back up her accusation, then he's "not going to ruin Judge Kavanaugh's life over this."

"I want to listen to her, but I'm being honest with you and everybody else. ... What am I supposed to do? Go ahead and ruin this guy's life based on an accusation?" Graham asked, explaining his dilemma over an allegation of a 1980s incident that is past the statute of limitations for criminal charges.

"But she should come forward. She should have her say."

Lawyers for Ford and bipartisan representatives of the committee came to a tentative agreement for a Thursday hearing after a short but productive phone call late on Saturday, said a person briefed on the matter, who was

not authorized to speak publicly and requested anonymity.

But unresolved was who would question the 51-year-old California college professor and other potential witnesses. Ford wants an appearance by Judge, a Kavanaugh friend who Ford asserts was in the room when the incident occurred. Meanwhile, the committee's 11 Republicans – all men – have been seeking an outside female attorney to interrogate Ford, mindful of the election-season impression that could be left by men trying to pick apart a woman's assertion of a sexual attack.

Sen. Dick Durbin, a Democrat on the committee, said on Sunday he believed Ford's requests have been "reasonable" and that she deserves a fair hearing to determine whether her allegations are "serious" enough to vote down Kavanaugh's Supreme Court nomination.

He acknowledged that lawmakers will "probably not" be able to know the truth of Ford's decades-old accusation that Kavanaugh assaulted her at a house party when they were teenagers. But Durbin left little doubt that that Democrats will go after Kavanaugh's drinking history to help shed light on the matter. Ford has alleged Kavanaugh was "stumbling drunk" when it happened.

"There have been a lot of things said about the alcohol that was consumed by the judge as well as by others in his school. That has to be part of any relevant questioning," he said.

Durbin had told ABC's "This Week" that some Republicans "reached out to Democratic senators and assured them that they are looking to this as kind of a determination as to how their final vote" on Kavanaugh is cast.

Tensions have been running on overdrive since Ford went public last week with her allegation that Kavanaugh assaulted her when they in high school.

Kavanaugh, an appellate court judge, denied the allegation and said that he wanted to testify as soon as possible to clear his name.

Republicans had grown frustrated as Ford's lawyers insisted on a hearing on Thursday rather than Monday or even on Wednesday and made other requests, some of which the committee chairman, Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, rejected.

Democrats, against the backdrop of the #MeToo movement, countered that Ford should be shown respect and given accommodation to tell her story.

Republicans viewed Ford's requests as a way to delay voting on the U.S. President Donald Trump's nominee.

The White House is approaching Ford's potential testimony with trepidation, nervous that an emotion-



al performance might not just damage Kavanaugh's chances, but could further energize female voters to turn out against Republicans in November against the backdrop of the #MeToo movement.

Moreover, the West Wing aides who had urged Trump to remain muted in his response to the accusations worried about how the president might react to an hours long, televised hearing.

In a tweet on Friday, Trump broke his silence to cast doubt on Ford's story in ways Republicans had been carefully trying to avoid.

Trump mused to confidants that the "fake" attacks against his nominee were meant to undermine his presidency, according to a White House official and a Republican close to the White House. Both spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss private conversations.

The lawyers for Ford wrote to the committee Saturday that she "accepts the Committee's request to provide her first-hand knowledge of Brett Kavanaugh's sexual misconduct next week."

Attorneys Debra Katz and Lisa Banks said that many aspects of Grassley's latest offer were "fundamentally inconsistent" with the committee's promise of a "fair, impartial investigation."

They said they remained disappointed by the "bullying" that "tainted the process." Yet they remained "hopeful that we can reach agreement on details."

Patience among Republicans, though, is running thin.

The GOP is facing enormous pressure from its base of conservative leaders and voters to swiftly approve Kavanaugh, who would become the second of Trump's nominees to sit on the nation's highest court, ahead of the Nov. 6 election.

(Source: AP)

Italy gov't adopts hardline anti-migrant decree

The Italian government on Monday adopted a heavily-criticized security decree which will make it easier to expel migrants and strip them of Italian citizenship.

The new bill is "a step forward to make Italy safer," far-right Interior Minister Matteo Salvini said on Facebook.

It will help Italy "be stronger in the fight against the mafia and [people] smugglers, reduce the costs of excessive immigration, expel delinquents and fake refugees, strip terrorists of citizenship, [and] give the police greater powers," Salvini said.

Parliament has 60 days to debate, amend and vote on the bill before President Sergio Mattarella signs it into law.

Salvini said the decree streamlines the rules for processing asylum requests and brings Italy into line with other European Union countries.

Humanitarian protection – a lower level of asylum that is based on Italian rather than international law – would be awarded based on six strict criteria.

These include whether there was urgent medical need or if the applicant was the victim of a natural disaster, Salvini told journalists.

He said around a quarter of those who have applied for asylum in recent years in Italy have been given humanitarian protection, which is a provisional status.

Those seeking refugee status will have

their requests suspended if they are "considered socially dangerous or convicted in the first instance" of crimes, while their appeals are ongoing.

They will in future be housed in bigger reception centers, while minors and those with recognized refugee status will be housed in different parts of the country in order to facilitate integration.

The new law also lets local police have Taser stun guns and makes it easier to evict squatters by getting rid of the obligation of finding provisional housing for the most vulnerable.

The controversial bill has been heavily criticized in recent weeks, including by members of the anti-establishment Five Star Movement which governs in coalition

with Salvini's far-right League.

The head of Italy's bishops' conference Nunzio Galantino has lamented the fact that security and the treatment of migrants are dealt with in the same bill.

"This means that the immigrant is already judged because of his condition and that he's already considered a public menace, whatever his behavior. This is a bad sign," Galantino said.

Salvini, who is also deputy prime minister, has taken a hardline on immigration since the coalition came to power in June, refusing to allow ships carrying migrants and asylum seekers rescued in the Mediterranean to dock at Italian ports.

(Source: AFP)

Corbyn has long said that a "People's Vote" is not off the table for his party, and a source close to the leadership urged caution over an as-yet unknown motion, repeating the Labor leader's stance that he does not support a second referendum.

WADA didn't put money above clean sport on Russia, says chief

The World Anti-Doping Agency president Craig Reedie is offended by allegations that WADA put money above clean sport while reinstating Russia's anti-doping agency (RUSADA), and said the move was only aimed at achieving Russian compliance.

