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# Airborne firefighting system unveiled

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© Ministry of Defence

## Integrated Trade System unveiled

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN**— Iran’s Integrated Trade System was unveiled on Saturday in the presence of Iran’s ministers of Industry, Mining and Trade Mohammad Shariatmadari and that of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Mohammad-Javad Azari Jahromi, IRNA reported. The system includes the comprehensive trade system, goods identification system, integrated system of warehouses, validation system and credit rating system of the merchants.

The system seeks to facilitate trade procedures for Iranian businessmen and combat trafficking of strategic goods besides systematic corruption, the report quoted an official from the industry ministry, Behnam Amiri, as announcing addressing the unveiling ceremony of the system at the Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds. As Amiri hoped, the integrated system will bring acceleration, ease, and transparency into domestic trade transactions.

## Zarif meets counterparts in New York

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif met separately with his counterparts from various countries in New York on Friday on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly conference. He met with foreign ministers of Syria, the Netherlands, Austria, Algeria, Germany, Paraguay, Slovenia, Norway, Venezuela, Oman, India, Sweden, South Korea and Qatar. In his meeting with Karin Kneissl and

Stef Blok, the Austrian and Dutch foreign ministers, Zarif discussed the need to preserve the 2015 nuclear deal after the U.S. withdrawal from the agreement in May. The Iranian foreign minister discussed the Syrian crisis with Walid Muallem, the Syrian foreign minister. Zarif said Tehran attaches great importance to settling the Syrian crisis politically. The annual UN General Assembly started on September 18 and is scheduled to end on October 1.

## Russia says already started delivering S-300 missile system to Syria

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov says his country has already started delivering the S-300 surface-to-air missile defense system to Syria as part of its efforts to ensure the safety of Russian forces in the country. “The delivery has been started already. And as President [Vladimir] Putin said, after that incident [...] the measures which we will take will be devoted to ensure 100

percent safety and security of our men in Syria,” said Lavrov at a press conference following his speech at the United Nations General Assembly on Friday in New York. By “incident,” Lavrov meant the recent downing of a Russian aircraft by the Syrian air defenses, which both Moscow and Damascus blame on the Israeli regime’s fighter jets. **→13**



**ARTICLE**  
**Hanif Ghaffari**  
Political analyst

## Washington’s Isolation and Dual Game of Paris

The United Nations General Assembly’s meeting in New York uncovered Washington’s isolation in the international system even more than before. The unilateralism of the United States and its illegal approach towards international agreements (e.g. its withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) were criticized by our president at the UN.

Trump, along with Nikki Haley, Mike Pompeo and John Bolton, started a psychological and propaganda campaign on the Iranian government’s request for holding negotiations with the White House. But this approach failed to depict Iran’s need for the United States as a proposition in the minds of the addressees. It has reached the point where even so many American media were skeptical about Trump’s claim over Iran’s request for holding talks with the United States.

Undoubtedly, the president of the United States is the main loser of the UN General Assembly in New York. Donald Trump’s remarks at a UN General Assembly meeting raised the laughter of the audience, and this was followed by the regret of many American analysts. They noted that Trump’s presence at the White House means the “international isolation of the United States.”

The fact is that Trump’s speech at the United Nations General Assembly had kind of domestic function. Regarding the decreasing popularity of Trump and the Republicans in some of the major U.S. states (which put them on the brink of defeat in the Congress elections) and the escalation of the international community’s opposition to the U.S. government, made the U.S. President to use the UN tribune to deliver just another speech for the American citizens.

Applying terms such as the “stronger U.S.” and the “safer World” reminds us of the 2016 presidential race. Trump tried to revive these abstract concepts on the verge of the U.S. mid-term elections in the minds of American voters. Therefore, in analyzing his remarks, his audience should not be limited to the international players and members of the United Nations General Assembly. **→7**

## IRGC forces kill Jaish-ul-Adl’s second-in-command

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Ground Force commander said on Friday that his forces have killed the second-in-command of the so-called “Jaish-ul-Adl” terrorist group in southeast Iran.

In an operation in Saravan in Sistan-Baluchestan Province on Friday, the IRGC Ground Force’s Quds Unit managed to kill four members of Jaish-ul-Adl and injured two others, Brigadier General Mohammad Pakpour said, Tasnim reported.

After identifying the terrorists’ dead bodies, it was determined that the group’s second-in-command, Mulla Hashem Nokri, is among them, he added.

Nokri had been in charge of some terrorist operations of the group over the past years, the



commander remarked.

In a statement earlier on Friday, the force’s Quds Base had said that in the heavy clash with the terror group, the IRGC troops killed four terrorists and injured two others. It added that

a number of other terrorists escaped to a neighboring country.

During the operation, not only no casualties were inflicted on the Iranian forces but also the terrorists’ ammunition and equipment were seized, according to the statement.

Back in March, the Quds unit said its forces had killed two suicide attackers in Sistan and Baluchestan before the terrorists could storm a border post with their explosive-laden vehicle.

Since a couple of years ago, the IRGC has been tasked with ensuring the security of southeastern border areas in cooperation with local residents.

Located in the southeast of Iran, Sistan and Baluchestan borders Pakistan and Afghanistan and has a long coastline by the Sea of Oman.

## ‘Trump is accelerating the decline of American empire’

By Syed Zafar Mehdi

**TEHRAN** — U.S. President Donald Trump’s bombastic speech at the United Nations General Assembly session last week has reignited the debate over the U.S. government’s flawed foreign policy ambitions and Trump administration’s desire to expand American hegemony. Many seasoned political observers have denounced Trump’s myopic vision and policy of bullying, especially in the context of Iran.

Max Blumenthal is the founder and editor of GrayzoneProject.com. A journalist and author of several books about U.S. and Middle East politics, he is also the producer of the recent documentary, Killing Gaza. In an interview to

Tehran Times, he dissects Trump’s UN speech and says he is actually accelerating the decline of American empire and his greatest accomplishments has been surpassing George W. Bush as the most internationally ridiculed and despised American president.

Following are the excerpts:

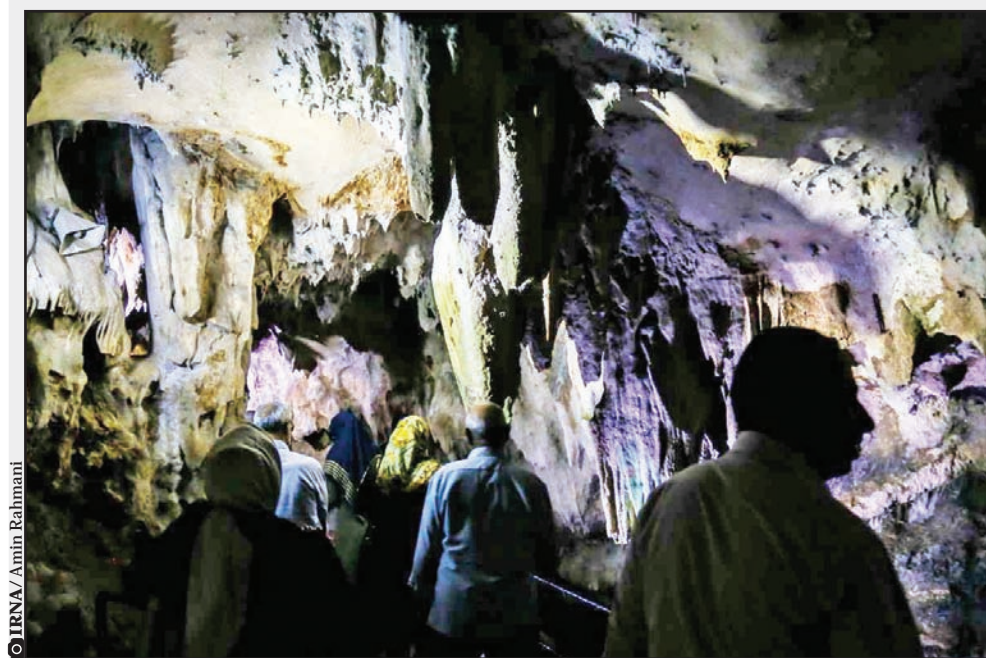
■ U.S. President Donald Trump in his bombastic speech at the UNGA summit said he opposes globalism and multilateralism and favors patriotism. Isn’t it ironic that he said this on the podium of the UN?

A. Trump’s speech was a deliberate show of contempt for multilateral institutions like the UN and the International Criminal Court. What was ironic about his speech, and about his ad-

ministration’s policies, is that these institutions have been molded over the years into tools of American global influence. So with his “America First” posturing, Trump is actually accelerating the decline of American empire.

■ Trump said his government has accomplished more in two years than governments before him did, which drew scornful laughter. Do you also think he has become a laughing stock with his bluster?

A. Among Trump’s greatest accomplishments has been surpassing George W. Bush as the most internationally ridiculed and despised American president. This is quite a feat considering Trump has not yet initiated a catastrophic war as Bush did. **→6**



© IRNA / Amin Rahmani

## A walk into Iran’s gigantic water cave

People visit Ghooori Ghaleh, a scenic water cave stretched in western Iranian province of Kermanshah, September 28, 2018.

Ghooori Ghaleh is teemed with Cretaceous and Triassic lime sediments which largely date back to the second geological age, about 65 million years ago.

In 1970s, a team of British and French speleologists discovered the cave which is widely believed to be the largest of its kind in the world and the longest water cave in Asia.



**REPORT**  
**Syed Zafar Mehdi**  
Journalist  
from New Delhi

## India, Russia seek to evade U.S. sanctions and bolster defense cooperation

There is a palpable buzz in the policy circles of India ahead of Russian President Vladimir Putin’s much-anticipated visit to India next week (October 4-5). He will be attending the 19th India-Russia summit with focus on advancing bilateral ties between the two time-tested allies.

During the high-profile summit, the two sides are expected to follow up on acquiring five S-400 ‘Triumph’ missile systems, four Project 11356 frigates, 48 Mi-17V-5 helicopters and 200 Ka-226T helicopters from Russia, which might ruffle feathers in the power corridors of Washington.

New Delhi is hoping to build on the momentum of the successful summit held in Sochi in May this year between President Putin and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Earlier this month (September 13-14), India’s External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj also made a whirlwind visit to Russia to prepare the ground for the upcoming summit.

Following the visit, which was her third visit to Moscow in less than a year, Swaraj asserted that India attaches “highest importance” to its relations with Russia. “This partnership has strengthened over time and covers a vast agenda involving almost all sphere of human activity. India attaches the highest importance to its relations with Russia,” she said. **→6**



Islamic Republic of Iran  
Ministry of Energy  
Khuzestan Water and Power Authority

**Re-Invitation to International Bid**

**Request for Qualification**

**EPC+F Bid for Development**

**Project of Dez Dam Power Plant Extension Project**

**See page 12**



MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Rouhani expected to reshuffle cabinet, name young ministers

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — President Hassan Rouhani has called on the parliament to stop impeaching some ministers and give his administration time to reshuffle his cabinet and name younger ministers, the Hamshahri newspaper reported on Saturday.

This comes while lawmakers have voiced determination to impeach Industry and Trade Minister Mohammad Shariatmadari as well as Transport and Urban Development Ministers Abbas Akhoundi.

According to a number of lawmakers, Rouhani is expected to introduce some changes to his cabinet by the end of the week. They added that ministers of science and justice may also change.



By refuting U.S. claims, Iran says condemns attack on diplomatic missions

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said on Saturday that Iran censures any attack on diplomats and diplomatic missions anywhere in the world, the Foreign Ministry website reported.

The statement by the Foreign Ministry came on the backdrop of an announcement that the U.S. State Department has ordered the closure of its consulate in Basra for fear of what it called increasing threats by Iraqi forces allied to Iran.

“The ridiculous justification [provided by Americans] for the closure of the U.S. Consulate General in Basra, which came after weeks of propaganda and false allegations against Iran and the Iraqi forces, is a suspicious move aimed at evading responsibility and pinning the blame on others,” Qassemi stated.



Iran: Riyadh ‘most notorious’ sponsor of terrorism

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi on Saturday rejected the anti-Iran comments made by Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir, saying terrorism has its roots in the ideology promoted and sponsored by the regime in Saudi Arabia.

“Incontrovertibly, Saudi Arabia is the most notorious supporter of terrorism in the world, and the terrorism that today has engulfed the whole world, especially the Middle East, is rooted in Saudi Arabia and the extremist ideologies promoted and sponsored by this regime,” said Qassemi, Foreign Ministry website reported.

The statement by the Foreign Ministry came after Jubeir told the UN General Assembly in New York that “Iran continues its terrorist activities and its aggressive conduct”.



Iran airs video of encounter with USS Theodore Roosevelt

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Iran’s national TV on Saturday broadcast footage of a close encounter between the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Navy and the USS Theodore Roosevelt in the strategic Strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf, the passageway for nearly a third of all oil traded by sea.

The footage comes amid new U.S. sanctions on Iran and the Trump administration plans to bring Iranian oil exports down to zero. In the video, the IRGC’s speedboats are seen closing in on the U.S. carrier.

Iranian sailors then warn the Americans over radio communication to “keep well clear” of the IRGC’s patrol boats and say they advise the Americans to “refrain from the threat or use of force in any manner.”



700,000 Basij forces participate in ‘Power of Ashura’ drill

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Basij Commander Gholamhossein Gheybparvar has said a military exercise, dubbed “the power of Ashura”, involves 700,000 Basiji forces.

The drill started a month ago with 1000 battalions in different cities across the country, Mehr quoted Gheybparvar as saying on Saturday.

Stressing the significance of the drill and the number of forces involved, he said 8,000 Jahadi groups also participated in the exercise.

General Gheybparvar said the exercise will end on Thursday.



German FM: Europe stands by Iran in nuclear deal

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — German Foreign Minister Heiko Mass on Friday highlighted the need to maintain trade with Tehran, saying Europe unanimously stands by Iran in the nuclear deal, officially called the JCPOA.

Addressing the UN General Assembly in New York, Mass said the JCPOA may not be impeccable, but it has so far prevented regional tensions, IRNA reported.

Mass added Berlin is taking steps to maintain trade with Tehran, urging Iran to continue to fully implement all its obligations with regard to the nuclear deal.

‘Guards of revolution’ will come hard on enemies like thunder: IRGC chief

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — The Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) chief Mohammad Ali Jafari issued a statement on Saturday warning that the “guards of the revolution” are determined to come on enemies like a “destructive thunder” to take revenge of the organizers of the September 22 terrorist attack in Ahvaz.

“The enemies and their wicked allies should know that the guards of the revolution will never forget blood of the martyrs and are determined to come on them like a destructive thunder,” General Jafari said.

He added, “Undoubtedly, blood of those who were martyred in this brutal and wicked attack will make us more determined to protect our causes, counter plots of the hegemony and annihilate anti-revolutionary forces.”

On September 22, five gunmen attacked a military parade in the southwestern city of Ahvaz, capital of Khuzestan province, killing 24 people and wounding 69 others. A four-year-old child was among the killed.



Zarif: U.S. ‘obsession’ with Iran is backfiring everywhere

The Donald Trump administration’s “obsession” with Iran is backfiring throughout the region, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif told Al-Monitor in an exclusive interview Friday evening.

Zarif’s comments come on the tail end of a UN General Assembly that saw the U.S. take heat from allies and foes alike for its withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal. Iran’s top diplomat took solace from the European Union’s push this week to salvage the Joint

Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and said that U.S. efforts to push Iran out of Iraq would similarly run into trouble.

“I think U.S. policy direction in the entire region, which is so focused on their obsession with Iran, has backfired in Lebanon, backfired in Syria, backfired in Iraq,” Zarif said. “And it will backfire elsewhere.”

Zarif expressed confidence that a new proposed financial mechanism announced by EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini last week could help

Iran weather some of fallout from U.S. sanctions.

“It will not be fully satisfactory but it can provide meaningful benefit to Iran,” Zarif said. “But we’ll have to wait and see.”

And he said that the U.S. had undermined its efforts to work with its allies to address Iran’s ballistic missile program.

“The fact that the United States withdrew from the JCPOA undermines the viability of any new arrangement,” Zarif said. “Because there is no guarantee that it would be implemented.”

Iran holds Saudi Arabia and the UAE responsible for the attack. In May 2017, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman (MBS) said his country would bring insecurity into Iran. Both Saudi Arabia and the UAE have refused to condemn terrorist attack in Ahvaz.

Hossein Salami, Jafari’s deputy, on Friday called on Saudi Arabia and the UAE to respect Iran’s “red lines” or face retaliation. “You are sitting in a glass house and cannot tolerate the revenge of the Iranian nation,” Salami said.

The attack in Ahvaz took place as Iran was marking Saddam Hussein’s invasion of Iran on September 22, 1980.

The Intelligence Ministry released a report on September 24 announcing that 22 people have been arrested in connection with the attack.

The ministry said “weapons, exclusive material and communication equipment were seized” from the people involved in the attack.

On Iraq, Zarif said Iran and the United States appeared to be working at cross-purposes despite the shared threat from terrorism.

“Our interests are Iraqi stability,” he said. “I think [U.S.] priorities are very different – their priorities are to fight Iran. And that policy is doomed to failure.”

Asked if he had made any efforts to resume contact with U.S. officials since the U.S. withdrawal from the nuclear deal in May, he answered simply, “Why should I?”

Lying is in Netanyahu’s DNA, Iranian diplomat says

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Farhad Mamdouhi, Iran’s representative at the United Nations General Assembly, said on Thursday that lying is in Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s DNA.

Addressing the UN on Thursday, Netanyahu showed an aerial photograph of the Iranian capital marked with a red arrow and pointed to what he claimed was a secret warehouse holding nuclear-related material.

“Today the Israeli showman claimed that he discovered new nuclear facilities in Iran. This is yet another false story. It is not surprising as lying is in his DNA,” Mahmoudi told a UN assembly meeting.

Following is full text of his speech published by IRNA: In the exercise right of reply, my delegation wishes to respond to the statement made today by the Israeli PM.

The Israeli regime has long history in following opportunistic policy to mislead others. The intention of this psychological projection behavior is to divert attentions from its inhumane and savage actions against Palestinians and other Arab nations.

This has brought so much suffering, caused so many crises and sown so much instability and anger throughout the region. Israel Regime continues to be the top spoiler of peace and stability in such volatile region as the Middle East.

The Israeli showman misses no opportunity particularly to accuse Iran. His fallacies in his statement confirm his pathological tendency to tell monstrous lies and distort reality. This is to distract the attentions from his regime’s inherent cruelty and brutality against Palestinians; to cover up the killing of defenseless women and innocent children; to hide the fact that millions of Palestinians are being taken hostage by Israel for decades; to mask Israel’s face as the last apartheid regime in the world; to conceal the reality that this is the only regime in the world that openly practices racism and recently legalized it.

Israel the warden of the world’s biggest open prison – Gaza, dares to stand here once again and make a statement filled with despicable lies. No amount of slur, no amount of lie, no amount of fabrication would cover up the criminal nature of Israel.

This is a dreadfully regressive and undemocratic regime led by a corrupt leader who pretends to be progressive and democratic. Israeli PM’s ethno-religious fantasies are indeed very close to the other extremists namely Da’esh.

Israel’s absurd claim of being democratic echoes similar assertions that Nazis used to make before dragging the whole world into destruction. A democracy for racists and supremacists democracy that crushes dreams of the true owners of Palestine for self-determination. That is a mockery of democracy; that is the tyranny of racists. In fact, Israel is the enemy of democracy in the Middle East. It hates democracy. There would be no room for Israel in the Middle East, should democracy prevail.

The Israeli regime that rejects all UN purposes and principles in its practices and policies and defies almost all UN resolutions, only misuses this august Assembly to mislead others.

As an example, let us see how many UN Security Council resolutions have been violated by Israel? It is about 300 ranging from weapons of mass destruction to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

On the Israeli-Palestinian related issues alone, Israel has violated 225 Security Council resolutions. The latest of such resolutions was resolution 2334, which called for an end to Israeli settlement building.

In the Council meeting on 20 September 2018, almost all its members, of course except Israel’s big patron, the U.S., referring to valuation of this resolution by Israel, urged it to end defying the resolution.

Israel holds the record for ignoring United Nations Security Council resolutions: the symbol of an international outlaw.

To do so, it relies mainly on the U.S. to date, the U.S. has used its veto power a total of 44 times to shield

Israel from Security Council draft resolutions against Israel.

Exhibiting some photographs of “google street view”, today the Israeli showman claimed that he discovered new nuclear facilities in Iran. This is yet another false story. It is not surprising as lying is in his DNA.

Instead of such fabrications he should stop threatening Iran with nuclear annihilation as he did recently .Such an inflammatory statement against an NPT party constitutes a serious violation of international law and the UN Charter.

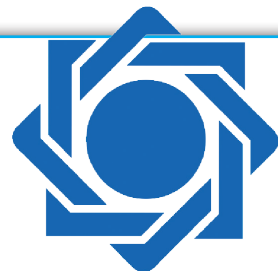
Recalling that the Israeli regime has attacked two peaceful nuclear facilities in our region in the past, the Security Council should strongly condemn the threat by this regime to use

nuclear weapons against Iran. It should also be compelled to abandon its nuclear weapons; to accede to the NPT without delay and precondition; and place all of its nuclear facilities under the IAEA full-scope safeguards.

This regime should stop its destabilizing conduct and frequent encroachments against the countries of the region; end its regular violations of Syrian and Lebanese airspace; and put an end to its airstrikes against various targets in Syria. These airstrikes effectively serve as air support for terrorist groups.

Let us be outright clear. We watch Israel’s criminal behavior whenever they do it and wherever they do it. The time that Israel hits its neighbors with impunity is past.

First Announcement



INTERNATIONAL TENDER No. : 97 / K - 244

**-Tender Holder:** Security Paper Mill of Central Bank of I.R.Of Iran.

**-Tender Subject:** purchasing 50,000 kg Madorit chemical powder .

**-Tender Deposit:** an unconditional and extendable Bank guarantee from Iranian Bank for the amount of 6,703 Euro or 687,500,000 Iranian Rials.

**-Deadline for receiving tender documents:**

Maximum ten days after second advertisement

**-How to get document:** Bidder can receive the tender documents by sending their written inquiry to Fax: +981143132566 or sending letter to email address [Info@takab – cbi.ir](mailto:Info@takab-cbi.ir) or refer to national\_database portal of Iran Tenders Information <http:// Iets.Mporg.ir>

**-Deadline for submitting offers:**

Maximum until dated 2018 November 10 (97/08/19)

**-Time period of financial offers:**

Maximum tow week after deadline submitting offer

**-Validity period of financial offers:**

The offers must be valid for ninety days after 2018 November 10 (97/08/19)

- The offers no sign, conditional, altered and the offers that submit after the expiration of the period of bid submission will be considered as null and void.

- Tender Holder reserves the rights to reject some or all of the offers.

The winner of tender must be submitting an unconditional and irrevocable performance bond guarantee equal to 10% of value of the contract.

**-Place for receiving and submitting tender documents:**

7<sup>th</sup> km Chamestan Road, Amol, Mazandaran, Iran, Security paper Mill-

Department of the commercial department building

-Delivery time: 4 month after signing the contract for further information, prospective bidder may contact us via the following

Tel: +981143132739 , 43132630 Fax: +981143132588

Web site: <http:// www.takab-cbi.ir> E-mail: [info @ takab-cbi.ir](mailto:info @ takab-cbi.ir)



# Hundreds dead as quake, tsunami hit Indonesia's Sulawesi

Nearly 400 people have been killed after a powerful earthquake triggered a tsunami that hit Indonesia's central Sulawesi island.