WADA lifted the ban on RUSADA, subject to conditions, on Thursday, thus incurring the wrath of athletes and other anti-doping bodies. Former WADA director general David Howman termed the decision "money over principle", which Reedie vehemently denied in an open letter. "...the accusation that WADA – and me personally – have pandered to the interests of money over clean sport are totally untrue, and deeply offensive," Reedie wrote.

"The author of those remarks, as a former Director General of WADA, should know better.

"This week's decision was based entirely on achieving Russian compliance, as properly delivered. A regularly monitored anti-doping process in Russia is surely the best way to reassure athletes there, and elsewhere, that clean sport prevails."

RUSADA was suspended in November, 2015 after an independent WADA report carried out by Canadian lawyer Richard McLaren outlined evidence of widespread state-backed, systematic doping and cover-ups in Russian sport.

Russia acknowledged the report but has consistently denied the existence of a state-sponsored doping programme.

Reedie said the doping saga "poisoned sport and its place in the world" but reminded WADA was quick to confront the scandal "with two long-running and independent investigations."

He said the criticism of the RUSADA reinstatement was "understandable" but WADA's mandate was to develop a "robust Russian anti-doping agency". "Our pressure to secure progress and concessions has been unrelenting, even if the language we have used may have been polite, and even diplomatic," he said.

Reedie said Russia had met 29 of the 31 criteria of the compliance roadmap. "Only the acknowledgement of wrongdoing and access to the Moscow laboratory remained..."

(Source: Reuters)

Spanish players association rejects U.S. game

La Liga's plan to host a game in the United States suffered another blow on Monday when the Spanish Football Players' Association (AFE) announced they were against the idea. The league's ambition to stage Jan. 26's Girona verses Barcelona fixture in Miami have been met with resistance from the Spanish soccer federation (RFEF), which last week refused to back the idea until they received more information. This led to a public war of words between La Liga chief Javier Tebas and RFEF president Luis Rubiales.

After receiving a more detailed analysis of the idea, the AFE aligned themselves with the RFEF, highlighting potential breaches of the collective agreement between the AFE and La Liga. "Also, the AFE points out that at the moment the necessary authorisations required to play said game in the USA have not been given," the AFE said in a statement.

(Source: BBC)

Serena Williams: 'I don't understand coach's claims'

Serena Williams says she wants to move on from her controversial US Open final defeat by Naomi Osaka.

In the final, the American was given a code violation for coaching, incurred a point penalty for racquet smashing and was docked a game for verbal abuse. Williams denies she was being coached from the stands, despite her coach Patrick Mouratoglou saying he was sending her signals. "I just don't understand what he was talking about," Williams said. Williams, who was aiming to equal Margaret Court's record of 24 Grand Slam singles titles, said she had not received any tactics from Mouratoglou, telling the umpire she would "never cheat to win and would rather lose".

Speaking to The Sunday Project on Australia's Network Ten, she added: "I asked him (Mouratoglou) 'what are you talking about you were coaching? We don't have signals, we've never had signals'. "He said he made a motion. So I was like 'you made a motion and now you told people that you're coaching me - that doesn't make sense, why would you say that?'"

"I was on the other side. I didn't see the motion. It was just a really confusing moment, I think, for him.

"What I'm trying to do most of all is to recover from that and move on." Following the accusation of coaching, Williams was punished for racquet smashing and verbal abuse, following several outbursts that saw her call the umpire a "liar" and "thief".

Williams did not answer when questioned about whether she regretted breaking her racquet on the court.

Following the final she was fined \$17,000 (£13,100) for the code violations.

(Source: BBC)

Women's Ballon d'Or to be introduced

A Ballon d'Or for the best female player of the year will be awarded for the first time at the end of 2018.

The prestigious award has been presented to a male player every year since Stanley Matthews won the inaugural accolade in 1956.

A list of 15 nominees for the women's prize will be announced in October by France Football magazine, alongside the 30-strong male list. This year's award ceremony will take place in Paris on 3 December. "Women's soccer is a booming discipline that deserves the same respect as men's soccer," said magazine editor in chief Pascal Ferre.

"It's coming to maturity and growing bigger. More than 760 million TV viewers watched games at the last women's World Cup in 2015 - this did not happen by chance."

France Football magazine merged its award with the Fifa world player of the year award in 2010, but the pair split again two years ago. The world governing body also awards a trophy to the best female player at its rebranded Best Fifa Football Awards. American Carli Lloyd and Lieke Martens from the Netherlands won the first two editions after it was introduced in 2016.

(Source: BBC)

Barcelona's Ernesto Valverde perplexed by Clement Lenglet's red card

Ernesto Valverde lamented the VAR decision which saw Clement Lenglet sent off as Barcelona dropped their first points of the new La Liga season, held to a 2-2 draw by Catalan rivals Girona at Camp Nou on Sunday.

Barca took an early lead through Lionel Messi but the game swung in the 35th minute when Lenglet, making his first league start following a €36 million summer switch from Sevilla, was dismissed for elbowing Pere Pons after intercepting the ball.

Uruguayan striker Cristhian Stuani scored either side of half-time to move Girona ahead but Gerard Pique equalised after the hour mark to earn the home side a point and maintain their unbeaten start to the campaign.