The national disaster agency put the current death toll at 384, all of them reported in the tsunami-struck city of Palu, but warned the number was likely to rise as rescue efforts continued on Saturday.

In Palu - home to around 350,000 people - partially covered bodies lay on the ground near the shore, the day after tsunami waves triggered by a 7.5 magnitude earthquake came ashore.

Tom Soetjipto, a journalist based in Indonesia's capital, Jakarta, said officials feared a "far worse" situation in the neighboring city Donggala, home to nearly 300,000 people.

"We haven't heard any news in terms of casualties from there, and officials are foreseeing and fearing the worst," Soetjipto told Al Jazeera. The Indonesian disaster agency, BNPB (National Agency for Disaster Management/National Agency for Disaster Countermeasure/Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana/ National Disaster Management Authority), also said there were concerns about the whereabouts of hundreds of people preparing for a beach festival due to start Friday evening in Palu. Meanwhile, hospitals in the city were overwhelmed by the influx of injured, with many people being treated in the open air, while other survivors helped to retrieve the remains of those who died.

Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, spokesman for Indonesia's disaster agency, said many people "were still doing their activities on the beach and did not immediately run" when the tsunami threat rose in Palu on Friday. "The tsunami didn't come by itself, it dragged cars, logs, houses, it hit everything on land," said Nugroho.

Some people climbed six-meter trees to escape the tsunami and survived, he said before adding the tsunami struck at a speed of 800 kph, destroying buildings and infrastructure.

The damage in the area was "extensive", he said, with thousands of houses, hospitals, shopping malls and hotels collapsed, a bridge washed away and the main highway to Palu cut off due to a landslide.

Strong aftershocks continued to rock the



coastal city on Saturday morning, he said.

Dramatic video footage filmed from the top floor of a parking ramp in Palu, nearly 80km from the quake's epicenter, showed waves of water bring down several buildings and inundate a large mosque.

The quake and tsunami caused a major power outage that cut communications around Palu, and on Saturday authorities were still having difficulties coordinating rescue efforts.

Road access to Palu from the east and the south were also disconnected.

The city's airport remained closed after its runway and air traffic control tower was damaged in the quake but officials said they were preparing to reopen to allow aid to come in.

The city is built around a narrow bay that apparently magnified the force of the tsunami waters as they raced into the tight inlet.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo said the military was being called into the disaster-struck region to help search-and-rescue teams get to victims and find bodies.

"I've already instructed the coordinating minister for political and security affairs to coordinate all resources including the national disaster agency."

"I've also called the chief of the armed forces to work together in handling the emergency situation including the search and rescue operation, evacuation including preparing the basic needs needed," said Widodo.

Cargo planes carrying doctors and aid are being sent to join the rescue efforts.

"We hope to immediately establish field hospitals," Komang Adi Sujendra, director Undata Regional Hospital, said.

"We need tents, medicines, medical personnel, tarpaulins, blankets and more of other things. I hope people can help us so we can give victims all the aid they need."

Soetjipto, meanwhile, added that emergency supplies from Jakarta and other cities near Palu will take time reaching the affected areas because of "bad roads".

"Makeshift shelters are being erected in the cities nearby. For now, the majority of

people there are staying outside their homes," he added. Indonesia's meteorological and geophysics agency BMKG (Agency for Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics/Badan Meteorologi, Klimatologi, Dan Geofisika) issued a tsunami warning after the earthquake, but lifted it 34 minutes later.

The agency was widely criticized for not informing a tsunami had hit Palu on Saturday, though officials said waves had come within the time the warning was issued.

The Palu area was hit by a less powerful quake earlier on Friday, which destroyed some houses, killed one person and injured at least 10 in Donggala, authorities said.

Indonesia sits on the Pacific Ring of Fire and is regularly hit by earthquakes. In August, a series of major quakes killed over 500 people in the tourist island of Lombok and destroyed dozens of villages along its northern coast.

Palu was hit by tsunami in 1927 and 1968, according to the disaster agency.

(Source: agencies)

## Qatar's top diplomat says Persian Gulf crisis at a 'stalemate'



Qatar's Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani has declared that the Persian Gulf crisis remains at a "stalemate", adding that the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (PGCC) is currently in a "paralysis".

Sheikh Mohammed spoke to reporters on Friday, following a United States-backed meeting between foreign ministers of the six member states of the PGCC, Egypt and Jordan in New York.

Sheikh Mohammed said that unless the issue of the House of Saud regime-led blockade is addressed first, a regional alliance envisioned by the United States would not be effective.

"This gathering is important. But we need to address the challenges among these countries," in order to prove the "credibility" of the alliance, he said speaking in Arabic and English.

"Today, the PGCC is suffering from a sort of complete paralysis," he said, adding that despite the U.S. President Donald Trump's efforts, blockading countries have not responded positively.

Friday's meeting took place on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and was the first gathering of its kind since the Saudi regime, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, and Egypt severed diplomatic and trade ties with Qatar on June 5, 2017.

The blockading quartet accuses Qatar of having close ties to regional power house Iran and harboring "terrorism" - allegations Doha strongly denies. The U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo spearheaded the talks. Among things discussed were the strengthening of military ties, as well as economic and diplomatic relations. Pompeo said earlier this year during a visit to Saudi Arabia that "Persian Gulf unity is necessary and we need to achieve it". In a separate interview with Al Jazeera, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani praised the U.S. for leading the meeting. The House of Saud regime's Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir said at the United Nations General Assembly earlier this week the blockading nations could wait decades for Doha to meet their controversial list of demands.

When asked for Qatar's response to the remarks, Sheikh Mohammed replied: "We have to address the challenges in our region first."

"A year from now, no one will know what the future of the countries will be... Qatar can also wait forever," he added.

"Diplomacy means communication and engagement, and this is Qatar."

At his press conference, Sheikh Mohammed backed the idea of a coalition based on "clear-cut strategies and a road map" to ensure a solid implementation of the initiative.

Sheikh Mohammed noted for the initiative to succeed, there must be certain criteria in place, and a solution to the ongoing PGCC crisis. This includes an end to the "illegal procedures" imposed on the Qatari people.

"We were frank and open. We don't need an initiative that will die soon. We want a strong, solid, sustainable one," he said.

Qatar's foreign minister went on to thank the U.S. President Donald Trump on his efforts to resolve the crisis.

"The U.S. reaffirmed its commitment to a united PGCC, they want a PGCC to operate together and more effectively," he said.

The U.S. State Department said the ministers agreed on the need to confront threats from Iran and had productive discussions on setting up what is to be known as the "Middle East Strategic Alliance" to promote security and stability in the region.

The PGCC is a political and economic alliance of six countries namely Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, the House of Saud regime and the United Arab Emirates. Before the crisis, citizens of the PGCC enjoyed a great deal of freedom of movement between the six member states, but that ended with the blockade. With close tribal ties, over generations thousands of intermarriages have been celebrated between Qataris and other PGCC nationals, and those families are no longer able to see each other.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

# Saudi, allies cry foul over UN resolution on Yemen

The House of Saud regime and its allies have cried foul over a United Nations Human Rights Council resolution that extended the mandate of an international investigation into war crimes in Yemen, despite Riyadh's efforts to abort the mission. The House of Saud regime, the Riyadh-backed former Yemeni government, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Egypt issued a joint statement late on Friday, claiming that the resolution was "biased."

"We are left with a resolution which is biased, and which clearly contradicts the clear mandate laid out by the United Nations Security Council," said the joint statement.

"In particular, we are disappointed that certain member states failed to consider the real and legitimate concerns of those states who are most affected by the situation in Yemen," the statement added.

The UN's top human rights body voted by 21 votes to eight on Friday to extend an inquiry into human rights violations in war-torn Yemen. The House of Saud regime launched its war on Yemen on March 2015 to bring former president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi back to power and crush the country's popular Ansarullah (Houthi) movement.

Earlier on Friday, Hadi's side in Yemen announced that it "refuses to extend the mission's mandate because its find-



ings outlined in the report, did not meet the standards of professionalism and impartiality or the basic principles of the United Nations."

Last month, investigators detailed evidence of possible war crimes committed in the war-torn country. Their August 28 report said Saudi airstrikes had caused "most of the documented civilian casualties." The UN mission voiced

"serious concerns about the targeting process."

According to the report, the Saudi regime airstrikes hit Yemen's residential areas, markets, weddings, medical facilities and funerals.

Some 15,000 Yemenis have been killed and thousands others injured since the onset of the Saudi regime aggression. More than 2,200 others have died of cholera, and the crisis has triggered what the United Nations has described as the world's worst humanitarian disaster.

An estimated five million Yemeni children may not see their next birthday in a war the UN children's fund has described as a "living hell" for minors, with 18 million of its 29 million population food insecure.

The World Food Program (WFP) warned on Thursday that there "very well could be" famine in remote areas of the country, where the UN's food agency does not have access.

"Yemen is a disaster and I don't see any light at the end of the tunnel right now," WFP's Executive Director David Beasley told reporters at a closed briefing during the UN General Assembly in New York City.

"Yemen is undeniably the world's worst humanitarian crisis by far," said Beasley.

(Source: Press TV)

# Palestine files complaint with ICJ against U.S. relocation of its embassy to al-Quds

Palestine has filed an official complaint with the International Court of Justice (ICJ) against the United States' relocation of its Israeli embassy from Tel Aviv to al-Quds (Jerusalem), saying the highly controversial and provocative move must be reversed as it violates an international treaty.

The United Nations' principal judicial organ announced in a statement on Friday that the Palestinian suit had requested the court "to order the United States of America to withdraw (its) diplomatic mission from the Holy City of al-Quds (Jerusalem)."

The World Court also said the complaint, sent from the Palestinian Authority (PA) led by President Mahmoud Abbas, argues that the 1961 Vienna Convention of Diplomatic Relations requires a country to locate its embassy on the territory of a host state. This is while the Israeli regime controls al-Quds (Jerusalem) militarily. The U.S.-Palestine ties deteriorated last December, when the U.S. President Donald Trump recognized al-Quds (Jerusalem) as the "capital" of Israel and announced plans to transfer the embassy from Tel Aviv to the holy city, triggering widespread anger both inside and outside the occupied territories. The U.S. embassy relocation, however, took place on May 14, the eve of the 70th anniversary of the Nakba Day (the Day of Catastrophe), sparking deadly clashes in the besieged Gaza Strip.

Israel lays claim to the whole al-Quds (Jerusalem), but the international community views the city's eastern sector as an occupied



territory and Palestinians consider it as the capital of their future state.

The contentious move led Abbas to formally declare that the Palestinians would no longer accept the U.S. as a mediator to resolve the conflict, because Washington was "completely biased" towards Tel Aviv.

Late last year, Trump said proposed a backchannel plan to allegedly reach a peace settlement between Israel and the Palestinians. Although the plan has not been released, leaks signal it will consist of the same tried and failed ideas.

The American leader has times and again called his yet-to-be-released plan as "The Deal of the Century", but it is coincidentally the title of a 1983 comedy, which features a bunch of hapless arms dealers, who compete to sell a weapon, called the Peacemaker, to a South American dictator.

■ **7 Palestinians killed, over 500 injured in clashes with Israeli soldiers in Gaza**

Elsewhere, at least seven Palestinians have lost their lives and over five hundred more sustained injuries when Israeli military

forces opened fire on a group of protesters participating in anti-occupation rallies along the border between the besieged Gaza Strip and Israeli-occupied territories.

The Gaza Ministry of Health said in a statement that 14-year-old Mohammed Nayef al-Houm was fatally shot in the chest during "The Great March of Return" protests east of Bureij refugee camp on Friday evening.

The statement added that 18-year-old Iyad Khalil Ahmed al-Shaer and Mohammed Bassam Shakhseh, 24, were shot dead east of Gaza City.

Four others were later identified as 24-year-old Mohamed Waleed Haniyeh, Nasser Azmi Musbah, 12, 18-year-old Mohammed Ali Anshasi and Mohammed Ashraf Awawdeh, 23.

Another 506 protesters were also injured. A total of 210 demonstrators were admitted to hospitals and medical centers across Gaza Strip to receive medical treatment. Ninety people were struck with live bullets.

Thirty-five children, four women, four medics and two journalists were among the injured Palestinians.

A minor and a young man were taken to hospital in critical condition. Both had suffered Israeli-inflicted gunshot wounds in the chest.

More than 190 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces ever since anti-occupation protest rallies began in the Gaza Strip on March 30. Approximately 20,000 Palestinians have also sustained injuries.

(Source: Press TV)

## Lavrov: Moscow will not allow sending terrorists from Syria to Afghanistan

**UNITED NATIONS (UNITED STATES) (AFP)** — Russia on Friday warned it will not allow jihadists in Syria to be sent to Afghanistan or elsewhere under a deal reached with Turkey that averted a large-scale military assault on rebel-held Idlib province.

Under the deal, Turkey agreed to separate opposition fighters from hardline jihadists who belong to groups branded as terrorists by the United Nations, but the fate of those extremists remains uncertain. "There is talk that they will be sent off to other hotspots, for example Afghanistan," Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told a news conference at UN headquarters. "This is unacceptable."

"They have to be eliminated or there has to be a judicial process," he said. Russia and Turkey reached the agreement after the United Nations and Western powers warned that an all-out assault on Idlib would lead to a humanitarian catastrophe in the province of three million people.

The deal calls for the creation of a buffer zone to be established by October 15 from which all fighters must withdraw to allow joint Russian-Turkish patrols. Lavrov met with his counterparts from Iran and Turkey this week on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly to discuss next steps in the agreement on Idlib.

Iran and Russia provide vital military support for Syrian forces while Turkey supports armed groups. The three countries last year set up the Astana group, which has largely eclipsed UN efforts in Syria. Lavrov said Turkey faced "not a simple task" in Idlib, noting that the United States had also promised to persuade moderate fighters to split from the jihadist groups but failed to deliver.

UN diplomats say the agreement between Russia and Turkey to avert an offensive on Idlib has created an opportunity to jumpstart political talks.



STOCK MARKET

|        |          |
|--------|----------|
| TEDPIX | 187406.1 |
| IFX    | 2150.9   |

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

|     |              |
|-----|--------------|
| USD | 42,000 rials |
| EUR | 48,750 rials |
| GBP | 54,720 rials |
| AED | 11,430 rials |

Source: isna.ir

COMMODITIES

|             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| WTI         | \$73.25/b     |
| Brent       | \$82.73/b     |
| OPEC Basket | \$80.88/b     |
| Gold        | \$1,193.75/oz |
| Silver      | \$14.71/oz    |
| Platinum    | \$821.80/oz   |

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

NEWS IN BRIEF



**Iran exports \$24m of medical equipment in a year**

**ECONOMY DESK** **TEHRAN** — Iran exported \$24 million of medical equipment to European, Asian and African countries in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20, 2018), according to the vice chairman of the association of Iranian medical equipment exporters.

Mohammadreza Compani said that Iran is exporting medical equipment to 50 countries, adding that the country has achieved many progresses and entered global markets of these products over the past ten years", ISNA reported.

Flying on one engine, global growth exposed to turbulence

With growth in many European, Asian and emerging markets mostly uninspiring, the United States is increasingly the main motor behind the global economy.

The world's biggest economy is under scrutiny, however, as its current upturn is running on borrowed time coming the fiscal stimulus of debt-financed tax cuts.

"When the downturn in the U.S. economy starts, the effects (on share prices, interest rates, capital flows, emerging countries, exchange rates, global trade and global growth) will be very pronounced," Natixis chief economist Patrick Artus wrote in a research note this week.

"This downturn in the U.S. economy is inevitable as the United States is returning to full employment."

The only question, he said, was when it would come, and in his opinion that would be sooner than later.

Though sanguine about the U.S. outlook through the end of the year, Barclays conceded it would be harder to predict further out.



"This fiscally induced expansion will be difficult to sustain in the absence of a much more substantial jump in investment to lift the economy's growth potential," the British bank's economists wrote in a research note.

"In the absence of such a jump, the economy will face heightened risks of a hard landing in 2020," they said.

A series of business surveys will offer a snapshot of where the business cycle stood at the end of the third quarter in major economies.

Manufacturing surveys for the euro zone and the United States will be in focus on Monday followed by service sectors polls on Wednesday.

But the highlight of the week on the data front will inevitably be all-important U.S. jobs data on Friday, offering clues as to whether the tight labor market is driving wages sharply higher.

That is important not only for firms' profitability and consumers' purchasing power, but also because a surge could fuel a broader inflation pick-up of the sort that could unsettle central bankers.

"Wages will be in focus with another strong month-on-month rise likely. We probably won't get a break above 3 percent year-on-year growth this month, but we certainly expect it next month," ING economists wrote in a research note.

While holidays in China and elsewhere in the region make for a quiet data week in Asia, politics in Europe may be the source of market ructions.

Italy's EU partners will have to figure out quickly whether to come out hard against the decision of Rome's populist-led government to flout its previous EU fiscal commitments.

Italy's unaffiliated technocrat economy minister, Giovanni Tria, who wanted to respect EU rules, will find himself in the awkward situation of explaining to his counterparts a decision he did not support at a euro zone finance ministers meeting on Monday.

(Source: Reuters)

Private sector suggesting approaches to counter sanctions

By Mahnaz Abdi

The U.S.'s withdrawal from Iran's nuclear deal and imposing fresh sanctions on the country has put Iran in a new economic condition and under the new condition the role that private sector can play to tackle the sanctions has come under the spotlight.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani says the country's counting on the private sector in the new round of sanctions, saying, "If we are together, we will turn any threat into opportunity. Private sector can neutralize sanctions and make opportunities out of them."

Also, Iran's Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Mohammad Shariatmadari who believes that private sector should be involved in the country's economic activities under any circumstances is of the opinion that this sector's capability should be benefitted to skirt the sanctions.

For example, as his deputy, Mehdi Karbasian, who is also the head of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), said in late June, cooperation between government and private sector in resolving the problems of steel chain of products expedites the implementation of projects and reduces the effects of sanctions.

Private sector's role in achieving the target of annual steel production of 55 million tons by 2025 could not be ignored, the official noted.

Meanwhile, in July 1, First Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri announced that in a move



to beat U.S. sanctions, Iran would let private companies to export crude oil.

Speaking in a ceremony to celebrate the national day of industry and mine, the official said that Iranian crude will be offered on the bourse and the private sector can export it.

The U.S. wants to cut Iran's oil export, but everyone, with even a limited knowledge of international affairs, knows that such thing is impossible, Jahangiri asserted.

Besides all these emphases put by the government on the role of private sector to tackle the sanctions, this sector, for its part, is making any endeavor to reduce the effects

of the U.S. unilateral sanctions against the Iranian economy.

As reported by IIRB on Saturday, Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) Head Masoud Khansari has announced ten tactics suggested by the private sector to improve the country's economic condition under the new round of sanctions and among these tactics establishment of a headquarters to counter sanctions is the most important one.

Khansari said: "As mentioned recently by the Supreme Leader, this headquarters should promote cooperation between the govern-

IFB continues consecutive record breaking

**ECONOMY DESK** **TEHRAN** — Consecutive record-breaking are being recently witnessed in Iran capital market and of course the country's over-the-counter (OTC) market known also as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB) is no exception; it's setting new records high on its 10th anniversary of establishment (September 28, 2009), as recorded by the IFB Public Relations Department.

IFB, which was founded in 2008 now reached maturity in terms of market development and statistics both of which will be explained in what follows.

Since establishment, IFB has set out to securitize numerous types of asset classes and liabilities to create a platform of diversified opportunities for sustainable growth.

In its first year of operation, listing and trading directives had been ratified and announced and four companies were listed and then offered to the public in IFB thus the



stock exchange officially started operating.

On the 10th anniversary of its founding, shares of almost 280 companies are now trading on IFB's markets.

Iran Fara Bourse now encompasses nine markets which are as follows: First and Second Markets, Third Market, Base Market A, Base Market B, Base Market C, SME Market, Structured Financial Products, and Derivatives. All kinds of financial instruments and products (like

10m tons of wheat to be purchased at guaranteed price this year: official

**ECONOMY DESK** **TEHRAN** — Mohammad Baqer Nobakht, the head of Iran's Budget and Planning Organization, said in a tweet that near 10 million tons of wheat are estimated to be purchased at guaranteed prices by the end of this year's harvest season, 10 percent more than last year's figure.

As reported by Tasnim news agency, the official expressed hope that all the farmers' dues will be paid by the end of the current Iranian calendar month (which ends on October 22).

Based on the plans implemented by the Government Trading Corporation of Iran,



the country is self-sufficient in production of wheat and level of wheat imports will remain zero during the present Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2019), as it did in the preceding year.

China central bank says will maintain ample liquidity as trade row threatens economy

China's central bank pledged to maintain its "prudent and neutral" monetary policy and to use multiple tools to keep liquidity ample, as the world's second-biggest economy comes under increasing pressure from a heated trade dispute with the United States.

On its website following a quarterly meeting of its monetary policy committee, the People's Bank of China (PBOC) said on Saturday it will fine tune monetary policy in a pre-emptive way and control the pace of deleveraging.

The PBOC is expected to keep policy relatively loose to support a slowing economy as China faces increased headwinds from trade frictions with Washington.

The central bank said it would strike a balance between interest rate, exchange rate and international balance of payments.

The PBOC will continue to closely watch broad changes in international and domestic economic trends and guide reasonable growth in money supply, credit and total social financing.



"The prudent monetary policy will be kept neutral, neither too loose nor too tight," it said.

The United States and China imposed fresh tariffs on each other's goods on Monday as both sides showed no signs of backing down from an increasingly bitter

Non-oil exports grow 13% in 6 months yr/yr

**ECONOMY DESK** **TEHRAN** — Iran's non-oil exports hit \$23.123 billion in the first half of the present Iranian calendar year (March 21- September 22, 2018), growing 13 percent in comparison with the same period in the preceding year, Tasnim news agency reported on Saturday.

As reported, 56.644 million tons of goods were exported in the said six months.

China, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Afghanistan, and India were respectively the top five destinations for Iranian goods in the said period.

ment and private sector to the highest level through setting up targeted mechanisms."

He mentioned predicting the scenarios that the country may face under the sanctions, with focus on the case of falling oil exports, as the second tactic and preparing required plans for each scenario as the third one.

The fourth tactic is to set up mechanisms to prevent from any damage to the livelihood status of the first five vulnerable groups in society through paying direct subsidy or supply goods for them.

The fifth one is to rapidly and seriously return the foreign currency earned from exports of products specially petrochemicals and steel to the country's economic sector and the sixth tactic is to supply feedstock to the petrochemical units based on the free market exchange rate.

Khansari referred to balancing the price of energy as the seventh tactic and providing the possibility of exporting gasoline and gasoil to the neighboring countries as the eighth one.

Developing relations between Iranian private sector and the neighboring markets (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey and Iraq) and strengthening trade with these countries is the ninth tactic, he added.

And finally, economizing on the expenses of government to reduce them to the least amount comes as the tenth tactic to counter the sanctions.

The TCCIMA head also put emphasis on adopting necessary approaches to control liquidity and establish banking discipline required under the new condition.

ETF, Islamic Treasury Bills Mortgage-Backed Securities, Certificate of Deposit, Mortgage Rights, Venture Capital Fund, and Construction Fund) approved by the Securities and Exchange High Council could be listed and traded in structured financial products market.

Notably, different kinds of Sukuks (Islamic securities) like Murabaha, Ijara, Musharaka, and Manfaah were introduced by IFB for the first time in Iran capital market during these years.