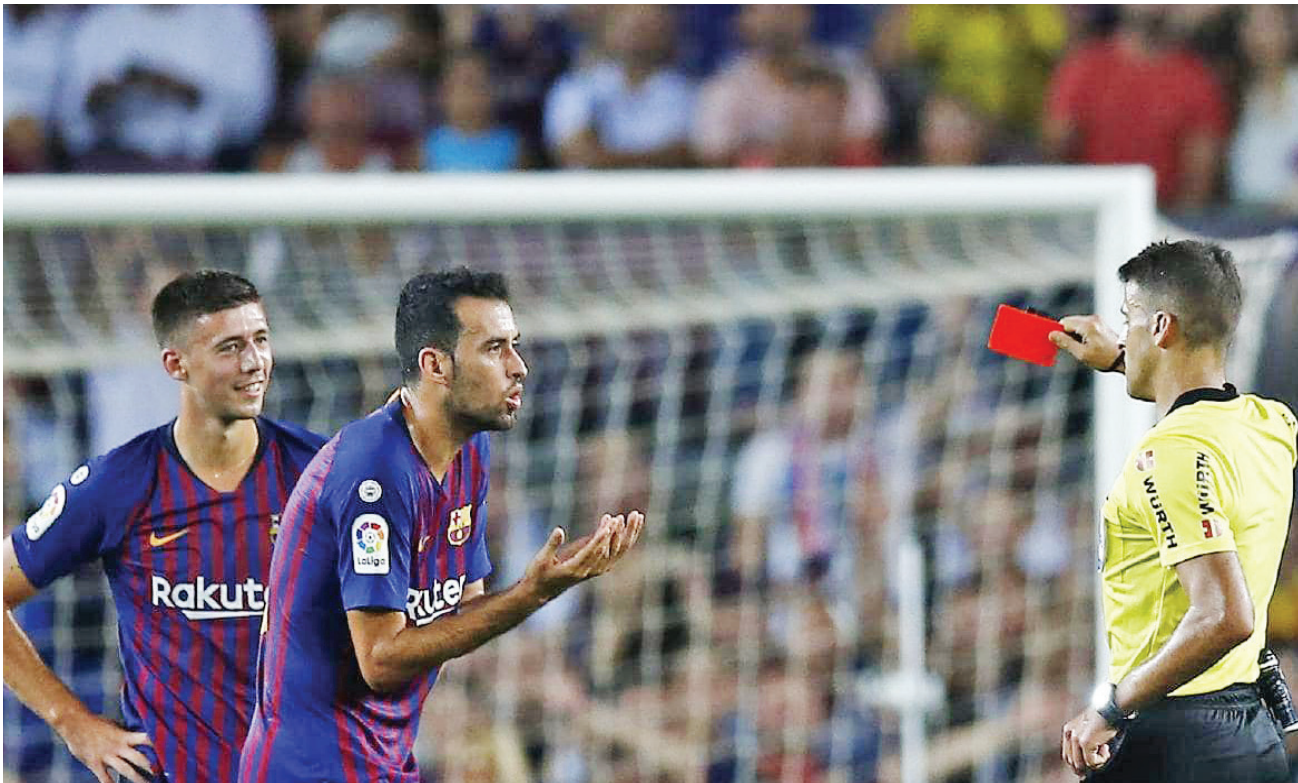
"The red card conditioned the game and we were unfortunate to concede at the end of the first half," Barca coach Valverde said in his post game news conference.

"The sending-off changed things a lot, we weren't able to come back [and win]. I've not seen it back on television. There's a coming together, of course, and it seems [Lenglet's] elbow has caught him. "It must be the first red card in which the player who's on the end of the foul has apologised as Pons did to Lenglet. I suppose justice was done with VAR but I have the feeling that it's not a red card.

"It's possible there's an impact. I don't think it was an act of aggression, though, not at all. It's a foul by [Pons]."

Girona midfielder Pons collaborated Valverde's version of events, confirming that he said sorry to Lenglet and admitting he thought he was the player who had committed the foul at first. "I did apologise to [Lenglet]," Pons said. "I didn't notice the contact from the elbow and I offered my hand to him because I thought it was a foul by me at first.

"I don't know if it was an act of aggression. We both went in 100 percent, we both caught



each other. In the end, it was VAR that made the decision. I don't know it's a red card or not."

Barca midfielder Sergio Busquets was also perplexed by the verdict, questioning the use of VAR to reach the decision.

"Maybe there's contact, you can see that in the images, but the ball's on the ground and the movement Clement makes is a natural one," he told reporters after the game.

"It's not an act of aggression, he wasn't look-

ing to do that. Even the Girona player apologised because he made the foul. VAR has to be used in the correct way and with consistent criteria.

"Until the red card, things were going well for us. After that, with one man less, it's harder, especially when we go behind. We tried, we got level again and we looked for the win... but it was tough with one less. We made a huge effort physically.

"It's a different game [with 10], we were

good 11 against 11, we could have scored more goals. But going down to 10 left us up against it. We all like to play well and win, above all to win, so we will try to improve."

Barca, who are level with Real Madrid at the top of La Liga with 13 points from five games, travel to Leganes in the league on Wednesday and then host Athletic Bilbao at Camp Nou on Saturday.

(Source: ESPN)

Germany to follow World Cup winners France in regeneration



France won the 2018 World Cup by regenerating their squad and previous holders Germany must now do the same, the countries' respective coaches said on Sunday.

Didier Deschamps and Joachim Loew were speaking at FIFA's World Cup conference in London attended by representatives of almost 200 member associations.

Deschamps, who in July became one of only three men to win the competition as both player and coach, said it was necessary to rejuvenate the French side that lost the 2016 European Championship final on home ground to Portugal.

"In two years things change," he said through an interpreter.

"In football terms it's a long time.

"You have to rethink and renew. It's important to have players with experience but it can be hard to find the balance between experience and youth.

"We had 14 out of 23 players who had never played at the Euros or a World Cup. But eight of the 11 in the final had done."

His overall impression of the 2018 finals was that "all teams were extremely well

prepared in terms of fitness and able to play at high intensity, so that as well as creativity they need nowadays to be true athletes".

Deschamps defended one of the younger members of his team, Manchester United's Paul Pogba, who one delegate said had been more impressive for France than his club.

"The rest of the world had an image of him that didn't reflect who he is, of someone very individualistic who only thinks of himself," he said. "That's not true at all."

Loew said Germany, who went into the tournament as holders but finished bottom of their group, had more or less the same group of players for a long period, some of them appearing in three World Cups.

"Maybe after this long time at the top you don't have the same passion or greed to win the title," he said through an interpreter.

"So now we have to think about how we integrate some new players over the next two to four years to get some new blood into the team and set new aims for what we want to do."

(Source: Reuters)

Pogba questions tactics: We need more attack



Paul Pogba questioned why Manchester United can not muster more attacking football at Old Trafford.

Jose Mourinho's team were held to a 1-1 draw by Wolves on Saturday and afterwards Pogba said they had not been able to create enough chances to win the game.