According to IFB authorities, through the very exchange mechanisms trading of intellectual properties, patents, industrial designs, and trademarks and mergers and acquisitions are getting completed.

Furthermore, Iran Fara Bourse unveiled its overall index, IFX, in 2013 in which year IFB got FEAS (Federation of Euro-Asian Stock Exchanges) and OICE membership pursuing its international goals.

Some 16.22 million tons of goods, at the value of \$22.182 billion were imported in the first half of the current year, registering 9.30 percent fall in terms of weight and 11.93 percent decrease in terms of value, the same report confirmed.

Iran majorly supplied its non-oil imports from China, the United Arab Emirates, South Korea, India, and Germany respectively.

In the said time span, auto parts constituted the major part of Iran's imports, while the country's main exports included gas condensate, the report added.

company specific, and will take time to be reflected in broad economic data and corporate earnings reports.

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

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

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

The PBOC has cut banks' reserve requirements three times this year to inject more liquidity, with further reductions widely expected.

But it has been struggling to channel more credit to small and private firms, which are vital for economic growth and job creation.

(Source: Reuters)

Iraqi trade with Russia surged to \$1.4b over past 2 years

in various areas, including energy.

There were Russian companies trying to enter the Iraqi market, Hadi noted, adding that the embassy in Russia would try to support them.

Good Iraqi-US relations did not hamper Baghdad's cooperation with other states in various areas, including military cooperation, Hadi pointed out.

"There are [Russian-Iraqi] military equipment contracts and they are being implemented ... Iraq is open for everyone,"

the ambassador emphasized.

Russia and Iraq have for years been maintaining cooperation in various fields, including education and the law enforcement. Energy is one of the areas where the two countries have the most number of joint projects. Particularly, Russian state-owned and private energy companies, including Gazprom, Rosneft and Lukoil, actively cooperate with the Iraqi authorities.

(Source: The Sputnik)



# Oil prices set to spike as OPEC and Trump go head-to-head, analysts say

OPEC producers and President Donald Trump are both embracing a “show me” attitude to energy market uncertainty, analysts told CNBC, as traders speculate about the possibility of \$100 a barrel before year-end.

“The market and certainly the U.S. president is saying to OPEC and Saudi Arabia: ‘Show me the barrels,’” Herman Wang, OPEC specialist at S&P Global Platts, told CNBC’s “Street Signs” on Friday.

“And Saudi Arabia and OPEC have kind of turned around and said: ‘Well, show me the demand,’” he added.

Earlier this week, Trump urged OPEC to ramp up production levels to prevent further price rises ahead of the mid-term elections in November.

Trump’s calls for the Middle-East dominated cartel to raise global production levels comes as the U.S. prepares to impose targeted crude sanctions against Iran in around five weeks’ time. Further to this, Washington is also asking buyers of Iranian oil to slash imports to zero to force Tehran to negotiate a new nuclear agreement.

OPEC and non-OPEC producers were initially expected to be reluctant to immediately respond to heightened pressure from the Trump administration, but Saudi Arabia is now expected to quietly add additional barrels of oil to the market over the next couple of months.



■ **Spare capacity is the ‘big question right now’**

When asked whether OPEC and non-OPEC producers were likely to have the capacity to ramp up production levels in order to offset any potential supply disruptions, Wang replied: “That is the big question in the market right now.”

Saudi Arabia has claimed to have around 1.5 million barrels per day (bpd) that they can add to the market if required.

Yet, external observers warn Riyadh’s claim has never been tested before and even if the kingdom was able to significantly ramp up production, the OPEC kingpin could then

be in a weaker position to offset any further other disruptions in the market.

U.S. sanctions against Tehran are widely expected to have an immediate impact on Iran’s oil exports, although the estimates of exactly how much of the country’s oil could disappear from November 4 vary widely.

Some energy market analysts expect around 500,000 bpd to disappear once U.S. sanctions against Iran come into force, while others have warned as much as 2 million bpd could come offline over the coming months.

At its 2018 peak earlier this summer, Iran exported around 2.7 million bpd of crude oil — that’s the equivalent to almost

3 percent of daily global consumption.

Sources confirmed to CNBC on Thursday that Riyadh stands ready to put as much as 550,000 additional bpd onto the market over the next eight weeks.

This increased crude supply would be reliant on demand, OPEC insiders told CNBC, although if market demand is apparent, supply would grow accordingly.

■ **‘Talk of \$100 a barrel is rife’**

“Even against this backdrop of a firmer dollar and potential demand destruction, talk of \$100 a barrel is rife,” Stephen Brennock, oil analyst at PVM Oil Associates, said in a research note published Friday.

“While we see such predictions as premature, one thing is clear: the ascent in oil prices shows few signs of capitulating,” he added.

International benchmark Brent crude traded at around \$82.03 on Friday, up around 0.38 percent, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) stood unchanged at around \$72.13.

Looking into 2019, S&P Global Platt’s Wang said OPEC producers were apparently reluctant to “open the floodgates” now because global oil demand is expected to be weaker next year.

OPEC forecasts that non-OPEC rivals, led by the U.S., would raise output by around 2.4 million barrels per day in 2016, while global oil demand would grow by just 1.5 million bpd. *(Source: CNBC)*

## U.S. crude output reaches record 10.96m bpd in July: EIA

U.S. crude oil production rose 269,000 barrels per day (bpd) to a record 10.964 million bpd in July, led by record output from Texas and North Dakota, the U.S. Energy Information Administration said in a monthly report.

The agency revised its June production figure slightly higher to 10.695 million bpd in June.

U.S. crude production has surged thanks to a shale boom and now rivals top producers Russia and Saudi Arabia.

Oil production in Russia averaged 11.347 million bpd between Sept. 1 and Sept. 27 and was on track to reach another post-Soviet high, an energy sector source told Reuters on Friday. Saudi Arabia meanwhile, produced about 10.4 million bpd in August.

Saudi Arabia is concerned that rising U.S. shale production over the next year could create another glut, especially if a stronger dollar and weaker emerging market economies reduce global demand for oil.

Production in Texas inched higher to a record 4.47 million bpd and output from North Dakota also hit a peak, rising by 41,000 bpd to 1.26 million bpd, EIA data showed.

Still, the rate of production growth in the Permian basin, the biggest U.S. oilpatch which spans Texas and New Mexico, is slowing amid transportation bottlenecks as pipelines have filled.

Drilling companies cut oil rigs for a second consecutive week as new drilling stalled in the third quarter with the fewest additions in a quarter since 2017, data



showed on Friday.

Total U.S. oil demand was up 3 percent in July compared with last year, driven by strong demand for distillates, EIA data shows.

Distillate demand jumped 6.8 percent, or 251,000 bpd, in July year-on-year, while gasoline demand was up 0.7 percent, or 67,000 bpd, in July compared with last year, EIA data showed.

Meanwhile, natural gas production in the lower 48 U.S. states rose to an all-time high of 92.7 billion cubic feet per day (bcfd) in July, up from the prior record of 90.9 bcfd in June, according to EIA’s 914 production report.

Output in Texas, the nation’s largest gas producer, increased to 24.6 bcfd in July, up 1.5 percent from June. That was the most since April 2016.

In Pennsylvania, the second biggest gas producing state, production rose to a record high 17.0 bcfd in July, up 3.0 percent from June. That compares with output of 14.7 bcfd in July 2017.

*(Source: Reuters)*

## U.S. to introduce sanctions against Nord Stream 2 project: German official

The United States will eventually slap sanctions on companies active in the Nord Stream 2 pipeline project, despite Donald Trump’s denial of such plans, claims Peter Beyer, the German government’s coordinator for trans-Atlantic relations.

Beyer told Bloomberg on Friday, citing an unnamed source, that the U.S. would toughen rules and even sanctions either before the November midterms or shortly after them, in early 2019.

He added that the sanctions that are likely to take effect will, in fact, damage businesses based in Germany and other European countries. This is why, Beyer believes, it is important to continue to pursue a constructive dialogue with Washington.

His revelation came after U.S. President Trump, on September 18, ruled out sanctions against companies taking part in the Nord Stream 2 pipeline’s construction. The project, led by Russia’s state-owned energy company Gazprom, is designed to carry Russian natural gas to Germany under the Baltic Sea, bypassing established routes through Ukraine.

Addressing the UN General Assembly this week, Donald Trump criticized Germany over its gas imports from Russia. He further said that Germany would “become totally dependent on Russian energy” if it didn’t change its course. His claims drew a rebuke from the country’s Foreign Minister, Heiko Maas, who said Trump’s “arguments and facts proving them don’t correspond to the reality. There’s no German dependence on Russia; this is especially a factor in the energy field.”

Donald Trump has repeatedly scolded



European nations for continuing to stick to Russian gas supplies and suggested that countries like Germany drop the construction of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. In July, the U.S. State Department warned Western companies involved in the deal that they were at risk of incurring sanctions, alleging that the project could divide Europe and pose a threat to its energy security.

At the same time, the U.S. President has been promoting American LNG in Europe as an alternative to energy imports from other suppliers. Russia is not Washington’s only competitor on the Old Continent: Norway is supplying Europe with its pipeline gas, while Qatar, Nigeria and Algeria are shipping liquefied hydrocarbons to the EU as well.

Nord Stream 2 AG, the project’s operating company, has France’s Engie, Austria’s OMV AG, UK-Dutch Royal Dutch Shell, and Germany’s Uniper and Wintershall among its investors. The price tag for Nord Stream 2 is estimated at 9.5 billion euros (\$11 billion), with Gazprom sharing half of the costs and the five European investors sharing the rest. *(Source: Sputnik)*

## UK coal revival reverses gains in clean power drive

The world’s largest offshore wind farm, capable of providing electricity for 600,000 homes, was officially opened this month. Claire Perry, UK energy minister, hailed the Walney Extension, off the north-west coast of England, as evidence of Britain’s sustained push to cut carbon dioxide emissions through renewable power generation.

But on the other side of the UK, in the same week the Walney Extension was unveiled, the arrival of hulking ships chartered by commodity trader Glencore and carrying coal to the Port of Immingham on Humber side highlighted near term brakes on Britain’s pursuit of clean energy sources.

The combined 500,000-ton cargoes underlined how demand for coal — one of the most polluting fossil fuels — in power generation by utility companies has rebounded in the UK in recent times, despite the government’s plans to eliminate its use by 2025.

Coal’s mini revival with the utilities has been driven primarily by a surge in the UK wholesale price of less-polluting natural gas — it reached a 10-year high this month. The rise has in turn highlighted vulnerabilities in the UK’s energy system, which has become increasingly reliant on expensive gas imports.

It became cheaper to generate power from coal than gas in late August, according to a report written by Iain Staffell of Imperial College London for the utility company Drax. “It’s not a flash in the pan,” he said. “There could well be a whole season where coal is the baseline fuel [for power generation by utility companies]. We could be looking at the first year-on-year increase in emissions in six years.”

Carbon emissions from electricity generation rose 15 per cent in the first half of September compared with August, Staffell’s report said.

This is not just a pollution issue. The 50 per cent rise since June in the UK wholesale price of gas for supply in the winter of 2018-19 has also contributed to an increase in household fuel bills.

Natural gas has long been regarded by western



governments as a bridge fuel between high polluting coal and a cleaner future based on green energy sources. It is seen in the UK as filling the gap left by reduced use of coal while electricity generation from renewables and nuclear power is ramped up.

But the gas price increase has complicated those plans. And the issue for Britain is that with its gas supplies from the UK North Sea in long-term decline, global demand for the fuel is soaring.

The advent of liquefied natural gas, a supercooled version of the fuel that allows it to be transported on ships, has helped globalize the gas market.

This has placed countries dependent on gas imports like the UK in direct competition with fast-growing, energy-hungry nations led by China and India.

The UK government has long insisted that gas supplies are freely available, but to bring them to Britain requires paying the market’s going rate.

“There’s not exactly a shortage of natural gas in the world,” said Jonathan Marshall, head of analysis at

the Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit, a non-profit organization. “The issue is sourcing.”

Meanwhile, the shutdown last year of Rough, the UK’s largest natural gas storage site that was previously operated by Centrica, has further reduced Britain’s self-sufficiency in the fuel to a point where the country has only a week’s buffer if cold weather conditions are combined with a period of disrupted supplies.

High carbon prices may have also played an unintended role in the gas increase. Energy traders have been buying up gas in recent times because they think utilities will want increased supplies in the future because of a surge in carbon prices.

In Europe, carbon prices are set under the EU’s emissions trading scheme — where companies buy and sell permits to cover the pollution they emit — and there have been sharp rises in the past year in anticipation of reform of the arrangements.

In the longer-term, energy producers may respond to the gas rise.

Tony Durrant, chief executive of Premier Oil, said his company could accelerate its plans after last month approving the development of gas fields in the southern part of the North Sea.

Energy company Total on Monday announced a big gas find off the west coast of the Shetland Islands that it said could be brought online relatively quickly.

But analysts are warning that more supplies from the North Sea are unlikely to reverse the gas increase anytime soon, with higher prices expected for at least another six months.

Coal burning for power generation by utilities is therefore likely to continue — a backward step by an industry that had been at the forefront of cutting carbon emissions.

“The power sector has seen the only real, strong progress in decarbonization and for that to reverse is a real kick in the teeth,” said Staffell.

*(Source: Financial Times)*

## Six new tech companies that can shape the future of oil and gas

Ten exciting companies will graduate from the inaugural Oil & Gas Technology Centre TechX Pioneers Program — a unique technology accelerator and incubator helping ambitious firms take their solutions to the oil and gas market — faster.

With expert support from experienced business mentors, co-working space, forward-thinking business partners, rapid prototyping and test facilities, large-scale field trials and showcase events, the Pioneers have enjoyed access to unrivaled support.

In just four months, they’ve had more than 150 meetings with industry leaders and several Pioneers have secured a total of seven field trials with major operating companies — an essential step towards fully commercializing their technology solutions. I look at six of these companies, in no particular order, that have the potential to have a significant impact on the future of the oil and gas sector.

■ **1: Blue Gentoo: Intelligent Hydrate Platform**

The product provides intelligent real-time management of gas hydrates and enables the digital transformation of the oilfield. Gas hydrates are a flow assurance issue that impacts safety, environmental, and operational costs of production of hydrocarbons, especially in deep and cold offshore environments.

The business is addressing the problem of gas hydrates (ice) which affects gas producers, particularly those operating in deep water and subsea environments. Gas hydrates can block well flow and damage infrastructure, resulting in lost production and high recovery costs. They form when gas meets water under high pressure and low temperature, and it costs gas producers millions of pounds every year to inject anti-freeze chemicals into their gas flows to prevent these hydrates from forming.

■ **2: Immaterral: Metal-Organic Frameworks**

Immaterral (IMM) is a spin-out from the Department of Chemical Engineering at the University of Cambridge. It was founded in 2015 to commercialize IP related to Metal-Organic Frameworks (MOFs). MOFs are a class of porous nanomaterials with exceptionally high internal surface areas (up to 10,000m<sup>2</sup>/g) and richly varied chemistries.

IMM aims to address two related problems caused by the difficulty of transporting natural gas (NG): monetizing small, isolated or associated gas assets (upstream), and the considerable cost, time and inflexibility of LNG (downstream).

At present, shipping NG requires either compression to 250 bar (CNG), or liquefaction below -162°C (LNG). Of these, LNG is by far the dominant technology. LNG is large-scale, long-term, and extremely expensive; the average expected cost is now at over \$1.5bn/MTpa for liquefaction capacity alone (quadrupled from a decade ago, with projects taking ten years or more to complete).

■ **3: Paragon Inspection: On-site Low Energy Gauging (OLEG)**

OLEG consists of a fast simple to use inspection system which determines small bore tubing (SBT) assembly condition and risk rating in-service. The user is guided through the process with a database to allow upload of system information. Determining assembly condition will enable the user to repair or replace the assembly before a hydrocarbon leak occurs. Hydrocarbon leaks increase risk, exposure and cost millions of pounds every year in lost production.

SBT assemblies are the most significant single contributor to the incidence of loss of process containment in a potentially hazardous plant. A leak from a SBT assembly has the potential to rapidly escalate to a significant release particularly if operating in gas service. 20 per cent of hydrocarbon leaks offshore are related to SBT assemblies. In the UK North Sea alone there are 45 million SBT assemblies, 26 percent of which are installed incorrectly with the potential to allow a hydrocarbon leak. Due to their complexity and extensive use, SBT assemblies are vulnerable to failure due to poor installation practice, vibration fatigue or the lack of adequate inspection and maintenance programmes. This means if good practice is not being applied throughout the whole SBT assembly life-cycle there is a relatively high probability that an integrity failure event will occur at some time during service. The OLEG system will allow more effective management of SBT systems and help to reduce the risk of such incidents.

■ **4: Sensalytix: Q-DOS**

Q-DOS will analyze downhole distributed fiber optic data, process it with integration of other sensor data, provide insight through advanced visualization and output conclusions to easily understood, decision ready products.

Distributed optical sensing is under-utilized in many applications and undervalued due to slow processing and the difficulty in understanding the results. This software will address those issues and enable distributed optical sensing to provide a step change in downhole insights which will provide increased value in applications in production, late well optimization and abandonment operations.

This will be the first software available on the market for operators to integrate high-performance cloud services to utilize distributed optical sensing data in integration with other data streams. The visualizations will go beyond just playback of data, accentuating the relevant features to the application and make the results simple for the non-expert to understand the implications of the findings.

■ **5: Specialist Safety Systems (SSS): Lift-Scan**

Innovative, game-changing crane instrumentation that has a crane block camera with deck scanning abilities to ensure efficient on/offloading. All of our intelligent work platforms will be delivered from with a high level of expertise, along with the highest level of customer service. The product will also offer two-way hands-free communication for the first time. Along with real-time visibility for the operator.

The product will offer more efficient crane operations where we hope to increase productivity by 30 percent. The products will also heighten safety as lifting is one of the most common accidents in the offshore sector. The knock-on effect from the products will be to increase productivity with every operation onboard as lifting is the heart of the supply chain process.

■ **6: Test1: Polyurethane Foam Flex (PUFF)**

PUFF (Polyurethane Foam Flex) is the most practical, quick, and effective methods for adsorbing hydrocarbons. It is an oleophilic, hydrophobic open-cell flexible polyurethane foam. It can absorb about 30 times its weight of various kinds of hydrocarbons, including 10w40 oil, light, and heavy fuel oils, Kerosene and crude oils of different API gravities.

The material saturates at an extremely fast rate (from 38 seconds to two minutes). It can be wrung out, allowing the recovery of pure hydrocarbons without water, and reused over 100 times, which allows recovery of about three tons of oils using only about 1kg of product. The product is not harmful to the marine fauna or flora and is safe for human health.

The 2010 disaster of the Deepwater Horizon platform showed that there is no effective and efficient method for the remediation of hydrocarbons. Despite the \$40 billion spent by BP for remediation, a report released by the University of Georgia concludes that up to 79 percent of the oil released into the Gulf of Mexico from the incident has not been recovered and remains a threat to the ecosystem. The recent disaster of the Iranian oil tanker in the Chinese sea has confirmed this thesis.

*(Source: Forbes)*



NEWS IN BRIEF



Pakistan committed to completing CPEC

**INTERNATIONAL** **TEHRAN** — Hailing relations with China as the cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policies, a senior Pakistani government official said the country is committed to completing the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and will support China over issues of its core interests.

Pakistani Senate chairman Sadiq Sanjrani made these remarks during a function held in Islamabad on Friday, underlining the importance Pakistan attaches to relations with Beijing.

He also hailed China as a model of economic growth to the low income countries in Asia, Africa and South America, adding that Pakistan appreciates and supports the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative and vision of shared prosperity and win-win cooperation.

Speaking on the occasion, Chinese envoy Yao Jing said Pakistan is China's good neighbor, good friend, good partner and a good brother, and the two sides enjoy time-tested friendship.

He said that CPEC is the major pilot project of the Belt and Road Initiative and will be promoted by the two sides into a new stage of enrichment and extension.



Putin to visit India next week

**INTERNATIONAL** **TEHRAN** — Russian President Vladimir Putin is scheduled to visit India on October 4-5 for the 19th India-Russia annual bilateral summit, Indian government officially announced on Friday.

Putin will hold the summit with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on October 5. He will also meet India's newly-appointed President Ram Nath Kovind and other senior Indian leaders.

During the much-anticipated visit of the Russian president, a number of agreements are expected to be signed between the two countries.

There is also possibility of the two countries inking the much-anticipated S-400 Triumph missile defense system deal which could attract punitive action by the US under the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA).

The agenda of talks between Modi and Putin includes key aspects of special privileged partnership between their two countries. The two leaders are expected to review global developments, including the situation in Afghanistan and Syria, and implications of the U.S. withdrawal from Iranian nuclear deal.

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj had recently visited Moscow to prepare the ground for Putin's visit to India. The last India-Russia summit was held in June 2017 when Modi visited St Petersburg.



Afghan election campaigning kicks off

**INTERNATIONAL** **TEHRAN** — Ahead of the much-anticipated but long-delayed parliamentary elections in Afghanistan, campaigning finally kicked off on Friday amid growing concerns of violence and electoral fraud.

More than 2,500 candidates are in the fray for the October 20 poll, which come before the next year's presidential election. Elections in Afghanistan have always been marred by incidents of violence and vote rigging.

It will be "highly flawed," a Western diplomat was quoted saying by AFP this week, reigniting the debate over the transparency of electoral processes in the war-ravaged country.

Only 4,400 out of the 22,000 German-made machines ordered have been delivered to Afghanistan, according to media reports.

The list of candidates, which has been trimmed to 2,565 after 35 were expelled, are competing for 249 seats in the lower house of parliament. The contestants include many former journalists and entrepreneurs who joined the race in recent months. Many former MPs are also in the fray.

The presidential election will be held early next year and observers believe President Ashraf Ghani would find it difficult to retain his chair. He has come under blistering criticism over deteriorating security situation, infighting and poor governance.



Sexual violence against Rohingyas

**INTERNATIONAL** **TEHRAN** — Bangladesh government and the United Nations have agreed to jointly address conflict-related sexual violence committed against Rohingya refugees forcibly evicted from Myanmar to Bangladesh.

On Friday, the two parties signed a 'Framework of Cooperation' in this regard. The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Pramila Patten, after signing the document, said, "I believe that through this Framework of Cooperation the Rohingya survivors of sexual violence will benefit from enhanced service-delivery, accountability and protection."

The Framework of Cooperation focuses on five priority areas. These are improving access of Rohingya survivors of sexual violence to medical and psychosocial support services; capacity building of the justice and security sector on the prevention of trafficking in persons, the return and reintegration of trafficked women and children, and the referral of victims to service providers.

An action plan based on these five key areas will be developed as a tool to measure progress and mobilize technical and financial resources for specific interventions.

# War with India is not an option; only solution is dialogue: Pakistan's FM



**TEHRAN** — Following the war of words between India and Pakistan last week, the prospects of peace and reconciliation between the two estranged South Asian neighbors have again dimmed.

In an interview to a foreign news channel, Pakistan's foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said the Pakistan Tehreek Insaaf (PTI) government elected last month had inherited strained relations with India and was working to improve them.

In recent weeks, there were concerted efforts from both sides to improve ties. In his victory speech, Khan said Pakistan was willing to take two steps if India took one step, indicating his desire to open a new chapter in Indo-Pak ties.

However, after India canceled the foreign minister-level talks with Pakistan on the sidelines of UN last week, in protest against the killing of policemen in Kashmir and issuance of stamps in Pakistan honoring Kashmir's militant commanders, all recent gains were squandered. It was followed by war of words in which India said Khan had shown his "true colors" and Khan termed India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi "a small man" occupying a big chair.