"We are at home and we should play much better against Wolves," he said. "When we are at home we should attack, attack, attack. That's Old Trafford. We are here to attack. "I think teams are scared when they see Man United attacking and attacking. That was our mistake."

Asked what was stopping them from attacking, Pogba said: "I can't tell you because I'm a player. It's not me."

Pogba was instrumental in Fred's opener against Wolves and when pushed about what was limiting United going forward, the 25-year-old World Cup winner reluctantly suggested it was down to a lack of pace and movement up front -- both hallmarks of Sir Alex Ferguson's best teams.

"I'm not the manager. I cannot say but obviously we should show more option

of playing but I cannot say because I'm a player," he said. "That's my way of thinking -- we should move better, we should move more, yeah." Alexis Sanchez was one of the United's players who drew most criticism for his performance against Wolves.

He was substituted after 63 minutes -- the third game in a row he has been replaced -- leaving his record since arriving at Old Trafford in January at just three goals in 23 games. Pogba, though, defended the 29-year-old and said he is still adapting after leaving Arsenal and that the best is yet to come. "What you have to know about Alexis is he is a hard worker," Pogba said. "He trains very well, he always tries to help the team, talks with the team and everything. He will get used to it.

"When you play a long time with another team and you play different football in that other team you have some kind of adaptation that you have to have.

"It's not that he is playing bad. We know that Alexis Sanchez can bring a lot and I'm sure he will.

(Source: ESPN)

Economic benefits key to Turkish plans to host Euro 2024 - bid chief

Turkey deserves to host the 2024 European Championship because it represents a "new frontier" that will bring great economic gains, the vice-president of the Turkish football federation said, brushing aside concerns over the country's human rights record.

UEFA will make its final decision on the venue for its 2024 flagship tournament when its executive committee meets on Thursday at its headquarters in the Swiss town of Nyon. Germany is the only other country bidding to host the tournament.

Turkey has seen previous attempts to host Euro 2016 and the 2020 Summer Olympics fail, while Germany won the rights to host the 2006 World Cup, which was widely hailed as a success.

However, Servet Yardimci, who is spearheading the Turkish bid, believes Turkey's attraction as a venue lies precisely in its status as an untapped resource for UEFA.

"Germany has a proven track record in hosting events but Turkey is a new market," Yardimci told Reuters in an interview. "It is... a completely new frontier because they (UEFA) will attract more supporters, more sponsorship, more excitement. It will bring an added value to the revenue UEFA is looking for. Definitely UEFA would be much stronger financially than if hosted by another European country."

Holding the tournament in a country that straddles



Europe and Asia would reinforce an appetite for global expansion in European soccer at the moment. Spain's La Liga is planning to take games to the United States and UEFA is discussing the possibility of having the Champions League final in New York.

"(Turkey) is the only UEFA member that links west to east. Istanbul is also a great gateway to the Middle East and Africa," Yardimci said.

■ POLITICAL CONCERNS

One issue that could count against Turkey's bid is its record on human rights. UEFA lists a country's rights record as a factor in determining its bid, and Ankara has come under increased scrutiny since a failed coup attempt against President Tayyip Erdogan in 2016.

A crackdown on dissent has led to some 50,000 people being arrested pending trial and 150,000 state employees being sacked. Erdogan has also won sweeping new powers with his re-election in June and Turkey's economy has been hit by a currency crisis.

But Yardimci brushed aside the concerns about politics. "We cannot change this negative perception Turkey has outside of Turkey, but politically Turkey is very stable, very consistent," he said, adding that he believed UEFA would look at the issue "purely from a footballing perspective".

Turkey managed to convince UEFA this year to name Istanbul's Ataturk Stadium as the venue for the 2020 Champions League final, beating off competition from Lisbon's Estadio da Luz. Besiktas's Vodafone Park stadium, also in Istanbul, will host the 2019 UEFA Super Cup.

"The trust is there already, the fact the 2020 and 2019 finals were given to Turkey demonstrates the support and trust and confidence UEFA has in us," Yardimci added.

(Source: Euronews)

Iran on the verge of AFC U-16 Championship elimination

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran were held to a goalless draw against India in the 2018 AFC U-16 Championship on Monday.

The result put Abbas Chamanian's team on brink of the competition's elimination.

Iran could have won the match after the referee rewarded them a penalty in the 74th minute but Alireza Bavieh failed to convert the penalty.

Also, India almost found the net in stoppage time when Lalchhanhime Sailo broke free in the middle but he fired his effort just wide as the match ended goalless.

Iran, who started the campaign with a 2-0 defeat to Indonesia, must defeat Vietnam in Group C in their final group match, while India face Indonesia.

"India did not play the beautiful game. If we scored the first goal early, things would have been different. We could have scored two goals and show the beautiful football to people. We lost the chance to earn three points but we will be prepared for the next game," Chamanian commented after the match.

The top four teams of the tournament will qualify for the 2019 FIFA U-17 World Cup in Peru as the AFC representatives.

The competition is being played in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from Sept. 20 to Oct. 7.



Alireza Faghani to referee Tehran derby



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Alireza Faghani has been chosen to take charge of Thursday's Tehran derby between Esteghlal and Persepolis at the Azadi Stadium.

The Referee Committee of Iran Football Federation announced on Monday that Faghani will officiate the match.

Mohammadreza Mansouri and Rahim Shahin will assist him in the derby.

Esteghlal and Persepolis have played against each other 87 times, with Esteghlal

winning 26 games, Persepolis taking 22 victories, and 39 matches ending in a draw.

Their last match was watched by FIFA president Gianni Infantino and former Dutch international Marco Van Basten at the Azadi Stadium.

Persepolis are second in Iran Professional League (IPL) table while Esteghlal sit 11th.

Faghani officiated 2018 World Cup third-place play-off between Belgium and England.

Saeid Alihosseini misses 2018 IWF World Championships



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iranian super heavyweight weightlifter Saeid Alihosseini will be missing the 2018 IWF World Championships due to injury.

Iran weightlifting coach Mohammad Hossein Barkhah has confirmed the absence of Alihosseini in the prestigious competition.

Behdad Salimi, another Iranian super heavyweight weightlifter, announced his retirement after winning

a gold medal in the 2018 Asian Games in late August.

Alihosseini won a silver medal in that competition held in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The 2018 IWF World Championships will be held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan from Nov. 1 to 11.

In the previous edition which was held in Anaheim, United States, Iran finished in second place with two gold, one silver and two bronze medals.

Neymar gives tearful young pitch invader a hug and his shirt

It's happened again! Paris Saint-Germain and Brazil superstar Neymar showed his generous side for a second time this season as he made another emotional young supporter's day in Rennes.

The 26-year-old, who was branded the "Kim Kardashian of football" by none other than Joey Barton just days after a largely anonymous Champions League outing in Liverpool, notched an assist before he was substituted moments before full-time in Sunday's 3-1 win for the French champions at Roazhon Park.

And, just like a youngster by the name of Zakaria after PSG's 4-2 win away at Nimes three weeks ago, the



tearful fan in Rennes took to the pitch after making his way past security and approached Neymar.

The world's most expensive player stuck with the precedent he set at Nimes by giving his newest young admirer a hug and his jersey.

Will this latest kid further emulate Zakaria by setting up an Instagram account just to thank Neymar? Stay tuned to find out.

The worry for Neymar -- and for PSG's new kit suppliers -- is how many other youngsters will be inspired to try their luck each time Les Parisiens' iconic No. 10 plays away from Parc des Princes.

(Source: Stuff. co.nz)

German FA investigating Borussia Dortmund, Hoffenheim for insulting banners

The German football association (DFB) has opened investigations against Hoffenheim and Borussia Dortmund following incidents that occurred before the teams' 1-1 draw on Saturday.

Hoffenheim owner Dietmar Hopp was verbally abused by some travelling Borussia Dortmund fans who displayed several offensive banners, including one showing a portrait of the 78-year-old in crosshairs with "Hasta La Vista Hopp!" written underneath.

The banners were a reply to a banning order sent last week to at least 33 Dortmund fans who insulted Hopp in May during the final match of last season.

"The DFB control body has opened proceedings against TSG Hoffenheim (suspicion of insufficient security) and Borussia Dortmund (unsporting behavior of its fans)," the

DFB said in a statement released to ESPN FC.

There were also reports that Dortmund supporters destroyed some restrooms at the Wirsol Rhein-Neckar-Arena in Sinsheim.

While Dortmund must explain their fans' behavior and could face punishment of a partial stadium ban or a closed away end when they next travel to Hoffenheim, the hosts must answer why Dortmund supporters were able to smuggle the giant banners into the block.

Dortmund fans attending the match told ESPN FC that security had been tight, with officers searching the purses of those sitting in the away end.

In an open letter published on Hoffenheim's website on Sunday, they called the banner an "incitement to murder" and said they are "deeply shocked by the insults against Dietmar Hopp."

Christoph Schickhardt, the lawyer repre-

senting both Hopp and the club, told SWR that "in the future, a game should not be kicked off like that."

Dortmund CEO Hans-Joachim Watzke apologized to Hopp in a statement posted on the club's website.

"We tried to de-escalate last week as things were blowing up," Watzke's statement read. "We talked to all parties, but sadly, we were not successful. Such a behaviour in no way corresponds with the values of Borussia Dortmund."

It had not been the first time the cross-hairs were on display at a Dortmund match in Hoffenheim.

When the sides met for the first time in the Bundesliga in September 2008, a smaller version of the banner was displayed as Dortmund supporters began their protest against Hoffenheim under the slogan, "Tra-

dition beats every trend."

That day, Hoffenheim fans replied with: "Tradition beats every trend. We are not a trend. We are the future."

The relationship between Hopp and Dortmund supporters has been strained since 2008, when Hoffenheim were first promoted to the Bundesliga behind financing from Hopp, a local billionaire. In 2015, Hopp was allowed to take over his hometown club after 20 years of funding it.

While most of the animosity was initiated by the Dortmund fans, in 2011, Hoffenheim admitted to having used a sound system to fill the away stands with loud and strident noise. They argued that the stadium's caretaker had installed the sound system without the club's approval.

(Source: ESPN)

Barcelona-Atletico Madrid decision made me lose sleep – Griezmann

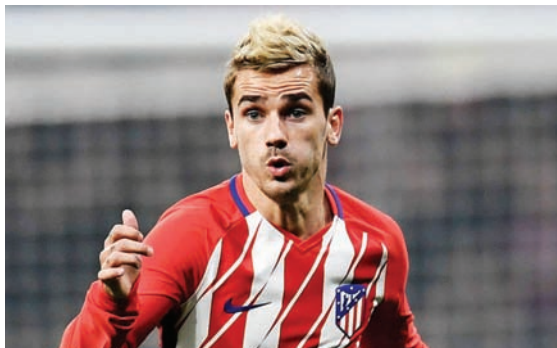
Antoine Griezmann said he lost sleep during the summer as he debated whether to leave Atletico Madrid for Barcelona.

Griezmann decided to sign a new contract with Atletico rather than join Barca in a video released before France's opening World Cup game against Australia in June and said it was the "most difficult" decision he has ever made.

"There were times when I wasn't feeling good," Griezmann told Telefoot. "I spoke about it with my wife. I woke her up at three in the morning and asked her, 'What are we going to do?' Because I tried to talk about it, but she can't help me, she doesn't know what I'm thinking. My parents, either. Some members of my family wanted to see me [at Barcelona], others no, so, it was difficult."

Griezmann has been at Atletico since moving from Real Sociedad in 2014. He helped them win the Europa League and UEFA Super Cup this year and also won the World Cup with France.

He has forged a strong bond with other Atletico players,



many of whom did what they could to convince their top scorer to stay.

"Everyone was calling me, seeing how I was, asking me what I was thinking," Griezmann said. "Each time, they said

to me, 'We want you to stay. We'll do everything for you to stay. We're ready to do a lot of things.' That touches you."

"In the Champions League, we want to do better than we did last year when we weren't able to get past the last 16. I think that it was mostly my fault because I wasn't good mentally, and in the league -- as usual -- to challenge [Barcelona and Real Madrid]."

And while the World Cup ended nearly three months ago, Griezmann remains fixated on marking the win with a championship ring for his teammates.

An NBA fanatic, Griezmann reportedly contacted a Los Angeles jeweller to produce a ring design that he -- after some help from France teammate Paul Pogba -- is delighted will come to fruition.