Referring to Khan's July 26 peace offer to India, Qureshi said that seeking a constructive dialogue with India was a key component

of the new government's policies. "What we did...we thought made sense. Two neighbors with outstanding issues, atomic powers. How do you fix things? War is no option. There is no military solution: the only solution is a dialogue," he said.

He rejected claims that the successive Pakistani governments aided the Taliban. "They were helping their own country (and were trying to) overcome a situation which

was not of their own making," he said.

He also spoke about America's links with Afghan fighters during the 1980s, when Washington backed 'mujahideen' against Soviet forces. "Who were these people? Who supported them? Who trained them? We forget history and at times we overlook that friends change," he asserted.

"People that you supported, some of the people, were called extremists. Weren't they

## 'Trump is accelerating the decline of American empire'

By Syed Zafar Mehdi

**1 →** ■ He attacked Iran and China while lavishing praise on Saudi Arabia for 'pursuing bold new reforms' and Israel for being a 'thriving democracy'. What makes Saudi and Israel so important for the U.S.?

A. Trump's approach to foreign policy, and to politics in general, is largely transactional. His entire policy towards the Middle East -- and particularly to Iran and the Palestinians -- is shaped by his relationship with Likudnik billionaires like Sheldon Adelson, who contributed hundreds of millions to his campaign and those of his allies.

Then there are the Saudis and Emiratis, whose sovereign wealth funds Trump and his family hope to benefit from, and who have captured the administration through a massive network of lobbyists and glad-handlers.

■ He said the Gulf countries (UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar) are working with the U.S. to 'fight terrorism and extremism' in their own region, and are 'pursuing multiple avenues to end Yemen war'. Are they actually trying to end the war in Yemen or making it worse?

A. Trump's foreign policy advisors have adopted the viewpoint of their Gulf whisperer, UAE ambassador Yousef Otaiba, and therefore incorrectly view the war in Yemen as a proxy war between the GCC and Iran. In their minds, humanitarian concerns are secondary at best; all that matters is crushing the Houthis, whom they wrongly view as a cat's paw for Iran.

■ He once again slammed the International Criminal Court and UN Human Rights Council. Why is he so afraid of them?

A. Trump is not necessarily afraid of these groups, nor does any American former or current official fear being prosecuted at the ICC. Trump's domestic political



base, and specifically the evangelical Christian right-wing, literally views these organizations as vehicles of the Anti-Christ that will impose a "globalist" agenda on traditional Americans. By singling them out for scorn, Trump is scoring points with the most powerful grassroots constituency of the Republican Party.

■ He said the ISIS fighters were driven out from the territories they once held in Iraq and Syria by the U.S. and its allies. How would you react to that?

A. Obviously ISIS and its takfiri offshoots would not have been defeated in Syria without Iran, Russia and Hezbollah, as well as the Syrian army. In Iraq, it was the PMU's who sacrificed the most to retake Fallujah and Mosul. But I would never expect an American president to acknowledge these inconvenient facts.

What is interesting, however, is the refusal of many in the Pentagon to acknowledge that ISIS has been defeated at all. The generals are indeed worried by declaring victory, they will not be able to justify the permanent presence of

U.S. troops in Syria. And so they continually complain about "residual pockets" of ISIS while attempting to shift the focus onto Iran's presence in the area.

■ Trump also spoke about tariffs on another \$200 billion in Chinese-made goods. How do you see this escalating trade war between U.S. and China? What will be its impact?

A. The trade war has become an election season issue in the US, and an unwelcome one for Trump's allies in Congress, as thousands of American jobs are evaporating, specifically among agricultural exporters, as a result of higher tariffs. But for the Trump administration, restoring American jobs may not be the goal here.

I think the Chinese leadership is essentially correct that the trade war is part of a wider strategy of containing Chinese power, and setting the stage for a new Cold War with Beijing. Indeed, Trump seems to be attempting an "America First" version of Obama's multilateral "Pivot to Asia."

■ Trump didn't mention Afghanistan in his speech where the war has entered 17th year without any results. Civilian casualties are at a record high and insurgents are stronger than ever before. What has been America's legacy in Afghanistan?

A. Through its utterly catastrophic adventure in Afghanistan, Washington has normalized the concept of permanent warfare. There have been many, many losers in this conflict, especially among the Afghan people. But there have been many winners as well, from the Afghan puppet leaders and warlords who have shipped billions in U.S. contract money and opium profits to Swiss banks, to the U.S. military industrial complex, which tested the over-priced and essentially useless F-35 aircraft in Afghanistan this week.

From a military standpoint, the U.S. has lost the war, but elites from Washington to Kabul have benefited handsomely in the process.

## India, Russia seek to evade U.S. sanctions and bolster defense cooperation

By Syed Zafar Mehdi

**1 →** However, the ominous shadow of the U.S. hangs heavily over the growing defense cooperation between India and Russia. The Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) passed last year by the U.S. Congress imposes sanctions on some Russian companies and customers, which might affect the defense deal between New Delhi and Moscow.

India will need exemptions from CAATSA to buy the S-400 Triumf missile defense system as well as frigates and helicopters.

Pertinently, the issue of defense cooperation between India and Russia had figured during the 2+2 dialogue between India and the U.S. in New Delhi earlier this month. According to sources, India had strongly put across its case to the visiting U.S. delegation, which includes Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Defense Secretary James Mattis, and asked for a waiver on the acquisition of S-400 missiles from Russia.

"The good news for Moscow is that India, which follows an independent foreign policy, is likely to retain its defense ties with Russia," Aleksei Zakharov, a visiting fellow at New



Delhi-based Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses, wrote in a paper last week. "With the Moscow-Washington relationship in a downward spiral, Indian diplomacy will require a masterful approach in its interactions with the two."

Zakharov further stated that a closer engagement with the U.S. is a challenge for India, as this relationship is "not likely

to be a partnership of equals". "Washington is dominating the agenda of bilateral cooperation and even imposing pressure on New Delhi's policies. The demands to cut off oil imports from Iran and halt the purchase of Russian military equipment are cases in point."

Speaking to media on the sidelines of the UN Summit in New York last week, Russian

## War with India is not an option; only solution is dialogue: Pakistan's FM

invited to the U.S.? Weren't they entertained in the White House? So, friends change. Circumstances change. We were just defending and protecting ourselves," he said.

He said U.S. is looking for new friends in the region, so is Pakistan. "They are looking at different options; they are looking at new friends in the region. We do have friends who have been consistent and very valuable. China is one of them," he said, adding that some other nations also recognized Pakistan's strategic location and understood its importance. "So, we are not alone, everyone has options".

According to a recent report in China's state-run newspaper Global Times, which is often seen as a reflection of Beijing's official stand, U.S. focus in South Asia is gradually shifting from Pakistan to India, with latter making no secret of its reluctance to continue to be subservient to the U.S. interests.

What has complicated the matter further is that Imran Khan has traditionally been seen as a fierce critic of U.S. South Asia policy. Since assuming power, he has made no effort to reach out to Washington, but has expressed his strong desire to improve ties with regional countries, including Iran. His government's backing of the Iranian nuclear deal has also ruffled feathers in the power corridors of Washington.

## 'Trump is accelerating the decline of American empire'

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From a military standpoint, the U.S. has lost the war, but elites from Washington to Kabul have benefited handsomely in the process.

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said India will make a "sovereign decision" on Russian defense purchases, which are facing possible U.S. sanctions.

"I understand that India will be taking sovereign decision (on) how to proceed and what kind of weapons it needs," he said at a news conference on Friday.

On the question if proposed \$8.5 billion defense deal with Russia, expected to be signed next week during President Putin's visit to India, was on hold, Lavrov said: "I haven't heard anything about the timing, about postponement, about putting anything on hold."

In India, the opinion in intelligentsia, media and policy circles seems to be heavily tilted in favor of India's ties with Russia. Brahma Chellaney, a geopolitical and commentator, in an interview with Tehran Times recently, said the ties between Russia and India should not be affected by U.S. sanctions.

"Russia is a tried and tested friend of India. Although the U.S. has now become the largest seller of arms to India, Russia remains important to India's interests. India has made it clear to the U.S. that it will go ahead with the S-400 purchase and other defense deals with Russia," he asserted.

## U.S. State Department approves sale of \$300 million tactical missiles to Bahrain

The U.S. State Department has endorsed the proposed sale of more than 800 tactical missiles to Bahrain amid the Al Khilafah regime's heavy-handed crackdown on pro-democracy campaigners and political dissidents in the tiny Persian Gulf country.

The approval includes Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System (GMLRS) Unitary Rocket Pods and Army Tactical Missiles System (ATACMS) Unitary missiles for an estimated cost of \$300 million, the Arabic-language al-Khaleej al-Jadeed news website reported.

The report added that the Manama regime has requested to buy 120 Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System (GMLRS) M31 Unitary Rocket Pods (six rockets per pod for a total of 720), and 110 Army Tactical Missiles System (ATACMS) M57 T2K Unitary missiles.

Personnel training, software development, contractor

engineering, technical and logistics support services in addition to other related elements of logistical and program support are also among the items included in the deal.

The M31 GMLRS is a low-cost guided rocket for use on the M270 multiple launch rocket artillery systems.

It can hit targets accurately with less chance of collateral damage as it utilizes global positioning system (GPS) technology for accuracy.

The ATACMS T2K is an all-weather, long-range unitary surface-to-surface guided missile. It is reported to have a range of up to about 300 kilometers.

Thousands of anti-regime protesters have held demonstrations in Bahrain on an almost daily basis ever since a popular uprising began in the country in mid-February 2011.

They are demanding that the Al Khilafah dynasty relinquish

power and allow a just system representing all Bahrainis to be established.

Manama has gone to great lengths to clamp down on any sign of dissent. On March 14, 2011, troops from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates were deployed to assist Bahrain in its crackdown.

Scores of people have lost their lives and hundreds of others sustained injuries or got arrested as a result of the Al Khilafah regime's crackdown.

On March 5, 2017, Bahrain's parliament approved the trial of civilians at military tribunals in a measure blasted by human rights campaigners as being tantamount to imposition of an undeclared martial law countrywide.

Bahraini monarch King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifah ratified the constitutional amendment on April 3 last year.  
(Source: Press TV)



# Ahvaz terror attack a ‘Zionist-Neo Conservative’ plot against Iran: ex-U.S. senate candidate

**TEHRAN (Tasnim)** — A former U.S. Senate candidate said the recent terror attack in the southwestern Iranian city of Ahvaz was part of a larger set of “Zionist-Neo Conservative aggressions” against Iran.

“This (terror attack in Ahvaz) is part of a larger set of Zionist-Neo Conservative aggressions against Iran with the Regime Change mantra being chanted by Rudolph Giuliani, a stooge of both the MEK and the Israeli Lobby, and the aforementioned Bolton, Pompeo, and Haley among many others, being the endgame.

Mark Dankof was the 36th Legislative District Chairman of the GOP in King County/Seattle; the 2000 Constitution Party candidate in the U.S. Senate race in Delaware; and a regular media presence for Press TV, Tasnim News Agency of Iran, Russia Insider, David Duke Live on Rense Radio, Dr. Patrick Slattery's National Bugle Radio on the Republic Broadcasting Network, The Nationalist Times of the American Freedom Union, and the American Free Press. He is an ordained Lutheran pastor.

Following is the full text of the interview:

■ As you know, 25 people were killed and dozens of others injured after unknown terrorists opened fire at a military parade in Iran's southwestern city of Ahvaz on Saturday. What is your take on the attack?

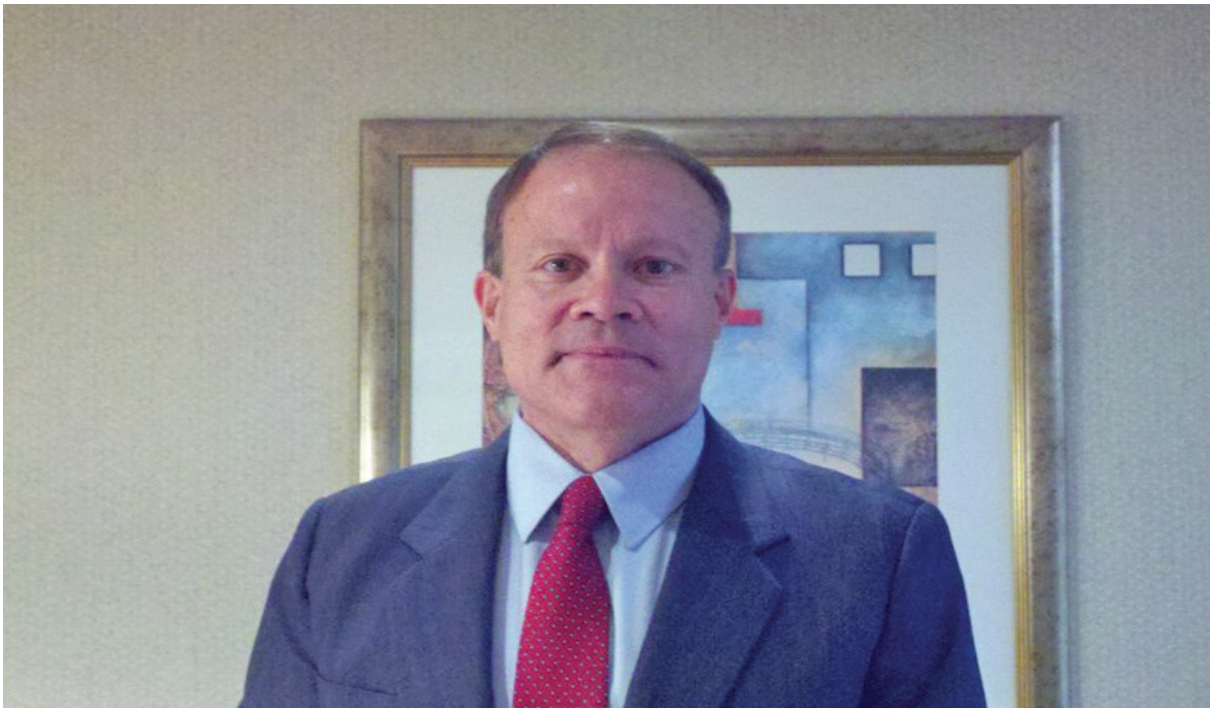
A: It is no accident that this despicable terror attack in Ahvaz occurred on the anniversary of the beginning of the Iran-Iraq War, which produced more casualties than any conflict since World War II. The launching of that conflict by Iraq had the full backing of the United States, Israel, and Britain among others, and was designed to strike back at the then newly established Islamic Republic of Iran in the wake of the overthrow of the Pahlavi Regime. The Ahvaz horror perpetrated during an Iranian military parade occurs against the backdrop of the totally irresponsible statements and policies of the current Zionist-Neo Conservative foreign policy team of Donald Trump led by John Bolton, Mike Pompeo, and Nikki Haley, who clearly want an American-Israeli military conflict with Iran at the behest of Benjamin Netanyahu and his sycophants in the American Con-

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gress and American Mainstream News Media.

The probable use of al-Ahvaziya in the Ahvaz attack mirrors the longtime use of the Mujahedeen e-Khalq (MEK/MKO) in carrying out terror attacks and assassinations on Iranian soil, including the latter's pivotal role in the murder of Iranian nuclear scientists in Tehran. Both of these terrorist organizations are based abroad, the latter currently headquartered in Albania. Both organizations have shadowy connections to the players ultimately behind the crime in Ahvaz, which are the United States, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. These nation-states are probably behind the use of Wahhabic terrorists imported into Syria as a means of overthrowing the Assad regime to set up the complete isolation of Iran in the Arab world, the continued encirclement of Russia, and an enhanced position from which to attack Iran and South Lebanon militarily.

This is part of a larger set of Zionist-Neo Conservative aggressions against Iran with the Regime Change mantra being chanted by Rudolph Giuliani, a stooge of both the MEK and the Israeli Lobby, and the aforementioned Bolton, Pompeo, and Haley among many others, being the endgame. The employment of terrorists in Iran is but one. The others are the renewed and increasingly draconian economic sanctions put in motion by the



Trump Administration against Iran subsequent to the former's illegitimate pullout from the JCPOA/P5+1 Treaty with Iran at the behest of Zionist interests and pressure on the President of the United States, and the ultimate use of American, NATO, and Israeli overt military force if all else fails. The fascinating thing is that the announced cooperation of the European Union, Russia, and China in the creation of a clearing house system that would allow their companies and others to continue to trade with Iran by circumventing Western banks, has Mike Pompeo and the other members of the Netanyahu-Saudi War Team screaming foul. This is but one of the many unintended consequences for the reckless and irresponsible actions taken by the Administration with Netanyahu's Tail Wagging the Dog.

■ According to media reports, the al-Ahvaziya terror group, whose recruits are believed to be scattered in several European countries, including in the Netherlands and in Denmark, claimed responsibility for the attack in Ahvaz. The terror outfit, which is backed by Saudi Arabia, has a record of carrying out sabotage acts in Iran's Khuzestan province, which encompasses Ahvaz and some other Arab-dominated towns. How do you see the role of Riyadh in the attack?

A: As already mentioned, I believe they were directly involved in the utilization of those who carried out this criminal act in Ahvaz, for reasons previously articulated. They have the motive, the means, the opportunity, and the criminal mindset necessary for such an event. Look at their genocidal war being conducted in Yemen with the military, political, and logistical support of the United States. Look at their pivotal role in supporting ISIS (Daesh) and the al-Qaeda affiliates in a war against Assad's regime in Syria that has killed at least 500,000 people and displaced half the population of 17 million. Their latest criminal attacks on Shiite believers in their own Eastern Province is but another example.

■ Following the attack on Saturday, Abdulkhaleq Abdulla, an adviser to the Abu Dhabi government, justified the attack on Twitter, claiming that it was not a terrorist attack and that “moving the battle to the Iranian side is a declared option”. “Attacks of this kind will increase during the next phase,” he said. What do you think?

A: Mr. Abdulla simply corroborates what I have said about

this matter. If one thinks about it, he looks and sounds like a cross-dressing John Bolton with a Sunni turban on. Denying the inherently criminally terroristic character of the attack, and employing incendiary rhetoric like “Moving the battle to the Iranian side is a declared ‘option’... Attacks of this kind will increase during the next phase,” suggests a psychotically criminal outlook that mirrors the latest lies of the American National Security Advisor to the President of the United States. Bolton blamed Iran for the recent shootdown of the Russian IL-20 surveillance aircraft clearly to be blamed on the approximately 200th illegal Israeli air strike on Syria, where the IAF used the Russian aircraft as cover to fool the Syrian S-200 anti-aircraft missile system into killing 15 Russian military personnel. At the same time, The Times of Israel tells us that Bolton's latest appearance before the United Against Nuclear Iran front organization in New York produced his most incendiary rhetoric yet, including warning the Iranian government of “hell to pay” for the latter's failure to bow down to Zionist threats and aggression. Who constitutes this United Against Nuclear Iran organization? Even Wikipedia gives us the truth on this one: Leaders like Joseph Lieberman, Mark Wallace, Richard Holbrooke, and Dennis Ross, with funding from Zionist billionaires Thomas Kaplan, and Republican mega-donors and Netanyahu-Trump pals, Sheldon and Miriam Adelson. As Pat Buchanan once put it so well, the American Government is a “Zionist Occupied Government.”

■ Reports suggest that U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo as well as Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman were behind the attacks. Do you believe so?

A: I obviously do believe this based on answers to the first three fine questions raised. There is another dimension of this war that needs to be understood by the fine people of Iran, Syria, Russia, and elsewhere who read my articles and hear my broadcast appearances.

The Alternative Right journalists and broadcasters in the United States against the Zionist New World Order and American support for its wars are already being subjected to national and global Internet censorship by Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, and YouTube among others. A classic example of this is a recent

radio broadcast by Dr. Patrick Slattery of National Bugle Radio and the Republic Broadcasting Network with me as the guest. It is entitled, “Saraqib as Sarajevo? The Constellis and Olive Groups and False Flags in Syria.” On that show, using public sources, we demonstrated who was behind the recent efforts to establish a False Flag Chemical Attack in Idlib Province in Syria designed to be falsely blamed on President Assad and to justify an American military attack in that country. YouTube blocked that broadcast from being aired in 40 countries only one day after the show was released. This is but one instance of this increasingly frequent phenomenon.

The ante with all of this has recently been upped with the Trump Administration's naming of Jewish Zionist activist attorney Kenneth L. Marcus to the the Assistant Secretary for Human Rights for the U.S. Department of Education. Why is this significant? It is significant because the Trump Administration has now adopted a definition of “anti-Semitism” in schools (Politico, Sept. 11th, 2018) which 1) equates any criticism of Israel as “anti-Semitic”; and which, in accepting the definition adopted by the draconian Global Anti-Semitism Review Act passed by the American Congress in 2004 and signed into law by President George W. Bush, makes a series of things “anti-Semitic” that are in fact demonstrably true when examined and researched objectively and dispassionately. The list of these is provided by cursory Internet research.

This is not only an assault on the First Amendment's guarantee of Freedom of Speech in the United States, but is following the draconian curtailments on freedom of speech and association well underway in Europe, the UK, Australia, and elsewhere.

Here, the Alternative Right is the most obvious target in the crosshairs of this Koshier Gestapo. Why? Because certain of their media outlets have not only linked Israel to the vast majority of crimes committed by the United States in that region,

**The Times of Israel tells us that Bolton's latest appearance before the United Against Nuclear Iran front organization in New York produced his most incendiary rhetoric yet, including warning the Iranian government of “hell to pay” for the latter's failure to bow down to Zionist threats and aggression.**

but because the Alternative Right has spoken out on the truth about Zio-Lies related to the First and Second World Wars, the Federal Reserve Board, the Kennedy Assassination, the Lavon Affair, Israel's deliberate attack on the USS Liberty in 1967, the Pollard and AIPAC spy cases, Israel's role in using the MEK in acts of terror in Iran, and the pivotal role of Jewish pressure and lobby groups in bringing legalized abortion and gay marriage into play in the United States in my lifetime.

As we continue exposing the Zionist-Globalist War on Syria, Palestine, Iran, and Russia, we shall continue to expose the War Party's War on legitimate dissent and protest in the United States. It is a seamless garment. The war is relentless. It is being waged on two fronts. The forces that target me and other members of the Alternative Right media in America are targeting the people of Iran simultaneously. Which is why I consider it a privilege to work with Press TV and the Tasnim News Agency while we still can. The clock is ticking to Midnight.

## Washington's Isolation and Dual Game of Paris

➡ Another point which should be taken into consideration here is about Trump's attempts to move forward in the hearts of paradoxes: On the one hand, he uses the worst terms addressing our country, and speaks of economic sanctions on Iran. On the other hand, he doesn't conceal his interest in negotiating with Iran!

In a similar approach, he addresses raises disagreements in NATO through the application of protectionist policies towards the European Union and China. The U.S. president also claims that ISIL was destroyed in Syria and Iraq (by the United States)! However, the existing evidences indicate that the United States had supported ISIL and the terrorist and takfiri groups to the last moment of their life; the groups that were created by no one but the former U.S. government.

Even now, the White House remains to be the main shelter of the takfiri groups in the West Asia region. Trump also said that Saudi Arabia and the UAE were trying to put an end to the Yemeni war, without revealing the destructive role of Washington in waging this war and killing the innocent people in Sana'a, Aden, and elsewhere.