"Paul has spoken to the [French Football] Federation," Griezmann said. "They're going to help us a bit. When they give them to us, we'll be like kids. It'll be cool."

(Source: Soccer.net)

Siamand Rahman named Best Asia-Oceania Powerlifter

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran's Siamand Rahman has been chosen as "Best Asian-Oceanian Powerlifter" after

winning the men's over 107kg title at the Asia-Oceania Open Championships in Kitakyushu, Japan.

The world's strongest Paralympian may have not gone for the world record this time, but it is always special to watch him compete, Paralympic.org wrote.

The vote was carried out on World Para Powerlifting's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, with Rahman collecting the most combined votes across all social media pages.

China's Lingling Guo and Tan Yujiao, and Iraq's Rasool Mohsin were also nominated.

The year's fourth and last regional Championships will be the Americas Open Championships in Bogota, Colombia, between 5 and 9 December.



Iran releases final list of 2019 football referees

IRNA — Iran Football Federation Referee Committee has presented the final list of 33 soccer referees and international male and female assistant referees in football, futsal and beach soccer to FIFA to judge in 2019 tournament.

The list which includes Iranian top soccer referees is as follows:

Male referees: Alireza Faghani, Mohammad Bonyadi Far, Bijan Heidari, Payam Heydari, Hassan Akrami, Vahid Kazemi and Komeil Gholami.

Assistant referees: Reza Sokhandan, Mohammadreza Mansouri, Mohammadreza Abolfazli, Saeed Ali Neghadian, Ali Mirzabeigi, Hassan Zahiri, Arman As'adi, Saeed Ghasemi and Alireza Ildrom.

Female referees: Saltanat Nowruzi, Mahsa Ghorbani and Mahnaz Zokaei

Assistant referees: Ensiye Khabaz Mafi Nejad, Bahareh Seyfiyan Nahavandi and Habibeh Rabavi

Male futsal: Mohammadreza Nasirlou, Vahid Arzpeima, Ali Hafizai and Ebrahim Mehrabi Afshar

Female futsal: Gelareh Nazemi, Zari Fathi and Maryam Pourjafarian

Beach Soccer: Ebrahim Akbarpour, Hamid Matin Moghaddam, Ebrahim Kurd and Amir Fallah.

Alireza Faghani has refereed important matches such as the 2014 AFC Champions League Final, the 2015 AFC Asian Cup Final, the 2015 FIFA Club World Cup Final, the 2016 Olympic football final match.

He has also refereed matches in the 2017 FIFA Confederations Cup and World Cup 2018 Russia.

Iranian team crowned champion in Beirut Taekwondo contests

IRNA — Iranian representative in 2018 Beirut Open Taekwondo Championships bagged six golds and two silvers to win the title of the tournament.

Iranian representative Shahrdiri Varamin won six gold and two silver medals, standing in the first place with a total 48 points in men and women categories.

Morocco with four golds and 28 points finished runner-up and Ivory Coast with two golds, one bronze and 15 points was ranked third.

Gold, silver and bronze winners of the tournament earned 10, 6, and 3.6 points in World Taekwondo Olympic rankings, respectively.

225 athletes from 28 countries partook in the first edition of Beirut Taekwondo Championships in Lebanese capital city of Beirut on September 22-24.

Iran finish 5th at Asian Youth Handball Championship

TASNIM — Iran finished in fifth place at the Asian Men's Youth Handball Championship.

The Iranian team defeated India 30-25 on Monday and came fifth.

The Asian Men's Youth Handball Championship is the 8th edition of the championship being held in Jordan from September 16 to 26.

The competition also acts as the qualification tournament for the 2019 Men's Youth World Handball Championship.

Top four teams from the championship will directly qualify for the Youth World Championship to be held in Republic of Macedonia.

Adam Hemati scores last gasp winner as Persepolis beat Sepidrood

TASNIM — Persepolis football team defeated Sepidrood with a last-gasp goal from substitute Adam Hemati on Sunday.

Hemati came off the bench in the 81st minute and was on target nine minutes later with a long-range shot.

Persepolis remained at second place of Iran Professional League (IPL) with 15 points, one point behind Padideh who were held to a goalless draw against Tractor Sazi in Mashhad.

It was a morale-boosting win for Persepolis ahead of Thursday's league game against arch-rivals Esteghlal, who played out a goalless draw against Nassaji in Ghaemshahr on Saturday.

INTERNATIONAL DAILY
www.tehrantimes.com
■ Managing Director: Ali Asgari
■ Editor-in-Chief: Mohammad Ghaderi

» Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895
editor@tehrantimes.com
» Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000
» Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051450
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No. 18, Bimeh Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran
P.o. Box: 14155-4843
Zip Code: 1599814713

Bulgaria festival to screen films from Iran

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — The Iranian films “Slaughter”, “Take a Deep Breath!” and “Blue Sky, Clean Earth” will be competing in the 14th Early Bird Film Festival, which will take place in the Bulgarian capital of Sofia from November 1 to 5.



“Slaughter” by Saman Hosseinpur and Ako Zandkarimi. “Slaughter” by Saman Hosseinpur and Ako Zandkarimi narrates the story of a family that is forced to slaughter their lone cow to pass the hard, cold winter days, although their son is not happy with it. “Blue Sky, Clean Earth” by Mahyar Mandegar tells the story of Masud, a small time thief who is charged with terrorism. Competing in the animation section, “Take a Deep Breath!” by Zahra Safdari Shadlu is about a woman who overcomes the fear of presence in the society and her past bitter memories. A selection of 117 films from 80 countries will be competing in the Early Bird Film Festival this year.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Willi Fest finds Iran’s “Paradise”
A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — “Paradise”, a comedy drama by Iranian filmmaker Ali Atshani will be competing in the Willi Fest, which will be held in New York City on September 28 and 29. The film is about two young theologians who are going to participate in an academic seminar about religions in Germany. Haj Agha Ferasati, the head of the seminary, prevents them from travelling. The young theologians then convince Haj Agha to come along and get him a visa. The film will compete in the feature film section with “Mariposas” by Adrian Carey and “One Bedroom” by Darien Sills-Evans, both from the U.S.