Trump knows well that he has to officially announce Washington's defeat in West Asia sooner or later. It's not without a reason that he called the U.S. military presence in West Asia useless about a month ago! Trump is now setting the ground for directing the U.S., and the international public opinion for America's defeat in Yemen and Syria.

France dual approach in the UN General Assembly is another issue that should be regarded carefully. French President Emmanuel Macron has recently had lots of ups and downs! On the one hand, he had secret dealings with Trump's government over current issues in the region (especially over Syria and Iran), and on the other hand, he is trying to enter international equations as an independent leader.

At this point, Macron tried to challenge Trump's speech at the United Nations General Assembly, and expressed regret that the U.S. president introduced “nationalism” as a basis for his actions towards the international community. It remains unclear, however, whether other European players would be willing to accept him as their leader in today's complicated conflicts.

The CNN has recently reported that “French President Emmanuel Macron delivered a fiery rebuke of U.S. policies under President Donald Trump at the UN General Assembly Tuesday, signaling that he is ready to take up the mantle of global leadership usually assumed by a U.S. leader.”

It continues; “At times directly referring to the U.S., Macron rapped the Trump administration for its policies on Iran, climate change, the



UN, migration and Mideast peace, among others.”

The report adds on that the 40-year-old French leader also took direct aim at the central theme of Trump's speech earlier in the day, in which the U.S. President focused on sovereignty and emphasized his administration's intent to distance itself from international agreements and groups.

“I shall never stop upholding the principal of sovereignty,” Macron told the General Assembly, which draws more than 120 world leaders each year. “Even in the face of certain nationalism which we're seeing today, brandishing sovereignty as a way of attacking others.”

But unlike Trump's emphasis on the importance of countries' independence, Macron offered a different vision, one that earned him sustained applause when he was done.

“Only collective action allows for the upholding of the sovereignty and equality of the people in whose name we take action,” Macron said. “This is the reason we must take action against climate, demographic and digital challenges. No one alone can tackle these.”

Undoubtedly, there is a huge gap between the French authorities' speeches and actions about the necessity to be committed to multilateralism. This same paradoxical approach has made it impossible to mention Emmanuel Macron as a powerful politician in the international system.

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# Paralysis breakthrough: Electrical implant helps man walk again

A recent case study could overturn existing beliefs about certain paralysis types. An approach combining spinal chord stimulation and physical therapy has now helped a man living for years with lower-body paralysis to stand and walk.

An electrode implant has helped a man regain mobility and may change the way we understand paralysis.

Paraplegia is a condition wherein an individual's lower body is paralyzed.

A 29-year-old man left with the condition after a snow-mobile accident in 2013 has recently been able to stand and walk with some assistance.

This is all thanks to an electrical implant that can stimulate nerves in the spinal chord.

Specialists at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN, and the University of California, Los Angeles, devised this strategy.

Together, the teams came up with the idea of implanting an electrode in the man's epidural space, which is the region just outside the membranous "tube" that contains the spinal cord and cerebrospinal fluid.

The efforts began in 2016, when the man first underwent 22 sessions of dedicated physiotherapy before receiving the electrode implant. The surgery was conducted by Dr. Kendall Lee, from the Mayo Clinic.

In a study paper that is now published in the journal Nature Medicine, the researchers report the amazing progress that the man saw after 113 rehabilitation sessions following the implantation surgery.

## ■ Electrical stimulation proves effective

The implanted electrode connects to a pulse generator device that was also placed under the skin. This device is accessed wirelessly through an external controller.

Its aim was simple: through electric stimulation, the implant allows the relevant neural networks to process signals that communicate "stand" and "walk."

During the rehabilitation sessions after implantation, the team kept adjusting and optimizing the implant's settings, and they offered the man much training and support to give him as much independence as possible.

## ■ How might virtual reality systems help address paralysis?

During the first week of training, the man required a harness to help him maintain balance. By week 25, however, this had become unnecessary, and the man required only occasional assistance from others.

By the end of the study, he'd mostly learned how to coordinate his own movements during electric stimulation and needed only very little occasional assistance.

During the study period, the man was able to achieve important milestones, such as walking for 111 yards (or 102 meters), which roughly corresponds to the length of



**During the study period, the man was able to achieve important milestones, such as walking for 111 yards (or 102 meters), which roughly corresponds to the length of a football field, taking 331 steps in one session alone, and walking for 16 minutes with assistance.**

a football field, taking 331 steps in one session alone, and walking for 16 minutes with assistance.

The top step speed he achieved was 13 yards per minute, or 0.20 meters per second. He was able to walk on his own using a front-wheeled walker and even step on a treadmill by using support bars to maintain balance.

## ■ Study shakes up existing notions

However, this was all done while electric stimulation to the spinal chord was on. When the implant is switched off, the man remains unable to move. For the time being, he only moves under special supervision as a continued precaution.

Still, the case study has important implications

for the mechanics related to paralysis that affects a person's mobility.

"What this is teaching us is that those networks of neurons below a spinal cord injury still can function after paralysis."

The other co-principal investigator, Dr. Kristin Zhao, explains that this is only the start of many in-depth studies regarding how such electric stimulation implants can best be used and who may benefit from them the most.

"Now I think the real challenge starts, and that's understanding how this happened, why it happened, and which patients will respond," she says.

(Source: Medical News Today)

## Contact lenses may harbor serious, blinding infection

Contact lens wearers everywhere need to be on the lookout for a rare, but potentially blinding, eye infection, British researchers warn.

In southeast England, cases of the infection, called Acanthamoeba keratitis, have tripled since 2011, a new study found.

The illness is typically tied to poor contact lens hygiene use.

The infection combines a tiny single-cell amoeba with the bacteria keratitis. Once the eye is infected, it causes the cornea to become painful and inflamed due to this cyst-forming microorganism.

For one in every four of people infected, the disease results in a loss of most of their vision or blindness and they face prolonged treatment, the research team said.

While rare, outbreaks have also occurred in the United States, one ophthalmologist said.

"There have been a few outbreaks in the U.S., most notably from improper disinfection of contact lenses," said Dr. Jules Winokur, who practices at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City. He wasn't involved in the new study.

"In clinical practice, we see cases of acanthamoeba on a regular basis," he said. "Most often, these cases present in patients wearing contact lenses who have been exposed to contaminated water, which could be from swimming pools, water parks or even showers at home."

"The treatment of acanthamoeba can be prolonged and difficult," Winokur explained. "Toxic medications and even corneal transplantation may be necessary treatments."

The British study was led by Dr. John Dart, from University College London's Institute of Ophthalmology. His team collected data on patients seen from 1985 to 2016 at Moorfields Eye Hospital.

They found an increase in cases of the disease from the eight to 10 a year seen in 2000 -2003, to 36 to 65 cases per year more recently.

Overall, 25 percent of those affected required corneal transplants to treat the disease or restore vision, the researchers said.

Dart's team also conducted a second study, this time in people who wore reusable contact lenses daily. The study compared those 63 diagnosed with Acanthamoeba keratitis with 213 people who went to the eye hospital for any other reason.

Dart's group found that the risk of developing the disease was more than three times greater among people with poor contact lens hygiene. This means people who didn't always wash and dry their hands before handling their lenses, or those who used a now discontinued disinfectant product containing Oxipol.

In addition, people who wore their contacts in swimming pools or hot tubs were also at risk, as were those who showered or washed their face while wearing their lenses, the study found.

"People who wear reusable contact lenses need to make sure they thoroughly wash and dry their hands before handling contact lenses, and avoid wearing them while swimming, face washing or bathing," Dart said.

"Daily disposable lenses, which eliminate the need for contact lens cases or solutions, may be safer and we are currently analyzing our data to establish the risk factors for these," he added in a university news release.

(Source: WebMD)

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| Darous<br>2Bdrs,fully furn,3rd fl.,brand<br>new,100 sqm,lobby<br>€1600   |
| Zaferaniyeh-Yekta,<br>Apartment-villa<br>French-style<br>3Bdrs,fully furn 360 sq.m.sp,<br>€5000  |
| Valiasre-Bagheferdos<br>3 Bdrs,fully furn,brand<br>new,5th fl., 150 sq.m ,indoor<br>spj,\$1900   |
| Mirdamad-Naft<br>3 Bdrs,fully furn,5th fl.,200<br>sq.m, \$ 2000<br>Close to Paladium Shopping<br>center<br>3Bdrs,180 sq.m,fully<br>furn,lobby,sp,garden,\$2000 |

### VILLA

|   |
|---|
| Elahiye<br>Triplex-800 sq.m built up,1000<br>sq.m land,Semi-furn,7<br>Bdrs,spj,\$9000                               |
| Zaferaniyeh<br>Duplex, 4 Bdrs,unfurn,350<br>sq.m,spj,\$8000   |
| Niavaran<br>2000 sq.m land,green<br>garden,500 sq.m built up<br>area,indoor spj,4Bdrs,fully<br>furn,triplex,\$15000 |
| Darous<br>1000 sq.m land,400 sq.m built<br>up area, flat.4 Bdrs,spj.\$7000  |
| Jordan<br>850 sq.m land,500 sq.m<br>built up,5 Bdrs,spj,furn/<br>unfurn,duplex,\$7000                               |



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| Valiasre<br>150 sq.m brand new, all<br>facilities,5th fl.,\$2300   |
| Vozara<br>250 sq.m,all facilities<br>8th fl.,,\$4000   |
| Mirdamad-Naft<br>120 sq.m,6th fl., \$1700  |
| vanak<br>shariati<br>pasdaran<br>shahrak gharb<br>saadatabad<br>4000-3000-5000-4000-1000<br>sq.m,full,reasonable price                           |

### FOR: EMBASSY/COMPANY

|  |
|--|
| Jordan,<br>4-storey building,1000 sq.m,<br>all facilities,\$10000  |
| Zaferaniyeh<br>Triplex villa,800 sq.m,built<br>up,1000 sq.m land,12<br>rooms,\$8500  |
| Niavaran<br>Triplex villa,2000 sq.m<br>land,600 sq.m built up ,spj,all<br>facilities,\$15000   |
| Darous<br>Duplex villa,600 sq.m built<br>up,1000 sq.m land ,all<br>facilities,\$8000   |
| Other areas:<br>Farmaniyeh<br>Aghdasiyeh<br>Shahrak Gharb<br>Shariati-Pasdaran<br>Valiasre<br>Tajrish<br>Jordan<br>Vanak<br>Arjantin<br>Zafar...<br>nice cases ready to move in. |



Berlin, Copenhagen universities assist Tappeh-Kheibar excavations



**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** — Experts from Berlin and Copenhagen universities along with their Iranian fellows have recently commenced several excavations at Tappeh-Kheibar, one of abundant archaeological sites in Ravansar county, western Iran.

“It marks the first archaeological survey in Ravansar and its achievements will be of high importance for both the region and the country,” said Abdollah Bahrami, the head of the National Union of Cooperatives of Iran’s Carpet Manufacturers.

“This historical site [Tappeh-Kheibar] is estimated to bear relics from the 5th millennium BC to the Parthian era (247 BC – 224 CE),” the official stated.

Located in Kermanshah province, Ravansar embraces 57 historical tappehs (mounts) which are deemed as very significant sources of search in the region, he added.

Hand-woven carpet exports jump 10% in 4 months

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** — Iran’s export of hand-woven carpets increased 10 percent in terms of value during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year 1397 (March 21-July 22, 2018), from a year earlier, ISNA reported on Saturday.

“According to the customs statistics, exports of Iranian hand-made carpets has increased by 10% over the [year’s first] four months,” said Abdollah Bahrami, the head of the National Union of Cooperatives of Iran’s Carpet Manufacturers.

He didn’t mention the value of exports but noted, “Last year, our exports were about \$400 million, up 20% from the preceding year, and on average, from [the Iranian year] 1395 onward, we had 15 to 20% growth each year.”

Persian carpets are sought after internationally for their delicate designs and their good quality. The country’s official figures show the carpets have a significant share in Iran’s non-oil exports.

Over 5,600 artisans engaged in handicrafts in Arak

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** — A total of 5,633 artists and artisans are currently working in 70 fields of handicrafts in Arak, the capital of Iran’s Markazi province, CHTN reported.

Females constitute 3,384 of the figure, said Qasem Kazemi, the provincial tourism chief.

Masoumeh Ebtekar, the vice president for women’s and family affairs, announced back in April that some 75 percent of Iranian handicrafts are produced by females.

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



ROUND THE GLOBE

Historic Centre of San Gimignano

The Historic Centre of San Gimignano sits on a height of land, dominating the surrounding landscape. During the Middle Ages, its location in Val d’Elsa, 56 km south of Florence, provided an important relay point for pilgrims travelling to or from Rome on the Via Francigena.

The town became independent in 1199 and between the 11th and the 13th century the noble families and upper middle-class merchants who controlled the free town built many fortified tower houses (probably 72) as symbols of their wealth and power.



The town grew around two principal squares: the triangular Piazza della Cisterna, ornamented with a lovely central well, and the Piazza Duomo, dating from the late 13th century with its more intricate layout containing the majority of public and private monuments.

After 1353, the town went into a period of decline due to waves of famine and plague that caused a drastic decrease in population. Within a hundred years, the town was downgraded to the level of the other lands under the Florentine control. This status, however, prevented the town from the urban renewal that transformed many Italian historical towns after the Middle Ages.

(Source: UNESCO)

National Museum of Iran to host ICOFOM symposium

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** — The National Museum of Iran will play host to the 41st annual symposium of ICOFOM -- International Committee for Museology – from October 15 – 19.

A host of Iranian and foreign experts and academia have been invited to deliver speech at the event, which will revolve around “Museology and the Sacred” as its major theme.

Officially known as the ICOFOM Annual Meeting, the symposium is to create a worldwide forum for a high level discussion on various museological topics.

The ICOFOM was founded in 1977 at the initiative of Jan Jelinek, in order to promote research and theoretical thinking within the museum world. It addresses the study of the theoretical foundation that guides museum activities around the world or, more generally, the analysis of the different forms that museums can take.

Some Three million historical objects are being kept in Iran’s museums which are affiliated with the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization.

CHHTO-affiliated museums hosted 19 million visitors during the past Iranian calendar year (ended March 20).

There are some 600 heritage museums across the country, some half of which are associated with private collectors or various institutions, according to Mohammadreza Kargar who presides over CHHTO’s Museums and Historical Moveable Properties Office.

UN chief urges support for digital techs to boom tourism

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** — The secretary general of the United Nations has called for an international support for digital technologies which are suitable for tourism.

“I call on governments to support digital technologies that can transform the way we travel, reduce the ecological burden of tourism and bring the benefits of tourism to all,” Antonio Guterres stated in a message issued on September to mark World Tourism Day.

He highlighted roles that governing bodies can assume noting, “Governments can help to connect startups with investors to facilitate innovation, entrepreneurship, employment and a truly inclusive tourism sector.”

“Digital technologies have brought positive momentum to societies and economies around the world. They have connected us on a global level, helped to empower the most vulnerable and become our crucial allies for sustainable



UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in an undated photo

development. Our challenge is to continue harnessing this power for good while safeguarding against the risks,” he added.

An ancient engineering feat that harnessed the wind

By Shervin Abdolhamidi

Iran’s wind catchers stand as a reminder of how ancient civilizations have adapted to the region’s harsh desert environment.

“I have water air conditioning too, but I prefer sitting under my natural air conditioning. Reminds me of old times,” Mr Saberi said, gesturing to the badgir (wind catcher) that we were sitting under. “More chai?”

In the 40C summer heat of Yazd, a desert city in the heart of Iran, a hot cup of chai would normally have been the last thing on my mind. However, a glance out from the breezy shaded patio where I sat onto the central courtyard, ablaze in the glaring evening sun, and all thoughts of bidding my host goodbye immediately evaporated. I leaned back and gazed up along the length of this remarkable technology that’s believed to be thousands of years old.

Wind catchers are tall, chimney-like structures that protrude from the rooftops of older houses in many of Iran’s desert cities. In their simplest form, wind catchers harness the cool breezes and redirect them downwards either into the home or into underground storage rooms to refrigerate perishable foods. Studies have shown that wind catchers can reduce indoor temperatures by around 10 degrees.

From ancient Persians and Egyptians to Babylonians and Arabs, civilizations have strived to adapt their architecture to the harsh, hot climates of their environments by developing natural ventilation methods. Examples of wind catchers can be found across the Middle East and Egypt, as well as in Pakistan and India.

Since wind catchers are located at the highest point of a building, they are especially susceptible to deterioration and decay. While the oldest wind catchers in Iran date only to the 14th Century, there are references to wind catchers in the writings of 5th-Century Persian poet Nasir Khusraw.

There is an ongoing dispute between Iran and Egypt over the origin of the wind catcher. Paintings dating to around 1300BC discovered near modern-day Luxor depict two triangular structures atop Pharaoh Nebamun’s royal residence, leading Egyptian archaeologists to believe the first wind catcher was developed in Egypt. Meanwhile, ruins of a Persian fire temple dating to 4000BC feature numerous chimney-like structures, some of which have no trace of ashes, leading Iranian architects to posit that wind catchers originated in Iran.

According to Dr Abdel Moniem El-Shorbagy, assistant professor of architecture and design at Effat University in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, wind catchers found throughout the Middle East, Pakistan and India, like the four-sided wind catcher of the 8th-Century Abbasid palace of Ukhaidir in Iraq, exhibit the impact of the traditional Persian architecture on these regions. One theory suggests that the wind catchers were adopted and spread to these areas after the Arab conquest of Iran



For centuries, badgirs (wind catchers) have helped Yazd residents stay cool despite desert temperatures that can reach 40C in summertime (Credit: Shervin Abdolhamidi)

in the 7th Century.

Later that day on the rooftop of the Yazd Art House, a former Qajari-era mansion converted into a cafe, I looked out over the city’s adobe skyline while listening to an Iranian song playing from a small radio hanging from the wall. As I savoured a cold glass of Sekanjabin (a local drink made of honey and vinegar poured into a cup lined with thin slices of cucumber), I scanned the dense cluster of wind catchers rising from the rooftops. They looked like miniature skyscrapers.

Most of the wind catchers in the residential buildings of Yazd are rectangular in shape, with inlets on each of the four sides to catch wind blowing from multiple directions. However, Moyeen, a cafe employee, told me that

mountains that block the desert winds.”

I stood atop the roof, trying to visualize the physics behind the wind catchers. Cooler winds blowing at higher elevations are directed downwards through the narrow, vertical slits, subsequently pushing warm air inside the buildings up and out through an opening on the opposite side of the wind catcher. Even in the absence of a breeze, wind catchers work as solar chimneys, creating a pressure gradient that pushes warm air up and out through the tower, leaving the interior of the home feeling cooler than the exterior.

With the scorching afternoon sun bearing down on me, I decided I’d rather be under a wind catcher than staring at them, and made



Wind catchers also channeled cool air into underground cellars used to store perishable food items (Credit: Shervin Abdolhamidi)

hexagonal and octagonal wind catchers are also common.

“The wind catchers here are multi-directional, because we have pleasant winds coming from all directions – unlike in Maybod [a small town roughly 55km north-west of Yazd], where the wind catchers have only one inlet to prevent harsh, dusty, desert winds blowing from the north from entering the houses,” he explained. “Here we are surrounded by

my way to the Lariha House, one of Yazd’s best preserved Qajari-era houses. The building, which dates to the 19th Century, exemplifies the Persian architecture of the time, which featured a central, rectangular courtyard, as well as summer and winter sections – a division intended to optimize exposure to direct sunlight in the winter and minimize it in the summer. The wind catcher is located in the summer portion of the house.



A poster for the 41st ICOFOM Annual Symposium



Guterres also reminded various impacts that thriving tourism can make in economic, social and cultural scenes.

“The wide reach of tourism into many sectors, from infrastructure and energy to transport and sanitation, and its huge impact on job creation, make it a vital contributor to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. At the same time, tourism plays a pivotal role in advancing cultural understanding and bringing people together.”

The UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) adopted “Tourism and the Digital Transformation” as the motto for the 2018 World Tourism Day.

To mark the day, Iran’s Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization hosted an educational workshop titled “Digital Marketing in Tourism Businesses” and it also offered special sightseeing tours across Tehran.

Often the cool air from the wind catcher passes through an alcove in a room on the ground level, down through a vent into the zir-zamin (basement), where perishable goods are stored. In the Lariha House, I felt a slight chill as I descended the 38 steps into an even deeper cellar space called the sardab (meaning ‘cold water’ in Farsi), where water from the qanats (underground channels used to transfer water from mountains to cities) would cool the incoming air.

Like the qanat, which has been rendered mostly obsolete by modern technology, the wind catcher is a symbol of the past. Its usage has significantly diminished with the advent of modern air-conditioning. According to Abbas Farroghi, an 85-year-old resident of Lab-e Khandaq, one of Yazd’s historical neighborhoods, many of his neighbors have left their traditional homes in favor of modern apartments.

“The houses become either empty, or get rented out to immigrants and workers,” he said. “The best situation is that it gets bought by some rich person in Tehran or Shiraz who converts it into a hotel.”

Mrs Farrokhi, who recently sold her house in the neighborhood of Kooche Hana and moved into a new apartment a few streets away, often reminisces about the “good old days, where all the kids would gather and we’d sit under our badgir in the evening eating and laughing.” Her old home has since been renovated and now serves as a traditional hotel, the Royay Ghadim (meaning ‘dream of the past’).

“I still go visit my home once in a while,” she told me with a nostalgic smile. “It looks good now. I’m glad it’s being preserved.”

The city of Yazd became a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2017, and while this provides a strong incentive to preserve some of the its historical architecture, Farsad Ostadan, who runs a local tour agency, believes more can be done.

“A few years ago, leading up to our acceptance as a UNESCO site, the Cultural Heritage Institute started giving out loans, and people who’d bought these old houses were able to renovate them into hotels and restaurants and preserve these old houses,” he told me. “But now people wait for years [to receive a loan]. The government doesn’t have money now for these things.”

Yet Ostadan has hope for the city’s historical structures – especially the wind catchers. He reminisces about long summer days spent at his grandfather’s house lying under the wind catcher that was “just as good as the AC we have nowadays.” He continued, “I mean we didn’t even know what AC was in those days.”

“As long as tourists keep coming things will be OK,” Ostadan said, noting that the money coming in from tourism allows for the renovation and preservation of the old houses. “They care about the old town and the wind catchers, and we care, so hopefully we can preserve them.”

(Source: BBC)



# Polymer coating uses tiny bubbles to cool buildings, scientists say

In many parts of the world – particularly developing nations, where air conditioning isn’t practical or affordable – people paint buildings’ roofs white in order to reflect sunlight and thus keep those buildings cooler. It’s an approach known as passive daytime radiative cooling, and a new paint-like polymer could make it more effective than ever.

The problem with conventional white paint is the fact that it typically contains pigments which absorb ultraviolet light, and that aren’t very good at reflecting longer solar wavelengths. Developed by a team at Columbia University, the polymer doesn’t contain such pigments. Instead, the porous material utilizes minuscule air pockets.

These are created via a process which begins with a clear solution consisting of the polymer, a solvent and water, which gets applied to a surface – that surface could be a roof, a building’s outer walls, a water tank or anything else that needs to be kept cool. As the solvent evaporates, the water forms into tiny droplets within the polymer.

■ **Microscopic air voids**

Once the water in turn evaporates, what’s left behind are a myriad of microscopic air voids, which cause the polymer to appear bright white.

All wavelengths of sunlight are very effectively scattered and reflected by these



voids, due to the difference in the refractive index between them and the surrounding polymer.