EU regulators to decide by October 26 on Sony’s \$2.3 billion bid for EMI

BRUSSELS (Reuters) — Sony Corp (6758.T) will know by Oct. 26 whether EU antitrust regulators will wave through its \$2.3 billion offer for control of EMI to become the world’s largest music publisher, according to a filing on the European Commission website on Monday. Sony, which announced the deal in May, sought EU approval for the deal last Friday. The proposed acquisition is the boldest strategy move by its new CEO Kenichiro Yoshida, which would give it rights to 2.1 million songs from artists such as Drake, Sam Smith, Pharrell Williams and Sia. EU antitrust enforcers can clear the deal with or without concessions or open a four-month investigation if they have serious concerns. The Japanese group, which currently owns a 30 percent stake in EMI, wants to buy Mubalada Investment Co’s 60 percent stake. In July, it acquired the estate of Michael Jackson’s minority share of EMI. The music industry has grown in recent years, driven by the popularity of fixed-price music streaming services such as Spotify (SPOT.N), Apple Music, Google Play, SoundCloud and YouTube. Independent music labels group Impala has criticized the Sony deal, saying it would give the company too much market power in both its recording and publishing catalogs, allow it to promote its global repertoire both on radio and in playlists, and be better able to attract songwriters with better terms. “This transaction would disrupt competition and harm consumers in an already overly concentrated music market. Given recent precedents set by the European Commission, we believe Sony’s takeover will face stiff opposition,” said Helen Smith, Impala’s executive chair. The Commission approved Sony and Mubadala’s acquisition of EMI’s music publishing business in 2012 in return for hefty concessions, including the sale of the worldwide publishing rights to four catalogs and the musical works of 12 composers.

“Blockage”, “Are You Volleyball?!” named best at Yari filmfest

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — The acclaimed movies “Blockage” and “Are You Volleyball?” won the awards for best feature and short films respectively at the 18th Iranian Film Festival in the Swedish cities of Uppsala and Stockholm, the organizers announced on Sundays. Directed by Mohsen Qarai, “Blockage” is about Qasem, a young man who is working at Tehran Municipality and his job is to prevent vendors from selling their merchandise on the sidewalks. He’s about to be fired because of his secret deals with some of the vendors so he’s looking for another job as a truck driver. He’s counting on his wife, Akram’s patrimony to buy a truck, however, Akram believes they should buy a small house and leave Qasem’s father’s home. Nevertheless, Qasem’s fight with a vendor some days earlier creates an opportunity to overcome these problems. “Are You Volleyball?” by director Mohammad Bakhshi tells the story of a group of Arabic-speaking asylum seekers who arrive at the border of an English-speaking country and can go no further. There are scuffles with the border guards every day until volleyball becomes the catalyst that improves relations. The short won the award for best film at the 9th BCN Sports Film Festival in Barcelona, Spain in May. The Iranian Film Festival is organized every year by Yari, an Uppsala-based charity organization that helps street children in Iran to go to school and also raises funds for the construction of schools and libraries for children. The Sweden-based Iranian cineastes Alireza Mojallal, Reza Baqer, Saeid Sharifian and Mina Azarian and Swedish filmmaker Mikael Hylin were the members of the jury this year.



Hamed Behdad acts in a scene from “Blockage” by Mohsen Qarai.

Iranian filmmaker traces Noriyuki Haraguchi’s “Oil Pool”



Japanese artist Noriyuki Haraguchi glances at his sculpture “Oil Pool” on display at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMCA) on October 21, 2017. (Honaronline/Gata Ziabari) **A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Iranian filmmaker Hooman Zarif is studying the 40-year history of Japanese artist Noriyuki Haraguchi’s “Oil Pool” in his latest documentary, “In Search of Lost Time”. Haraguchi’s trip last year to Iran to restore the sculpture, which is on display at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, inspired Zarif to make the documentary, a public relations team announced on Monday. The trip was made in October 2017 at the invitation of TMCA. Composers Alan Kushan and Peyman Khazani, narrator Nader Daahi and artist Farhang Baqai have collaborated in this project. Born in 1946, Haraguchi has lived most of his life in the town of Yokosuka. The environment of Yokosuka, located just south of the massively industrialized city of Kawasaki, has indelibly shaped Haraguchi’s aesthetic. His “Oil Pool” was exhibited to great acclaim at “Documenta 6” in the German city of Kassel in 1977 and was soon afterwards acquired by the TMCA, where it remains installed to this day.

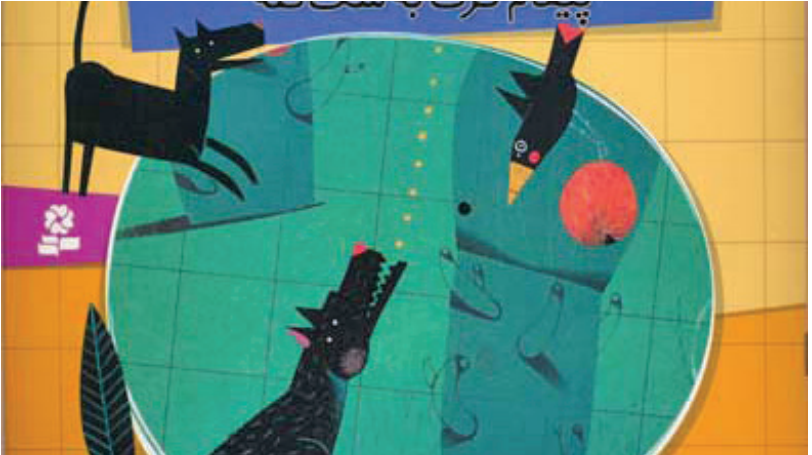
“The House with a Clock in Its Walls” leads with \$26.8 million

LOS ANGELES (Variety.com) — “The House with a Clock in Its Walls” easily topped the domestic box office in an otherwise quiet weekend at multiplexes. Eli Roth’s adaptation of the popular children’s book picked up a better-than-expected \$26.8 million when it opened in 3,592 locations. The fantasy film, starring Jack Black and Cate Blanchett, didn’t face much competition. A number of holdovers filled out the top five as a trio of new releases came in way under expectations. “The House With a Clock in Its Walls” topped “Hostel” as Roth’s biggest opening to date. The family-friendly film bowed with \$3.1 million overseas for a global start of \$29.9 million. Imax screens accounted for \$2.5 million of its box office total. Universal’s head of domestic distribution Jim Orr said the release date in a wide open market, along with the team of Roth, Black, and Blanchett, helped bolster the film above earlier projections. “Obviously, we couldn’t be more pleased,” Orr said. “It’s always great to kick off your fall slate at No. 1.” Michael Moore’s “Fahrenheit 11/9”, a satirical look at President Donald Trump, fared the best among newcomers. The Briarcliff Entertainment political documentary landed in eighth place, coming in way under estimates with \$3.1 million from 1,719 venues. Launching the film in over a thousand theaters might have hurt its box office potential. Most specialized films start small in a select amount of theaters before slowly expanding nationwide as word of mouth builds. It was a good summer for docs — “RBG”, “Won’t You Be My Neighbor,” and “Three Identical Strangers” all hit double digits, but they all had modest expansions. Dinesh D’Souza took a similar route to Moore just a few months ago, opening “Death of a Nation” on over 1,000 screens. The pro-Trump doc



Actors Jack Black and Owen Vaccaro pose at the premiere for “The House with a Clock in its Walls” in Los Angeles, California, U.S., August 16, 2018. (Reuters/Mario Anzuoni) was the worst showing for the right-wing conservative filmmaker, bowing with \$2.3 million and picking up just \$5.8 million. It’s a tough time to be serving up even more Trump. Moore’s 2004 film “Fahrenheit 9/11” is still the highest grossing documentary ever. It debuted with \$23 million in North America and went on to earn \$22 million globally. “Life Itself”, a tear-jerker from “This Is Us” creator Dan Fogelman, didn’t even crack the top 10, pocketing just \$2.1 million from 2,609 screens. That’s cause for concern, especially considering Amazon Studios paid \$10 million for the star-studded drama with Oscar Isaac, Olivia Wilde, Antonio Banderas, and Annette Bening. It didn’t help that the movie was savaged by bad reviews ahead of its release. It currently holds a 13 percent average on review aggregation site Rotten Tomatoes, as well as a B+ CinemaScore. Lionsgate’s “A Simple Favor”, the neo-noir mystery drama starring Anna Kendrick, Blake Lively, and Henry Golding, landed in second place with \$10.4 million in 3,102 locations in its second frame. To date, it has earned \$32 million. In third is Warner Bros.’ “The Nun” with \$10.2 million, taking its domestic tally to \$100 million.

Golden Pinwheel Illustrators Competition picks works from Iran



“Message of the Wolf to the Sheepdog” illustrated by Hassan Amekan. **A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Works by two Iranian illustrators have been selected for the final list of the Golden Pinwheel International Young Illustrators Competition in Shanghai, China. Reza Dalvand and Hassan Amekan are the Iranian finalists, the organizers have announced. They will be competing with 48 other illustrators coming from Mexico, Spain, Colombia, Brazil, Portugal, Italy, United Kingdom, Poland and several other countries. The competition is organized by the Shanghai Children’s Book Fair (CCBF) and winners will be announced on November 9. All the finalists’ illustrations will be displayed in an exhibition during the book fair, and the artists will also receive an official diploma and free access to the workshops that will be organized during the event. Joan Fernández from Spain and Zhang Fan from China were the Grand Prix winners in 2017. In 2016, Fatemeh Nakhai from Iran and Ye Luying from China won the grand prizes of the competition. The CCBF 2018 will take place from November 9 to 11 at the Shanghai World Expo.

Andrew Lloyd Webber plans new “Cinderella” musical project

LOS ANGELES (Hollywood Reporter) — There’s a beautiful symmetry, as Andrew Lloyd Webber points out, in the fact that he’s following his recent EGOT milestone by embarking on a new musical treatment of the same classic fairy tale once adapted by Richard Rodgers, a fellow composer he calls his idol. Rodgers also happens to be the original EGOT, the first person in history to have secured wins in all four major American entertainment awards — Oscars, Emmys, Grammys and Tonys — back in 1962. Along with lead actor John Legend and lyricist Tim Rice, both of whom served as junior producers on NBC’s Jesus “Christ Superstar: Live in Concert”, Lloyd Webber joined the elite EGOT club at Sunday’s Creative Arts Emmys when they took home the honors for Outstanding Live Variety Special. Lloyd Webber has stayed on in Los Angeles this week to dig into work on his next major project, an all-new stage version of Cinderella with a contemporary twist. “I’m working with young writers whose combined ages add up to less than mine,” Lloyd Webber told The Hollywood Reporter. “It’s delightful to have such young collaborators and I’m completely captivated by what they’ve done with the story. Now that I’ve said I’m going to do it, I have to get to my piano.” Those collaborators are L.A.-based British writers Tom MacRae and Emerald Fennell. MacRae is a screenwriter, author and playwright who wrote the book and lyrics for the hit musical “Everybody’s Talking About Jamie”. The show has been playing a sellout extended run on London’s West End since Nov. 2017. Fennell is an actress and author who starred in the popular BBC series “Call the Midwife” and will take over from Phoebe Waller-Bridge as lead writer



Andrew Lloyd Webber (Walter McBride/WireImage) on the second season of the BBC America cult hit, “Killing Eve”. “They have remade Cinderella into a completely modern, feisty girl,” said Lloyd Webber of the creative team’s non-traditional approach to the material. “Every piece of the story is followed, but it will be turned around so it’s not at all what you expect it to be. It just turns the whole thing around on itself.” Lloyd Webber says the writing process is moving swiftly as the three collaborators work together to storyboard the musical and figure out where songs will go. The composer will be fitting in work on the project around the start of shooting on the film version of his blockbuster musical Cats in November, but nonetheless expects to have a Cinderella score completed by the end of the year. “Rodgers and Hammerstein’s Cinderella” was written for television as a vehicle for Julie Andrews and premiered on CBS in 1957 to a record-breaking viewership of more than 100 million people. Given that history and his recent success with Jesus Christ Superstar on NBC, Lloyd Webber doesn’t entirely rule out a TV or streaming platform launch for the new project. “But I’m a theater animal, so my feeling is that it will be for the stage,” he said. “In any case that’s where it will end up.”