In field tests, coatings of the polymer

have been shown to reflect over 96 percent of incoming sunlight, minimizing solar heating. Additionally, the material exhibits a high thermal emittance, radiating about

Once the water in turn evaporates, what’s left behind are a myriad of microscopic air voids, which cause the polymer to appear bright white.

97 percent of what heat there is into the sky.

As a result, a net heat loss can occur, with the coating actually staying cooler than the ambient outdoor temperature. It was a total of 6 °C cooler when tested in the desert climate of Arizona, and 3 °C cooler in the tropical climate of Bangladesh.

Should users not wish to “paint” everything white, colored dyes can be added to the polymer, which will still largely retain its reflective qualities.

■ **Creating the coatings**

Additionally, although the scientists specifically utilized a poly(vinylidene fluoride-co-hexafluoropropylene) (P(VdF-HFP)HP) polymer, a wide variety of other polymers could be used to create the coating, allowing manufacturers to maximize factors such as eco-friendliness and biocompatibility.

“Now is a critical time to develop promising solutions for sustainable humanity,” says lead scientist Yuan Yang. “This year, we witnessed heat waves and record-breaking temperatures in North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia. It is essential that we find solutions to this climate challenge, and we are very excited to be working on this new technology that addresses it.”

The research – which also involves scientists Nanfang Yu and Jyotirmoy Mandal – is described in a paper that was recently published in the journal Science.

(Source: New Atlas)

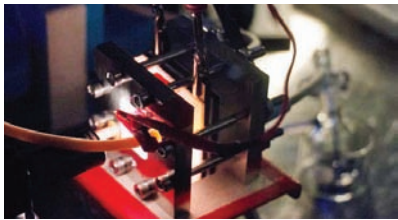
## Device that integrates solar cell and battery could store electricity outside the grid

Scientists have harnessed the abilities of both a solar cell and a battery in one device -- a “solar flow battery” that soaks up sunlight and efficiently stores it as chemical energy for later on-demand use. Their research, published September 27 in the journal Chem, could make electricity more accessible in remote regions of the world.

While sunlight has increasingly gained appeal as a clean and abundant energy source, it has one obvious limitation -- there is only so much sunlight per day, and some days are a lot sunnier than others. In order to keep solar energy practical, this means that after sunlight is converted to electrical energy, it must be stored. Normally this takes two devices -- a solar cell and a battery -- but the solar flow battery is designed to perform like both.

“Compared with separated solar energy conversion and electrochemical energy storage devices, combining the functions of separated devices into a single, integrated device could be a more efficient, scalable, compact, and cost-effective approach to utilizing solar energy,” says Song Jin, a professor of chemistry at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Jin and his team developed the device in collaboration with Jr-Hau He, a professor of electrical engineering at King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) in Saudi Arabia.

The solar flow battery has three different modes. If energy is needed right away, it can act like a solar cell and immediately convert sunlight to electricity. Otherwise, the device can soak up solar energy by day and store it as chemical energy to deliver it later as electricity when night falls or the sky grows cloudy. The device



can also be charged by electrical energy if needed, just like a typical battery.

■ **Solar flow battery**

Jin believes the solar flow battery could help transcend the limitations of the electrical grid by making electricity more readily available to people living in rural areas and providing an alternative source of energy when traditional electrical systems fail. “These integrated solar flow batteries will be especially suitable as distributed and stand-alone solar energy conversion and storage systems in remote locations and enable practical off-grid electrification,” says Jin.

Manufacturing current solar flow batteries is still too expensive for real-world markets, but Jin believes simpler designs, cheaper solar cell materials, and technological advances could help cut costs in the future. And while the current model is comparatively quite efficient, the team has plans to further improve its design.

Some of the current device’s voltage is still going to waste -- meaning the scientists may need to tweak the redox species and photoelectrode materials that work in tandem to convert solar energy input into electrical output. But Jin believes that, with further research, solar flow batteries may soon be practical.

(Source: eurekalert.org)

## Taller plants moving into Arctic because of climate change, new research finds

Plants in the Arctic are growing taller because of climate change, according to new research from a global scientific collaboration led by the University of Edinburgh.

While the Arctic is usually thought of as a vast, desolate landscape of ice, it is in fact home to hundreds of species of low-lying shrubs, grasses and other plants that play a critical role in carbon cycling and energy balance.

Now, Arctic experts have discovered that the effects of climate change are behind an increase in plant height across the tundra over the past 30 years.

As well as the Arctic’s native plants growing in stature, in the southern reaches of the Arctic taller species of plants are spreading across the tundra. Vernal sweetgrass, which is common in lowland Europe, has now moved in to sites in Iceland and Sweden.

Dr. Isla Myers-Smith of the School of Geosciences at the University of Edinburgh, and Dr. Anne Björkman from the Senckenberg Biodiversity and Climate Research Centre (BiK-F) in Frankfurt, led the international team of 130 scientists in the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)-funded project.

■ **Arctic and alpine tundra**

More than 60,000 data observations from hundreds of sites across the Arctic and alpine tundra were analyzed to produce the findings, which were published in Nature today.

Dr. Björkman said: “Rapid climate warming in the Arctic and alpine regions is driving changes in the structure and composition of plant communities, with important consequences for how this vast and sensitive ecosystem functions.

“Arctic regions have long been a focus for climate change research, as the perma-



frost lying under the northern latitudes contains 30 to 50 percent of the world’s soil carbon.

“Taller plants trap more snow, which insulates the underlying soil and prevents it from freezing as quickly in winter.

An “increase in taller plants could speed up the thawing of this frozen carbon bank, and lead to an increase in the release of greenhouse gases.

“We found that the increase in height didn’t happen in just a few sites, it was nearly everywhere across the tundra.

“If taller plants continue to increase at the current rate, the plant community height could increase by 20 to 60 percent by the end of the century.”

■ **Consequences of climate change**

Dr. Myers-Smith, of the School of Geosciences at the University of Edinburgh, said: “Quantifying the link between environment and plant traits is critical to understanding the consequences of climate change, but such research has rarely extended into the Northern hemisphere, home to the planet’s coldest tundra ecosystems.

The team now has a comprehensive data set on Arctic tundra plants, collected from sites in Alaska, Canada, Iceland, Scandinavia and Russia. Alpine sites in the European Alps and Colorado Rockies were also included in the study.

(Source: Science Daily)

## Hyper Suprime-Cam survey maps dark matter in the universe, new study suggests

Today, an international group of researchers, including Carnegie Mellon University’s Rachel Mandelbaum, released the deepest wide field map of the three-dimensional distribution of matter in the universe ever made and increased the precision of constraints for dark energy with the Hyper Suprime-Cam survey (HSC).

The present-day universe is a pretty lumpy place. As the universe has expanded over the last 14 billion years or so, galaxies and dark matter have been increasingly drawn together by gravity, creating a clumpy landscape with large aggregates of matter separated by voids where there is little or no matter.

The gravity that pulls matter together also impacts how we observe astronomical objects. As light travels from distant galaxies towards Earth, the gravitational pull of the other matter in its path, including dark matter, bends the light. As a result, the images of galaxies that telescopes see are slightly distorted, a



phenomenon called weak gravitation lensing. Within those distortions is a great amount of information that researchers can mine to better understand the distribution of matter in the universe, and it provides clues to the nature of dark energy.

■ **Measuring the gravitational distortion**

The HSC map, created from data gath-

ered by Japan’s Subaru telescope located in Hawaii, allowed researchers to measure the gravitational distortion in images of about 10 million galaxies.

The Subaru telescope allowed them to see the galaxies further back in time than in other similar surveys. For example, the Dark Energy Survey analyzes a much larger area of the sky at a similar level of precision as HSC, but only surveys the nearby universe. HSC takes a narrower, but deeper view, which allowed researchers to see fainter galaxies and make a sharper map of dark matter distribution.

The research team compared their map with the fluctuations predicted by the European Space Agency Planck satellite’s observations of the cosmic microwave background radiation—radiation from the earliest days of the universe. The HSC measurements were slightly lower than, but still statistically consistent with Planck’s. The fact that HSC and other weak lensing surveys all find

slightly lower results than Planck raises the tantalizing question of whether dark energy truly behaves like Einstein’s cosmological constant.

“Our map gives us a better picture of how much dark energy there is and tells us a little more about its properties and how it’s making the expansion of the universe accelerate,” Mandelbaum said. The “HSC is a great complement to other surveys. Combining data across projects will be a powerful tool as we try uncover more and more about the nature of dark matter and dark energy.”

Measuring the distortions caused by weak gravitational lensing isn’t easy. The effect is quite small and distortions in galaxy shapes can also be caused by the atmosphere, the telescope and the detector. To get precise, accurate results, researchers need to know that they are only measuring effects from weak lensing.

(Source: phys.org)

## Pellet Production at Considerable Growth in Khorasan Steel Complex

Pellet production in Khorasan Steel Complex witnessed a significant growth, the Public Relations Dept. of the company reported.

With due observance to the said issue, industrious workers and engineers of the newly-constructed pelletizing factory of Khorasan Steel Production complex managed to produce 94,000 tons of conglomerates in the Iranian month of Shahrivar (Sept. 21).

CEO of Khorasan Steel Production

Complex Eng. Ahmadi announced the above statement and said, “94,29 tons of pellet was produced in the company in the current Iranian month of Shahrivar (Sept. 21), promoting the previous production volume of this raw material as much as 16 percent (16%) at large.”

He went on to say that pelletizing factory of Khorasan Steel Production Complex, with the production capacity of 2.5 million tons,

became operation in the beginning of the current year in the presence of President Rouhani.

He pointed to the unity and amity among industrious personnel working in various department of the Complex as the main the most important factor behind success of this industrial and production unit and expressed his special thanks to workers, laborers and engineers who managed to materialize most

objectives of the company.

As the main hub of steel production in the country, Khorasan Steel Complex has created all components of production chain in this province and its geographical sphere, he added.

In conclusion, CEO of the company said, “benefited from the most experienced manpower, the company will take giant strides in the current year named after supporting homemade products.

## Warm ocean waters may be responsible for increased hurricane activities

Warm ocean water, caused by rising temperature, is responsible for the increased hurricane activities in the North Atlantic Ocean in 2017, according to new research.

Last year, the United States was rocked by six major hurricanes. Three of them, namely Harvey, Irma, and Maria made landfall, displacing families and destroying homes.

Puerto Rico is still reeling from the damage caused by Hurricane Maria that hit the island in September. As of this writing, the death toll has increased to nearly 3,000 people.

That is just the beginning. In the study published on Thursday, Sept. 27, in the journal Science, experts warned that more active hurricane seasons might be experienced in the future.

Several other factors contributed to the increased hurricane activity last year. The researchers pointed out that the moderate La Niña in the Pacific is also partly responsible for the formation of six major hurricanes in the North Atlantic Ocean.

However, the unusually warm water in the ocean outweighed all the other factors and will continue to cause major hurricanes in the future.

For the study, scientists used HiFLOR, a high-resolution global climate model, which is developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The weather tool successfully predicted the active major hurricane season last year.

Additional experiments using HiFLOR also identified that the unusually warm water of the Atlantic Ocean was the main cause of the active major hurricane season.

“This new method allows us to predict hurricane activity as the season is happening, as well as take into consideration the likely contribution of climate warming,” explained Hiroyuki Murakami, a researcher from NOAA and the lead author of the study.

(Source: Tech Times)

## Scientists have confirmed two new particles, and possibly discovered a third

The Large Hadron Collider is at it again, showing us new wonders in the world of particle physics. Scientists working on the Large Hadron Collider beauty (LHCb) collaboration have observed two new particles that have never been seen before - and seen evidence of a third.

The two new particles, predicted by the standard quark model, are baryons - the same family of particles as the protons used in Large Hadron Collider (LHC) particle acceleration experiments.

Baryons are what most of the Universe is made up of, including protons and neutrons - composite particles consisting of three fundamental particles called quarks, which have different ‘flavors’, or types: up, down, top, bottom, charm, and strange.

Protons consist of two up quarks and one down quark, while neutrons consist of one up quark and two down quarks, for instance. But the two new particles discovered have a slightly different composition.

These particles are known as bottom baryons, and they are related to four particles previously observed at Fermilab. However, the new observations mark the first time scientists have detected these higher-mass counterparts; they are about six times more massive than a proton.

So what’s the third particle candidate we mentioned earlier?

The researchers think it might be a strange type of composite particle called a tetraquark. These are an exotic kind of meson, which normally have two quarks. But a tetraquark is composed of four quarks - well, two quarks and two anti-quarks, to be more accurate.

Observational evidence of tetraquarks has been pretty elusive to date, and that is also the case here. Evidence of the candidate particle, called Zc(4100) and including two heavy charm quarks, was detected in the decay of heavier B mesons.

(Source: sciencealert.com)

## Interstellar visitor Oumuamua came from 1 of 4 nearby stars

Last year, astronomers spotted an object from beyond the stars. There have surely been many interstellar visitors to our humble solar system over the eons, but this is the first one we’ve been able to study as it passed through. Oumuamua is a slender, cigar-shaped comet that could have come from almost any nearby star. However, scientists have pinned down the four most likely origins for Oumuamua.



The scientific community announced the discovery of Oumuamua in late 2017. By that point, it was already on its way out of the solar system after slingshotting around the sun. It entered the solar system going 15.8 miles per second (25.5km/s), and it’s going even faster now. Combined with an orbital eccentricity of 1.20, there’s no doubt it came from another solar system.

The high speed makes it impossible to catch up to Oumuamua, so it’s been difficult to characterize it. Scientists first labeled it a comet, but the lack of a visible coma made everyone think it wasn’t one. Earlier this year, analysis of its path through space confirmed it was outgassing like a comet. It’s just a “mildly active comet.” We also know it’s probably not a spaceship.

Researchers from the Max Planck Institute have used data from the ESA’s Gaia satellite to calculate possible paths for Oumuamua all the way back to nearby stars. The Gaia satellite is a star-mapper with data on some seven million stars. Since stars drift through the cosmos over time, you can’t draw a straight line from Oumuamua to its origin point. However, the team did identify four stars which would have been very close to its path in the last several million years.

(Source: extremetech.com)



## Homegrown airborne firefighting system unveiled

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — Iran unveiled on Saturday a domestically produced airborne fire-fighting system that can be loaded to various aircrafts for extinguishing large-scale fires.

The system allows aircrafts to be used as an air tanker to combat fire as it can carry about 18 tons of water and spray it every five seconds, YJC reported.

Forests in Iran are prone to fire outbreaks and such equipment would help in containing destructive flames much more effectively.

## September 30: International Translation Day

International Translation Day is meant as an opportunity to pay tribute to the work of language professionals, which plays an important role in bringing nations together, facilitating dialogue, understanding and cooperation, contributing to development and strengthening world peace and security.

Transposition of a literary or scientific work, including technical work, from one language into another language, professional translation, including translation proper, interpretation and terminology, is indispensable to preserving clarity, a positive climate and productiveness in international public discourse and interpersonal communication.

Thus, on 24 May 2017, the General Assembly adopted resolution 71/288 on the role of language professionals in connecting nations and fostering peace, understanding and development, and declared September 30 as International Translation Day.

### ■ Why 30 September?

30 September celebrates the feast of St. Jerome, the Bible translator who is considered the patron saint of translators.

St. Jerome was a priest from North-eastern Italy, who is known mostly for his endeavor of translating most of the Bible into Latin from the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. He also translated parts of the Hebrew Gospel into Greek.

He was of Illyrian ancestry and his native tongue was the Illyrian dialect. He learnt Latin in school and was fluent in Greek and Hebrew, which he learnt from his studies and travels.

Jerome died near Bethlehem on September 30, 420. Every year since 2005, the United Nations invites all its staff, accredited permanent missions staff and students from select partner universities to compete in the UN St. Jerome Translation Contest, a contest which rewards the best translations in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish as well as German, and aims to celebrate multilingualism and highlight the important role of translators and other language professionals in multilateral diplomacy.

(Source: un.org)

# National firefighter day: Time to show gratitude

By Maryam Qarehgozlou

**TEHRAN** — September 29, is the national firefighter day in Iran and is a chance to pay homage to the firemen who devote their lives to the protection of life and property.

The day is being observed nationally in Iran on September 29 as a reminder for all communities to honor the commitment and sacrifices firefighters make to keep us safe, it's a day to extend our sincere gratitude for the firefighters' contributions.

Firefighters rescue thousands of victims from hazardous conditions, like fires, crashed or overturned cars, or debris of quake-hit buildings annually regardless of their own lives. They provide incident stabilization in forest fires, floods, hazardous material releases, etc. and work quickly and strategically to reduce the dangers and level of damage caused by the incidents.

Since the range of emergency incidents firefighters should respond to is vast firemen are required to be trained to learn new kinds of knowledge and skills and despite all the systematic and rigorous trainings they have received in preparation for the incidents, sometimes they are forced to make difficult and even life-threatening decisions in



Tehran Times/ Majid Asgaripour

A fireman searching through the debris of the Plasco building

high-pressure situations which might end up in losing their own lives to save many.

They not only try their best to save lives but they also strive to conserve the property

and the environment, in case of wildfires, as much as possible. Firemen attempt to not cause unnecessary damage to the personal property and limit the extent of the damage

## Times rankings: 29 top Iranian universities on the list

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — According to the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2019, 29 Iranian universities are among more than 1,250 top universities worldwide.

Babol Noshirvani University of Technology ranked between 351 and 400, Amirkabir University of Technology and University of Kashan both ranked between 501 and 600, Iran University of Science and Technology, Isfahan University of Technology, Mashhad University of Medical Sciences, Sharif University and Technology, Shiraz University of Technology, University of Tabriz, University of Tehran and Tehran University of Medical Sciences all ranked between 601 and 800 came in first three places among the Iranian universities.

Azarbaijan Shahid Madani University, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, University of Guilan, Iran University of Medical Sciences, University of Isfahan, K.N. Toosi University of Technology, University of Mazandaran, Shahid Beheshti University, Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, and Shiraz University are collectively ranked between 801 and 1,000.

Moreover, Alzahra University, University of Birjand, Kharazmi University, Shahid Bahonar University of Ker-

man, Shahrood University of Technology, Urmia University, Yazd University and University of Zanjan are ranked above 1,001 in the list.

Times Higher Education website states that the ranking is the only global university performance table to judge research-intensive universities across all of their core missions: teaching, research, knowledge transfer and international outlook.

It uses 13 carefully calibrated performance indicators to provide the most comprehensive and balanced comparisons, trusted by students, academics, university leaders, industry and governments.

This year's list of the best universities in the world is led by the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge for the second consecutive year.

Stanford University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, California Institute of Technology, Harvard University, Princeton University, Yale University, Imperial College London and University of Chicago are among the world top 10 university respectively.

Among Islamic countries Iran with 29 universities is the representative with the highest number of higher education

institutes followed by Turkey and Egypt with 23 and 19 universities respectively.

Malaysia with 11 universities, Pakistan with 9 universities, Saudi Arabia and Algeria each with 6 universities, Indonesia with 5 universities, Morocco, Jordan and the UEA each with 4 universities, Kazakhstan with 2 universities and Iraq, Oman, Nepal, Tanzania, Jamaica, Qatar and Kuwait each with 1 university are the Islamic countries in the ranking.

In general only 11 universities in Islamic countries ranked below 500. Additionally, China has stepped up its ascent of the Times Higher Education World University Rankings, with the country now home to the top institution in Asia for the first time under the current methodology. Tsinghua University has overtaken the National University of Singapore to become the best university in Asia in the The World University Rankings 2019 after rising eight places to 22nd, representing the greatest rise in the top 30.

There is also good news for France, which has a top 50 university for the first time since 2011.

Overall, 86 countries are represented, including Iraq, Jamaica, Nepal, Tanzania and Kazakhstan for the first time.



Islamic Republic of Iran  
Ministry of Energy  
Khuzestan Water and Power Authority

### Re-Invitation to International Bid

### SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT

### Request for Qualification

### EPC+F Bid for Development Project of Dez Dam Power Plant Extension Project

Khuzestan Water and Power Authority (KWPA) intends to entrust financing, engineering , procurement, construction, installation, commissioning and 1 year trial operation and maintenance of the Dez Dam power plant extension project as EPC+F basis contract to qualified eligible bidders considering the following criteria and information. The bid will be carried out in accordance with Article (12) of the National Law of Bids (2004) and its relative directives in compliance with the relevant regulations of the “Law for the Sixth Development Plan of the Islamic Republic of Iran” and based on the issued licenses.

- Client Name and Address:** Khuzestan Water and Power Authority (KWPA), Golestan Blvd., Ahvaz City, Iran: Telephone No + (9861) 33331001, Fax + (9861) 33337001.
- Brief Scope of project:**
  - Financing, engineering, procurement, construction, installation, commissioning and 1 year trial operation and maintenance of:
    - Three 180 MW hydroelectric power units (as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dez dam power plant)
    - Dam strengthening and rehabilitation.
  - Based on the Governmental approved financing structure, the Contractor shall be held responsible for financing 85 percent of the Contract Price (from foreign sources).
- Project Location:** The Dez Dam site, 22 km northwest of Andimeshk City, Khuzestan province, Iran.
- Estimated Cost for Execution:** 372 million Euros

Repayment of the financial facilities cost of money and related expenses will be guaranteed by the provision of the sovereign guarantee, in accordance with the regulations of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance under Article 62 of National Audit Act.

- Execution and Operation Periods:** 72 months including 60 months for financing, engineering, procurement, construction, installation and commissioning along with 12 months of trial operation and maintenance.
- Eligibility Criteria of Bidders:**

Those consortium or joint venture of foreign and local contractors that have proven experience in dam and hydro power projects, can participate in bid considering the Law and Regulations of the Islamic Republic of Iran particularly including the Law on Maximum Use of Iranian Technical, Engineering, Manufacturing Industrial and Executive Capabilities for Implementation of Projects and Provision of Facilities Required for Export of Services (2012) taking into account the terms and conditions below:

#### 6-1- For Foreign contractors:

- Foreign contractors must be capable of financing, providing technical support and management regarding to the size, magnitude and specifications of the project.
- The foreign contractor must have similar project experiences in dam and hydro power projects in the role of EPC contractor or participate in the bid with a reputable foreign consultant in designing similar projects (as a sub-consultant in the technical office).

#### 6-2-For local contractors:

The required grades for consortium or joint venture of local contractors approved by plan and budget organization (PBO) are as follows:

- Certificate of “grade 1 in EPC projects” in the field of “water” with the sub-category of “dam construction” and the grade 1 of the contractor in the field of “power” with the sub-category of “power generation”.
- Or
- Certificate of “grade 1 of the contractor” in the field of “dam construction and related facilities” and the grade 1 of the contractor in the field of “power” with the sub-category of the “power generation” along with first-rank local consultants in “water engineering” with the sub-category of “dam engineering”.

**Remark:** All stages of the financing Contract will be the commitment of the Joint Venture and in accordance with the Code of the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran (CBI).

#### 7.Date, Deadline and Address to receive documents:

The eligible bidders can receive the qualification documents from the date of 02/10/2018 to 09/10/2018 on office hours, from Moshanir - Power Engineering Consultants Co. at the following address: No. 1, Shadi 2 Alley, Khoddami St., Vanak Sq., Tehran, Iran Phone: + (9821) 88 88 91 21

The bidders can receive the document only by the authorized representative with the sign and sealed introduction letter including the bank-payment bill of 3,500,000 Rials deposited into the account number 1976800132508 of Moshanir Consulting Engineers Company in Sepah Bank, “Mirdamad Blvd.” Branch

**8. Qualification Documents' Submission Date, Deadline and Address:** After reviewing of the qualification documents, the bidders should complete the relevant documents up to the end of the office hours of 27/10/2018 and submit them in a signed and sealed envelope to the following address: Khuzestan Water and Power Authority (KWPA), Contracts Department, 2nd Floor, Five-Floor Building, Golestan Blvd., Ahvaz, Iran. Phone: + (9861) 33360278.

9. The bidders may contact the Moshanir Power Engineering Consultants Co. at the above mentioned address and number for any further questions/information.

*Public Relations Dept. of Khuzestan Water and Power Authority (KWPA)*

### نوبت دوم

### مناقصه بین المللی

### فراخوان تجدید ارزیابی کیفی مناقصه گران و تامین کنندگان مالی

### طرح توسعه نیروگاه سد دز به روش EPC+F



جمهوری اسلامی ایران  
وزارت نیرو

سازمان آب و برق خوزستان

شرکت سپاهي سازمان آب و برق خوزستان در نظر دارد با رعایت ماده (۱۲) قانون برگزاری مناقصات مصوب سال ۱۳۸۳ مجلس شورای اسلامی و آیین نامه اجرایی ذریبست براساس **قانون برنامه ششم توسعه کشور** و براساس مجوزات اخذ شده، تأمین مالی، طراحی، تأمین کالا، اجرا و یک سال بهره‌برداری و نگهداری آزمایشی طرح توسعه نیروگاه سد دز به روش EPC+F را با اطلاعات مشروحه ذیل به متقاضیان واجد صلاحیت واگذار نماید.

- نام و نشانی دستگاه مناقصه‌گزار:** سازمان آب و برق استان خوزستان، اهواز، بلوار گلستان، تلفن ۳۳۳۳۷۰۰۱-۵ و فکس ۳۳۳۳۱۰۰۱-۶ (۹۸۶۱)+
- شرح مختصری از مشخصات و مقادیر کار:**
  - تأمین مالی، طراحی، تأمین کالا، اجرا و یک سال بهره‌برداری و نگهداری آزمایشی سه واحد ۱۸۰ مگاواتی نیروگاه برقابی و انجام کارهای سیویل ایمن سازی، پاینداری و علاج بخشی در سد و ساختمانه موجود.
  - براساس مجوزات اخذ شده تأمین مالی (به صورت فاینانس خارجی) معادل ۸۵٪ مبلغ پیمان به عهده پیمانکار می‌باشد.
- محل اجرا:** استان خوزستان - ۲۲ کیلومتری شمال شرقی شهر اندیشک، ساختمان سد دز.

**۴- برآورد تقریبی هزینه اجرا:** ۳۷۲ میلیون یورو  
بازپرداخت اصل و سود تسهیلات مالی و هزینه های تبعی مطابق قوانین وزارت اقتصاد و دارایی در چارچوب ماده ۶۲ قانون محاسبات عمومی کشور با ارائه ضمانت دولتی ( Sovereign Guarantee ) تضمین خواهد شد.

**۵- مدت اجرا و بهره برداری:** ۷۲ ماه ، شامل ۶۰ ماه برای تأمین مالی، طراحی، تأمین کالا و اجرا ، بعلوه ۱۲ ماه بهره برداری و نگهداری آزمایشی.

**۶- شرایط متقاضیان شرکت در ارزیابی کیفی:**

پیمانکاران خارجی و داخلی که دارای سوابق کاری در اجرای پروژه‌های سد و نیروگاه برق آبی باشند باتوجه به ضوابط و مقررات جاری دولت جمهوری اسلامی ایران از جمله قانون حداکثر استفاده از توان تولیدی و خدماتی در تأمین نیازهای کشور (مصوب ۱۳۹۱) با رعایت شرایط زیر می‌توانند نسبت به ایجاد مشارکت (پیمانکاران خارجی و داخلی ) و شرکت در ارزیابی کیفی اقدام نمایند.

۱-۶ پیمانکاران خارجی:

پیمانکاران خارجی باید دارای توان مالی، مالی و مدیریتی مناسب با توجه به ابعاد و مشخصات طرح باشند.

پیمانکار خارجی می بایست سابقه اجرای پروژه مشابه سد و نیروگاه برقابی را بصورت طرح و ساخت داشته باشد و یا با مشارکت با یک شرکت مشاور خارجی معتبر در طراحی پروژه های مشابه ( به عنوان مشاور همکار در دفتر فنی) در مناقصه شرکت نماید.

۲-۶ پیمانکاران داخلی:

مشارکت پیمانکاران داخلی می بایست با لحاظ رتبه های تایید شده زیر از سازمان برنامه و بودجه باشد:

- پیمانکار رتبه ۱ طرح و ساخت رسته آب با زیرشاخه سد سازی به همراه پیمانکار رتبه یک رشته نیرو با زیر شاخه تولید نیرو.

و یا

- پیمانکار رتبه یک آب در زیر رشته سدسازی و تأسیسات مربوطه و رتبه یک رشته نیرو با زیر شاخه تولید نیرو و به همراه مشاور رتبه یک مهندسی آب با تخصصی سد سازی.

**تبصره :** کلیه مراحل عقد قرار داد تأمین مالی در تمهد گروه مشارکت و مطابق با شرایط بانک مرکزی جمهوری اسلامی ایران خواهد بود.

**۷- تاریخ، مهلت و محل دریافت اسناد ارزیابی:** واجدین شرایط می‌توانند در ساعات اداری از تاریخ ۹۷/۰۷/۱۰ تا ۹۷/۰۷/۱۷ نسبت به دریافت اسناد ارزیابی از شرکت مهندسین مشاور مشانیر به نشانی: تهران، بالاتر از میدان ونک، خیابان شهید خدای، کوچه شادی، پلاک ۸، تلفن ۸۸۸۸۹۱۲۱+ (۹۸۲۱) اقدام نمایند. دریافت اسناد ارزیابی تنها با همراه داشتن معرفی نامه کتبی و در قبال ارائه فیش بانکی به مبلغ -/۳۵۰۰۰۰۰۰ ریال واریزی به حساب به شماره ۰۸-۱۳۳۵۰۸۱۹۷۶۸۰ نزد بانک سپه شعبه بلوار میرداماد به نام شرکت سپاهي خدمات مهندسی برق ( مشانیر) امکان پذیر خواهد بود.

**۸- تاریخ، مهلت و محل تحویل اسناد ارزیابی:** مناقصه‌گران پس از دریافت و مطالعه اسناد ارزیابی، حداکثر تا آخر وقت اداری مورخ ۹۷/۰۸/۵ اسناد مربوطه را تکمیل و در پاکت لاک و مهر شده به نشانی: اهواز - بلوار گلستان، ساختمان ۵ طبقه سازمان آب و برق استان خوزستان، طبقه دوم، دفتر قراردادها، تلفن ۳۳۳۶۰۳۷۸+ (۹۸۶۱) تحویل دهند .

**۹- مناقصه گران می‌توانند برای کسب اطلاعات بیشتر و بیان سوالات احتمالی خود با شرکت سپاهي خدمات مهندسی برق ( مشانیر) به نشانی ذکر شده در بالا مکاتبه و یا با شماره تلفن ۸۸۸۸۹۱۲۱+ (۹۸۲۱) تماس حاصل نمایند.**

*روابط عمومی سازمان آب و برق خوزستان*



# Russia says already started delivering S-300 missile system to Syria

**1→** Israeli fighter jets attacking Syrian military posts misled the country's air defenses into shooting down the Russian Ilyushin Il-20 reconnaissance plane on September 17, killing all 15 passengers onboard.

Russia says it had suspended the delivery of its S-300 missile defense system for years over concerns raised by Tel Aviv; however, the recent plane crash prompted the Kremlin to press ahead with its earlier plan to deliver the missile system to Syria within two weeks in a bid to boost Syria's air defense capabilities and take "adequate retaliatory measures".

Shortly after Moscow announced its decision to deliver the missile system, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called President Putin to warn him about the delivery.

In the Monday phone conversation, Netanyahu claimed the delivery of the missile defense system would increase dangers in the region, a statement by his office said.

Tel Aviv has long lobbied Moscow not to provide the S-300 to Syria, fearing this would prevent its jet fighters from launching illegal aggressions against targets in the Syrian territory.

The United States has also called Kremlin's decision a "major mistake." The U.S. National Security Advisor John Bolton recently warned Russia against the decision, advising it against escalating the already high tensions in the Middle East region.

## ■ Idlib no safe passage for extremists

Addressing the same press conference on Friday, Lavrov referred to his country's recent



agreement with Turkey over the northern province of Idlib, where both anti-government militants and Takfiri terrorists are living, and said Moscow won't let terrorists use Idlib as a safe passage to run away.

Based on the deal, Ankara has agreed to separate the armed opposition from radicals and extremists who belong to groups branded as terrorists by the United Nations.

"There is talk that they will be sent off to other hotspots, for example Afghanistan," Lavrov said, slamming the decision as unacceptable and vowing not to let that happen.

The Russian diplomat underlined that the terrorists have to be eliminated or there has to be a judicial process to punish them.

The leaders of Turkey and Russia said

on September 17 they had agreed to create a demilitarized buffer zone to separate Syrian government troops from Takfiri militant groups in Idlib. The deal came amid Turkey's concerns about thousands of terrorists living in the province.

## ■ Syria reopens Nasib border crossing with Jordan after 3-year closure by militants

Elsewhere, Syria has reopened a vital border crossing with Jordan, three years after the major transit route was shut down by foreign-sponsored Takfiri militants.

In a post on its official Facebook page on Saturday, the Syrian Transport Ministry said that the Nasib border crossing, situated in the southern Dara'a Province, had resumed operating.

"The Syrian Transport Ministry announces the opening of the Nasib border crossing, with trucks and transit vehicles beginning to cross the Syrian-Jordanian border," the ministry said.

A Jordanian government spokeswoman Joumana Ghonaimat, however, rejected the re-opening of the checkpoint. "Jaber Nasib crossing is still closed. It hasn't reopened yet for movement of goods and passengers."

The development came two months after Syrian army forces and allied fighters liberated the Syrian side of the crossing under a Moscow-brokered deal with anti-Damascus militants.

The terrorists had completely sealed the border crossing since they overran it in April 2015.

The Nasib crossing was a major trade route between Syria and Jordan as well as Lebanon and the Persian Gulf countries.

Earlier this week, Syrian Prime Minister Imad Khamis announced that all necessary steps had been taken to reopen the border crossing with Jordan.

"This crossing will be invested in according to our national interest. The customs fees were amended to achieve the interests of the Syrian state, increased from \$10 to \$62 for a four-ton truck," he said.

Damascus has recently been engaged in technical talks with Amman to resume movement via the Nasib route.

Over the past few months, Syrian forces have made sweeping gains against Takfiri elements, especially in the country's southern areas and Damascus suburbs.

(Source: agencies)

## Hezbollah rejects Netanyahu 'delusions' about 'hidden missile sites'

Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement has described the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as delusional after he attacked the movement in his recent address to the United Nations General Assembly.



"Let's leave Netanyahu with his lies and delusions, to speak about what he wants and incite in the way he sees fit," Mohammad Fneish, a Hezbollah member and Lebanon's caretaker youth and sports minister, was quoted by Lebanon's the Daily Star newspaper as saying.

The Israeli premier alleged during an address to the United Nations General Assembly on Thursday that the movement was using "hidden missile sites" near Rafik Hariri International Airport in the Lebanese capital Beirut.

Lebanese President Michel Aoun asserted that Israel's latest "threats" would not work to cause an escalation with Tel Aviv.

Lebanon and Israel are technically at war due to the latter's occupation of the country's Shebaa Farms since 1967.

Hezbollah was founded in the 1980s following the Israeli invasion and occupation of southern Lebanon.

Since its establishment, the movement has helped the army defend Lebanon both in the face of foreign aggression, including wholesale Israeli wars in 2000 and 2006, and against terrorism. The Israeli regime suffered a humiliating defeat during the second war.

"We are those concerned with responding to Netanyahu's aggression and to any new attack on Lebanon," Fneish said.

The Hezbollah minister added, "The Israeli premier knows exactly what awaits him if he commits any aggression against Lebanon, and if he does not know, he will be surprised."

"Hezbollah will continue to lead the resistance, to defend the country, and to confront any aggression that could pose a threat to the Lebanese and to the sovereignty of Lebanon," Fneish said.

On Thursday, Lebanon's acting Foreign Minister Gebran Bassil said Israel was trying to create excuses to attack the country.

"Here is Israel, again coming up with excuses to justify assault and preparing to violate the sovereignty of states using the platform of [the UN]," Bassil tweeted.

"It forgot that Lebanon drove [Israel] out, defeated its aggression and is oblivious that its arrogance and new friendships won't benefit it again," he added.

(Source: Press TV)

## Taliban deny meeting Afghan officials in Saudi Arabia ahead of elections

A Taliban spokesman has rejected reports that the group's representatives have met an Afghan government delegation this week in Saudi Arabia, after sources said a meeting was held to discuss security issues ahead of Afghanistan's parliamentary elections.

Zabihullah Mujahid, a self-proclaimed spokesman for the Taliban group, released on Friday a short statement denying the meeting less than a month before voters are scheduled to go to the polls to elect a new Afghan parliament.

The news came amid fears of Taliban attacks on polling stations and campaign rallies. The Afghan government and its international partners have put at the top of their priorities the safe and smooth passing of votes without violence.

The denial of the meeting is perceived as a blow to Riyadh as it sought a so-called mediation role between the Taliban and Kabul to help the United States continue their presence in Afghanistan.

Previous reports by Reuters quoted three Taliban officials as saying that representatives from the militant group had met an Afghan government delegation in Saudi Arabia and agreed on reinforcing security during the upcoming elections and also on a limited prisoner release.

"They requested us to help them conduct peaceful elections," claimed one of the Taliban officials, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"The Afghan delegation has agreed with us on the release of prisoners," he said, adding that some prisoners facing minor charges had already been released and officials had divided up others into three categories, depending on their



importance, for future release.

Representative from the Taliban have held a meeting with Afghan government officials in Saudi Arabia after earlier plans for another meeting with American officials broke down.

The Taliban have generally insisted on negotiating only with the United States, but plans for another meeting with American officials broke down over U.S. demands for a three-month ceasefire.

The United States has reportedly agreed to participate directly and has appointed former U.S. ambassador to Kabul Zalmay Khalilzad as the special envoy.

The Taliban say they will not enter talks unless the U.S. troops leave the country and have pledged to make Afghanistan "another graveyard" for foreign forces.

The House of Saud regime has been pressuring the mil-

itants to stop attacking the U.S. troops. The regime was one of the only two countries that had officially recognized the Taliban as the legitimate government of Afghanistan between 1996 and 2001.

The Taliban were ousted from power in 2001 following a U.S.-led invasion. That war, which continues to this day, has failed to bring stability to the country despite the presence of thousands of foreign forces.

The United Nations is concerned about a spike in civilian casualties in the U.S. airstrikes across Afghanistan.

The war-wracked country suffers from scores of deadly attacks by the Taliban militant group almost across the country. The terrorist outfit has recently stepped up its acts of violence, overtaking several key districts in a spate of brazen attacks.

The United Nations said in a recent statement that blasts, attacks and clashes between militants and Afghan forces killed over 1,600 civilians in the first six months of the year, the highest number in the past decade.

Since late last year, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) Takfiri terrorist group, which has already lost all its urban strongholds in Iraq and Syria, has also taken advantage of the chaos in Afghanistan and established a foothold in the country's eastern and northern regions.

Afghanistan's former president Hamid Karzai has accused the U.S. of propping up ISIL and using it as a "tool" for its own agenda in the country.

(Source: Press TV)

## Saudi regime foreign minister demands Canada stop treating it like a 'banana republic'

The House of Saud regime's foreign minister has demanded Canada stop treating it like a "banana republic" and called upon the government of Justin Trudeau to apologize for calling for the release of jailed human rights activists, further escalating a simmering diplomatic row that began over the summer.

"You can criticize us about human rights, women's rights ... that's your right. You can sit down and talk about it, but demand the immediate release? What are we, a banana republic? Would any country accept it?" said the foreign minister, Adel Al-Juebir, at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York, as world leaders gathered for the United

Nations general assembly.

Al-Juebir referenced a tweet sent by Canada's foreign minister, Chrystia Freeland, calling for the release of jailed activists Samar Badawi and her brother, Raif Badawi. Raif Badawi's wife and children are Canadian citizens.

It was a separate tweet of the same content, but translated into Arabic and sent by the Canadian embassy in Riyadh, that in August prompted a wave of anger from the Saudi regime government, culminating in the expulsion of Canadian diplomats, the near-cessation of trade and the removal of all Saudi medical students from Canadian universities.

In his comments on Wednesday, Al-Juebir also attempted to return the criticism, alluding to issues of separatism in French-speaking Quebec and Canada's treatment of indigenous communities.

"It is outrageous, from our perspective, that a country will sit there and lecture us and make demands - we demand the immediate release. Really? We demand the immediate independence of Quebec. We demand the immediate granting of equal rights to Canadian Indians," he said.

"We don't want to be a political football in Canada's domestic politics. Find another ball to play with. It's very easy to fix. Apologize and say you made a mistake."

Earlier in the week, Freeland had expressed optimism that the two countries would be able to mend what has become a fractious relationship.

Freeland has previously refused to apologize for the comment and on Tuesday, reiterated her support for the activists.

"Canada will always stand up for human rights ... we feel a particular obligation to women who are fighting for their rights around the world," she said on Tuesday, before the Saudi request for an apology. "And we feel a particular obligation to people who have a personal connection to Canada."

(Source: The Guardian)

## Syria at UN: 'Our battle against terrorism is almost over'

Syria's top diplomat told the world Saturday that his country's "battle against terrorism is almost over" after more than seven years of civil war, as an envoy from another of the planet's most troubled spots - North Korea - prepared to address the UN General Assembly.

Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Moallem also vowed that the Syrian government will free the country from all "illegitimate" foreign troops. He vehemently restated denials that Damascus has used chemical weapons during the war - although international investigators have found otherwise - and he called on all refugees to return home, saying that is a priority for Damascus.

"Today, the situation on the ground is more stable and secure, thanks to combating terrorism," he said. "All conditions are now present for the voluntary return of refugees."

He spoke at a time when Syrian government forces, backed by Russia and Iran, have retaken most of the territory rebels seized during the war that has killed over 400,000 people and driven millions from their homes.

A military offensive by President Bashar Assad's forces on Idlib, the last remaining rebel stronghold, was averted last week in a deal reached between Russia and Turkey to set up a demilitarized zone around the province. Still, there is uncertainty over how the deal will be implemented; two insurgent groups have rejected it.

Idlib has been a relative refuge for people displaced by violence in other parts of the country, and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has said a full-scale battle for Idlib could unleash "a humanitarian nightmare" surpassing the misery already seen during the war.

(Source: AFP)



## North Korea says continued sanctions deepening mistrust in U.S.

North Korea's Foreign Minister Ri Yong ho told the United Nations on Saturday that continued sanctions on Pyongyang

were deepening its mistrust in the United States.

"Without any trust in the U.S. there will

be no confidence in our national security and under such circumstances there is no way we will unilaterally disarm ourselves

first," Ri told the annual gathering of world leaders at the United Nations.

(Source: Reuters)

## Powerful typhoon Trami pounds southern Japan

A powerful typhoon has brought heavy rain and high winds as it battered southern Japan, leading to flight cancellations and power outages in several cities.



Typhoon Trami, rated Category 2, is the latest storm to threaten Japan in a year of grim weather-related woes, including punishing heat, heavy rains and landslides.

Outlying islands in the Okinawa chain, around 1,000 km southwest of Tokyo, were being pounded by heavy rain and high tides on Saturday.

Winds with gusts of up to 216 kph knocked down trees, blew off an outer wall from a building and left 17 people injured in Okinawa.

Local officials said no one was feared dead as a result of the storm.

About 195,000 households lost electricity on Okinawa and other neighboring small islands, according to Okinawa Electric Power.

Public broadcaster NHK said more than 380 flights were cancelled, mainly those flying in and out of Okinawa.

Churning north across Okinawa on Saturday, Trami is then predicted to move across the islands of Kyushu and the main island of Honshu on Sunday, a path similar to that taken by typhoon Jebi early in September.

Jebi, the most powerful storm to hit Japan in 25 years, brought some of the highest tides since a 1961 typhoon and flooded Kansai airport near Osaka, taking it out of service for days.

The season's 24th typhoon "might cause a catastrophe with storm surges, high waves, powerful winds and torrential rains," an agency official told a news conference on Friday in Naha, the island's capital, the local Ryukyu Shimpo newspaper reported.

Rainfall of up to 400mm was forecast for the Amami island region and up to 250mm for Okinawa by noon Sunday, while the storm could generate waves up to 13 meters high around the regions, forecasters said.

(Source: agencies)



## Man Utd record worst start for 29 years with defeat at West Ham

Manchester United recorded their worst league start in 29 years as Jose Mourinho's side were beaten by West Ham at London Stadium.

The Hammers, with only one win in the previous 19 top-flight meetings, were ahead after just five minutes through club-record signing Felipe Anderson's clever back-heeled finish from Pablo Zabaleta's cross - despite both players appearing to be offside.

And the hosts doubled their advantage on the brink of half-time in fortunate fashion, as Andriy Yarmolenko's shot cannoned in off Victor Lindelof and beyond the wrong-footed David de Gea.

Marcus Rashford responded for the largely pedestrian visitors on 71 minutes, but Marko Arnautovic restored the Hammers' two-goal lead less than three minutes later as Mark Noble's pass sliced through United's unconvincing back-line.

The Red Devils also picked up 10 points from their opening seven fixtures in 2013-14 under David Moyes, but their margin of defeat made this their worst top-flight start since they accrued just seven points in 1989-90.

Manchester United proved no match for a lively West Ham in the opening stages, but the visitors did go close to equalising when Romelu Lukaku's header struck the post midway through the first half.

Their appeared little response to their midweek Carabao Cup exit to Championship side Derby, however, and the Hammers - who had failed to score in their previous three home games - enjoyed plenty of chances.

Marouane Fellaini forced a magnificent save from goal-keeper Lukasz Fabianski as the visitors chased a route back into the contest, before Rashford's sublime front-post flick offered a lifeline.

But Arnautovic's fourth goal of the season signalled West Ham are beginning to progress under Manuel Pellegrini, while problems continue to mount for Manchester United and manager Mourinho

(Source: BBC)

## 'All the emotion of the World Cup left me completely drained': Modric

Real Madrid midfielder Luka Modric has revealed he was left exhausted after Croatia's stunning run to the World Cup final in the summer.

Modric, who was recently crowned FIFA Best Men's Player after his exploits in Russia, played an integral role as Croatia finished runners up to France at the tournament.

The 33-year-old was not given much respite when he returned to his club and has gradually been reintegrated into Real Madrid's starting line-up after being rested for their first two La Liga matches.

Modric admitted he was running on empty at the start of this season and still has some way to go on his path back to full fitness.

He told FIFPro: 'I had only three weeks of holidays. I think that was the least since I have been playing football.

'The first week we spent in celebration, first day in Zagreb and after in our cities. It was not easy to start again; after all these emotional moments you are drained completely.'

Despite the highs of the World Cup, Modric, who has started four La Liga games this season, has insisted his focus is now back with Real Madrid.

Modric's immediate attention will be on rivals Atletico Madrid, who Madrid face on Saturday. The midfielder acknowledges expectations will be high again this season, but he is ready to deliver more success as he continues to stride towards getting back to his best form.

He added: 'I needed time to get back to my better level. Now I feel better and better, and now I need more games to get back to my best. It was not easy.

'We were so eager to achieve something great with Croatia and when we did all these emotions came down on us and it's not easy to recover but now we are getting better.

'The season has started, we need to forget about it and concentrate on what is expected of us this season.'

(Source: Daily Mail)

## Signed by Bayern Munich at 18, playing in England's ninth tier at 25

Former Bayern Munich winger Dale Jennings has been given a chance to re-start his career by North West Counties League side Runcorn Town.

Jennings was only 18 when the German giants signed him from Tranmere Rovers for an undisclosed fee in 2011.

He played 36 times for Bayern's reserves but did not make a first-team appearance and returned to English football with Barnsley two years later.

Jennings, now 25, played his last professional game for MK Dons in 2015.

"He has lost his way somewhat but I have met with Dale and he is desperate to resurrect his career," manager Chris Herbert told the Runcorn website.

"He is still only 25 years old, and this next five years are going to be his best years in football.

"He wants to prove the doubters wrong and it was very refreshing to see and hear from someone who has been at one of the biggest clubs in the world at Bayern Munich."

Speaking to BBC Sport in 2014, Jennings blamed injury problems - including a hernia and torn knee ligaments - for his failure to succeed with Bayern.

"They're one of the biggest clubs in the world and I knew they were the right ones for me," he said

"People ask me if I have regrets about going and I say 'no'. I think I would have had more regrets if I had turned it down because you don't know what is going to happen."

Runcorn are currently third in the table, having won seven of their first eight games.

(Source: BBC)

# Ronaldo lawyers to sue Der Spiegel over 'illegal' report



Lawyers for Cristiano Ronaldo said on Friday they would sue German magazine Der Spiegel after it published "blatantly illegal" accusations by an American woman who alleges she was raped by the Portuguese soccer star in 2009.

Ronaldo's lawyer Christian Schertz said in a statement the report was "an inadmissible reporting of suspicions in the area of privacy", and that he would seek legal redress for his client from the magazine.

The statement was sent to Reuters by Ronaldo's agent Gestifute in response to a request for comment on the Der Spiegel story. Gestifute did not answer any specific questions about the content of the Der Spiegel report, which Reuters was unable to independently verify.

Ronaldo is one of the biggest names in world sport. He has been named player of the year five times and transferred to Juventus from Real Madrid this summer for 100 million euros. The Italian club declined to comment on the Der Spiegel report.

The magazine said the rape allegedly took place in June 2009 in a hotel room in Las Vegas, according to Leslie Mark Stovall, lawyer for the alleged victim, Kathryn Mayorga.

Ronaldo and Mayorga then reached an out-of-court agreement, according to Stovall as reported in the magazine.

It said, according to Stovall, that she had pledged never to speak of the accusation again and Ronaldo paid her \$375,000.

"Kathryn was sexually assaulted in June 2009 by an individual named Cristiano Ronaldo," Mayorga's lawyer, Leslie Mark Stovall, said in a video published online by Der Spiegel.

Reuters was not able to independently verify Mayorga's allegations.

Stovall did not immediately respond to email requests from Reuters for comment on the report and Mayorga was not available for comment in telephone calls to her home.

Her lawyer told Der Spiegel, however, that he had filed a civil complaint seeking to declare the non-disclosure agreement void.

"The purpose of this lawsuit is to hold Cristiano Ronaldo responsible within a civil court of law for the injuries he has caused Kathryn Mayorga and the consequences of those injuries," Stovall told Der Spiegel.

## 'Very sorry' Murray ends season after suffering ankle injury



Former world number one Andy Murray has brought his truncated season to a premature end, pulling out of the China Open in Beijing after suffering an ankle injury during his quarter-final defeat at the Shenzhen Open.

The 31-year-old Briton is battling to regain top form and fitness following hip surgery in January and said that he was "very sorry" to miss the China Open

The tournament -- which begins this weekend -- has been hit by several high-profile pull-outs with Rafael Nadal not involved because of injury, Roger Federer saving himself for Shanghai and Serena Williams all absent.

World number three Novak Djokovic is also not involved despite being offered a wildcard.

Murray, ranked 311 in the world, previously said that Beijing would be his final event this season and he is carefully managing his schedule following his operation in order to get the most out of his creaking body.

"I am very sorry to have to withdraw from the China Open," Murray said in a statement on Saturday.

"I was sincerely looking forward to re-

turning to Beijing, where I won the championship just two years ago.

"I injured my ankle in my match in Shenzhen last night and there is no way I can compete effectively next week."

Murray was beaten 6-4, 6-4 on Friday in Shenzhen by Spanish veteran Fernando Verdasco, although he defeated world number 11 David Goffin in the last 16 for the best win since his comeback in June.

Murray, a three-time Grand Slam title winner, will spend the winter working himself back to the sort of fitness levels that saw him capture nine titles in a stellar 2016 campaign, including his second Wimbledon crown and another Olympic gold.

"It was another three matches, which is positive," said Murray after defeat to Verdasco.

"But obviously I want to play better than that, I have higher ambitions than losing in the quarter-finals. I want to try to be better in these events.

"I need to spend more time on the practice court and the gym so that I'm more robust and physically in better shape."

Juan Martin del Potro, the top seed in Beijing, will play Albert Ramos in his opener.

(Source: AFP)

## Turkey cries foul after fourth failure to host Euro soccer



**ANKARA (Reuters)** — Turkish newspapers slammed UEFA's choice of Germany to host the Euro 2024 soccer tournament, saying the country's fourth failed bid was a stab in the back by Europe's soccer bosses.

UEFA's executive committee voted 12-4 in favour of Germany hosting the competition on Thursday, hours after President Tayyip Erdogan arrived in Berlin on a visit aimed at improving strained ties. Turkey was the only other bidder.

At a news conference with German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Friday, Erdogan left a question about the decision unanswered, but his Youth and Sports Minister Mehmet Kasapoglu said that the decision was "saddening for UEFA and the Euro 2024".

Turkey's newspapers were not as diplomatic, accusing UEFA of siding with racism in reference to Germany midfielder Mesut Ozil's resignation from the national team. Ozil said he had faced racism over his Turkish background - a charge denied by the football association.

"It's not fair, UEFA supported racism," said pro-government newspaper Yeni Safak.

Several newspapers also accused UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin of swaying

there were no answers. Nobody sued us in connection with earlier Ronaldo reports," he said in an email.

Mayorga told Der Spiegel she no longer felt bound by the non-disclosure agreement as she suffers from the consequences of the night nine years ago.

"I've had like these serious breakdowns," she told the magazine. "And again, blaming of the rape. And I blame him, and I blame myself for signing that thing."

(Source: Reuters)



the vote in favour of Germany. "We were shot in the back," said another pro-government newspaper, Vatan.

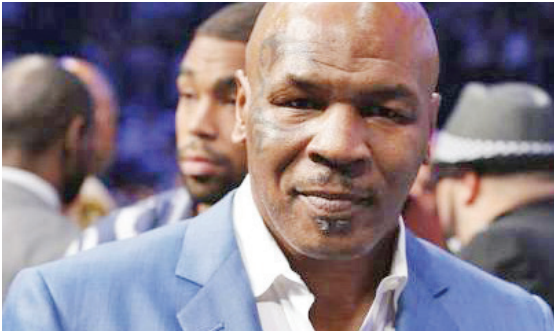
It said Yildirim Demiroren, an ally of Erdogan who is also the chairman of Turkey's Football Federation (TFF) and the Demiroren media group, lashed out at Ceferin after the decision.

"(He) stabbed us in the back," said Milliyet, owned by Demiroren's group. "The number one actor responsible for us losing at the table is Ceferin," it said.

The Hurriyet daily, also owned by Demiroren's group, said Ceferin had swayed support which stood at 9-5 in Turkey's favour on the eve of the vote by calling delegates to convince them to vote for Germany. "We lost it in one night," it said.

A UEFA report ahead of the decision had said that while there were several positive aspects to Turkey's bid, it also carried risks in areas such as human rights - which was featured for the first time as a one of the bid criteria. Turkey, which also failed with attempts to host the event in 2008, 2012 and 2016, still has a bid in to host the 2026 Winter Olympics in its northeastern province of Erzurum, after losing its bid to host the 2020 Olympics to Tokyo.

## 'Slumdog' Tyson laments lack of personalities in the game



Tyson said he enjoyed last year's boxing match between undefeated multi-division world champion Floyd Mayweather Jr and the Ultimate Fighting Championship's (UFC) McGregor. "I go to the UFC all the time," he said. "That was a good fight. I was entertained."

Tyson became the youngest world heavyweight champion in 1986 at the age of 20 and was the undisputed champion until a stunning loss to Buster Douglas in Tokyo in 1990.

He served three years of a six-year U.S. jail sentence after being convicted of rape in 1992 and returned to the

ring in 1995. He then added to his notoriety when he bit off a chunk of Evander Holyfield's ear in a bout two years later.

Tyson, who had his last fight in 2005, picked Briton Anthony Joshua as the best of the current crop of heavyweights.

The 28-year-old Joshua holds the WBA, IBF, WBO and IBO belts and has been in talks about a fight with WBC title holder Deontay Wilder which would give him a shot at becoming the undisputed heavyweight champion.

American Wilder will defend his title against Britain's former world champion Tyson Fury on Dec. 1.

"I think Joshua right now," said Tyson when asked to pick the top heavyweight.

"Tyson Fury hasn't fought in a while. I don't think he has had enough fights yet. He should have won more fights."

Tyson also said he planned to avoid Bollywood parties while in India and that he would rather visit Dharavi, one of Asia's largest slums.

"I'm a slumdog. I grew up in the slum," said Tyson, who was raised in Brooklyn, New York. "But I had that ambition and I wanted to get out of the slum and that's why I'm here talking to you guys now."

"There's nothing wrong with the slums. I think the poorer you are, the better boxer you are."

(Source: Eurosport)



# Louis van Gaal to replace Carlos Queiroz as Iran coach?



**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Former Bayern Munich and Manchester United coach Louis van Gaal will reportedly travel to Iran for Team Melli coaching job.

T-online.de reported that Louis van Gaal will have two job offers in Iran.

According to German media reports, he could succeed Carlos Queiroz as coach of the Iranian national football team. The Portuguese current deal expires in February.

The 67-year-old coach is also a possible candidate to take charge of Iranian football club Tractor Sazi Tabriz, currently the richest club in the first Iranian league.

The Tabriz-based football team have recently parted company with Welshman

John Toshack.

They have penned contract with Iran national football team captains Masoud Shojaei, Ashkan Dejagah and Ehsan Haji Safi but are sixth in the table, four points behind leader Padideh.

Louis van Gaal led the Netherlands to the third place at the 2014 World Cup in Brazil and was appointed as the new manager for Manchester United on a three-year contract after the World Cup.

The Dutchman started his coaching career at Ajax in 1991 and has already coached Barcelona, AZ and Bayern Munich.

On 17 January 2017 it was announced that Van Gaal had retired "for family reasons". He later said that it was only a sabbatical.

## I won't change my philosophy at Persepolis, insists Branko Ivankovic



**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Persepolis head coach Branko Ivankovic said he will not change his philosophy despite 'shortage of players'.

Persepolis will play Qatari giants Al Sadd in the first leg of the AFC Champions League semifinals on Tuesday.

"We are excited for the match against Al Sadd in the semifinals. Persepolis are the only team to reach semis for the second successive year. It shows we are progressing well," Ivankovic told reporters on the margins of the training.

"Persepolis face so many problems for the match against Al Sadd. Kamal Kamyabinia and Mohammad Ansari are suspended for this match and Hossein Mahini has sustained a knee injury in the match against Esteghlal. Despite all that,

we are very happy to be in this stage and I hope to book a place in the final match," the Croat added.

"Regarding shortage of players we face, a young player will certainly be in starting XI in the first leg and I completely trust him," Ivankovic went on to say.

Persepolis defeated Qatar's Al Duhail 3-2 on aggregate thanks to a 3-1 win in Tehran's Azadi Stadium. Al Sadd coach Jesualdo Ferreira has said they want to beat Persepolis in Doha with more than one goal.

"We will not change our philosophy in the match against Al Sadd. We will play attacking football and I have trust in my players. We are optimistic about this match," he added.

"Persepolis fans like to win the AFC Champions League and we will do our best to do that," Ivankovic concluded.

## Persepolis defender Mahini misses rest of season

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Persepolis defender Hossein Mahini was ruled out for the rest of the Iran Professional League (IPL) season through knee injury.

He injured the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee in Thursday's match against Esteghlal.

Mahini was hurt in the 37th minute and was forced to leave the field.

His absence will be a big blow for Persepolis since the Reds will have to play Qatari giants Al Sadd on Tuesday in Doha in the first leg of the AFC Champions League semi-finals.

As expected, Mahini's season is over after an MRI confirmed a torn ACL on Saturday.

He will undergo surgery next month and will return to the field in May.



## Damjanovic: Winning the ACL would be the perfect end to my career

Suwon Samsung Bluewings striker Dejan Damjanovic admits his sights are set on signing off his playing career as an AFC Champions League winner, and the tournament's all-time top goalscorer, ahead of Wednesday's semi-final against Kashima Antlers.

34 goals down, two more to go. Legendary forward Damjanovic's love-affair with Asia's premier club competition keeps enduring.

A runner-up in 2013 with FC Seoul and again a semi-finalist in 2016 with the capital city club, the prolific Montenegrin is now back in the business end of the tournament with Suwon.

Just a brace off the record of current AFC Champions League all-time top scorer Lee Dong-gook, whose side Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors were eliminated by Suwon in the quarter-finals, Damjanovic has one eye on that record but - naturally - both on lifting the title itself.



"34 now, two more I'm missing! It's my job to score goals, so if somebody needs to do something for the team, that's me or [Yeom] Ki-hun as the older more experienced players on the team," said the 37-year-old, who will lead the attack against Japan's Kashima in

the semi-final first leg on Wednesday.

"I know what kind of responsibility I have, so I am going to try to do it. Of course, if someone is in a better position than me I will pass to them! - but if some chance presents itself to me, I will try to achieve it.

"To score 30-plus goals in the AFC Champions League shows that I am doing my job."

"I am really motivated to win this competition. The AFC Champions League title is something missing from my career. I've won domestic team awards, individual awards, but this has slipped from my hands a few times.

"It's really keeping me hungry. I am more than 100% focused on these games and it's working so far.

"I hope to have a few more games in the competition because it's this hunger to succeed that's keeping me at that level."

"To play in the AFC Champions League for such a long time is not easy. Teams change, players change, but I've managed to be part of this tournament for a long time, which means I'm performing well still," he added.

"If it's possible to win the AFC Champions League and become the top scorer, that would really be the perfect end to my career."

(Source: the-afc)

## Hertha stun Bayern to go level on points in 1st

Hertha Berlin stunned Bundesliga leaders Bayern Munich 2-0 on Friday for their first win against them in nine years, snapping the champions' unbeaten run this season and moving the Berliners joint top in the league.

Hertha captain Vedad Ibisevic sent Manuel Neuer the wrong way to score with a 23rd minute penalty after Jerome Boateng had brought down Salomon Kalou.

Slovak forward Ondrej Duda continued his sensational form with his fifth goal of the season, firing in on the stroke of half-time.

Bayern, without injured Leon Goretzka, had their share of chances with Arjen Robben in the first half and James Rodriguez after the break but slumped to their first defeat of the season, three days after stumbling to a 1-1 draw against Augsburg.

First-year Bayern boss Niko Kovac, who was handed his first defeat since taking over as manager, brought on Thomas Muller



for Robben early in the second half. The Netherlands winger appeared to question the decision as he talked with his coach.

With 65 percent possession, 14 corners compared to Hertha's one and 24-6 shots on goal, Bayern will be asking themselves how they failed to get at least a point from the game.

"Our conversion rate is one reason but we also let in two goals," said Kovac. "Both could have been avoided.

(Source: ESPN)

## Tokyo 2020: Japan play home advantage

With less than two years to go until their home Paralympic Games at Tokyo 2020, the captain of the Japanese blind football team Ryo Kawamura has spoken of his team's winning aspirations.

Japan will line-up in 2020 to face some of the world's best teams, including defending and world champions Brazil who have won every title since the sport was introduced at Athens 2004.

But that does not scare Kawamura. "The goal as a team is the gold medal," he said. "My personal goal is to become one of the best players on the planet, shooting a goal against whichever opponents, and leading the team to the top of the world."

Kawamura's optimism and determination is clear to see. Japan have also been building the level of the team up in recent years. After not qualifying for the 2018 World Championships they do not intend to waste the opportunity of having an automatic spot at their home Paralympics.



"In terms of strategies, we're focusing more on getting the initiative in a match," Kawamura said. "And we're starting to check out our physical condition every day in detail via a database.

"It enables us not only to accumulate daily data on each one's condition, but also to share them with our medical team, so that we can get the full support from them until coming back to the pitch when we have an injury.

(Source: Paralympic.org)

## Petrochimi into FIBA Asia Champions Cup semis

**TASNIM** — Petrochimi of Iran defeated Liaoning Flying Leopards from China on Saturday to book a place at the 2018 FIBA Asia Champions Cup semi-final.

The Iranian team, who had defeated South Korean Seoul SK Knights (77-62) and Chinese Taipei's Pauian Archiland (96-63) in Pool A, defeated Liaoning Flying Leopards 108-69 and maintained its 100 percent record.

Pool B consists of Lebanese Sporting Al Riyadi Beirut, Alvark Tokyo from Japan, Meralco Bolts of the Philippines and Thailand's Mono Vampire.

Petrochimi will face the Pool B's second team on Monday.

The 2018 FIBA Asia Champions Cup is the 27th staging of the FIBA Asia Champions Cup, the international basketball club tournament of FIBA Asia.

The tournament, which was originally scheduled to be hosted by China, takes place in Nonthaburi, Thailand from 27 September to 2 October 2018.

## Iran unchanged at FIFA Women's Rankings

**IRNA** — Iran's women's national football team stayed unchanged in the latest FIFA rankings released on Friday.

Team Melli remained in 58th place in the rankings.

World champions the United States women's soccer team have held on to the top spot in the rankings.

England pushed France down to fourth in the table.

Australia climbed two spots to sixth on the back of victories over Brazil and Japan in the Tournament of Nations in the United States. Sweden also rose two places to ninth after its World Cup qualifying win against Denmark.

## Anthony Stokes bags FOUR goals in one game for Tractor Sazi

FORMER Celtic star Anthony Stokes chipped in with FOUR goals as Tractor Sazi ran riot on Friday.

Stokes, 30, has been in lethal form since his shock summer switch to Iran – scoring five times in seven games.

And the Hibs hero continued his fine goal streak by firing ex-Real Madrid boss John Toshack's side to a remarkable 6-0 win over Esteghlal Khuzestan FC.

The Republic of Ireland striker couldn't hide his delight as he shared the news on Instagram.

He wrote: "Great performance tonight! Delighted with the four goals, think that's the most I've ever scored in one game!"

Ex-Kilmarnock striker Lee Erwin and Rangers flop Harry Forrester also clinched lucrative moves to the Middle East this summer.

But the pair haven't enjoyed the same success with the Persian Gulf Pro League side, making just five appearances between them without finding the net.

After leaving Hibs in January, Stokes spent the rest of the season in Greece with Apollon Smyrnis.

He was wanted by both St Mirren and Shamrock Rovers, but signed a two-year deal with Tractor Sazi.

(Source: Scottish Sun)

## "I Love Aleppo" marathon kicks off

**IRNA** — On the occasion of World Tourism Day, "I Love Aleppo" marathon kicked off in the city of Aleppo on Friday.

The marathon is organized by Aleppo Tourism Directorate in cooperation with Aleppo Youth Volunteer Team with the participation of volunteers from several organizations, civil associations and martyrs' family members.

The marathon's participants took the course from Aleppo Citadel in front of Khan al-Wazir and headed towards the Umayyad Mosque to the roundabout of al-Sabaa Bahrat, and ended at Saadallah al-Jabri Square before "I Love Aleppo" monument.

Speaking to SANA, Tourism Minister Bishr Yazigi said that the citizens of Aleppo, in all their activities, have affirmed their love for their city, stressing that the role of the youth of Aleppo is to restore glamour to the Old City of Aleppo.

In turn, Head of Aleppo Tourism Directorate, Bassem Khatib, said that the marathon has kicked off from the Old Aleppo towards its modern parts where the participants chanted "Aleppo has Recovered".

The World Tourism Day is celebrated every 27 September around the world. Its purpose is to raise awareness about the role of tourism and to demonstrate how it affects social, cultural, political and economic values worldwide.

The theme for World Tourism Day 2018 is "Tourism and the Digital Transformation".

## Oman Olympic Committee hold finance course for officials

The Oman Olympic Committee (OOC) have held a specialised sports management course on finance for the organisation's members of staff.

The programme was held with the support of the International Olympic Committee (IOC)'s Olympic Solidarity initiative.

The OCC state 22 employees, who work in finance and sporting associations, participated in the course.

It was arranged by the OOC Board, as part of a series of sports management programmes being arranged by the organisation.

OCC secretary general Taha bin Sulaiman Al Kishry was among the key officials in attendance during the course.

He claimed the initiative was aimed at covering all areas of administration, finance and technical aspects to boost the productivity of bodies.

Dr Munzir bin Hilal Al Busaidi was among the presenters at the event. He offered support as the assistant professor and assistant dean for training and community services at Sultan Qaboos University.

He thanked the OOC for its continuing support for such courses.

Al Busaidi claimed this would help to boost the skills and increase the experience of employees.

(Source: Insidethegames.biz)



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IRIB unveils 130 docs of Iranian soldiers martyred in war against Daesh

**A R T** **TEHRAN** – Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) has unveiled 130 documentary films about those Iranian soldiers killed during war against Daesh in Iraq and Syria.



(Mehr/Shahabeddin Qayyumi/file photo)

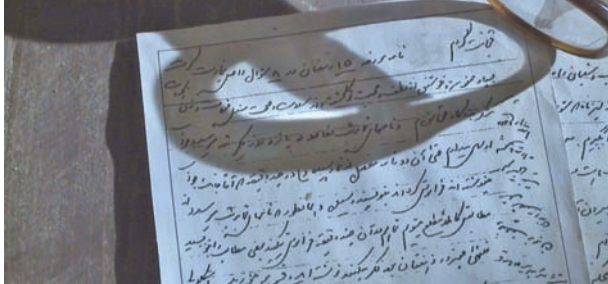
IRIB Managing Director Abolali Ali-Asgari, Veterans' Affairs Organization director Mohammad-Ali Shahidi and a number of cultural figures also attended the unveiling ceremony held in Tehran on Saturday.

The documentary films have been produced at 33 IRIB offices across the country, and each documentary is dedicated to one soldier.

The documentaries will be aired gradually on various channels of IRIB, which plans to a new collection of documentaries about other Iranian soldiers that were killed in Syria and Iraq, IRIB deputy director Ali Darabi said.

Rome festival to screen doc on wife of Imam Khomeini

**A R T** **TEHRAN** – “Iran’s Lady Qods”, a documentary by Iranian filmmaker Mostafa Razzaq-Karimi about Khadijeh Saqafi, the wife of Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic, will be screened at the Asiatica Film Festival in Rome.



A scene from “Iran’s Lady Qods” by Mostafa Razzaq-Karimi.

The festival is scheduled to be held in the Italian capital from October 4 to 10, Iran’s Documentary and Experimental Film Center, which is the producer of the documentary, announced on Saturday.

“Iran’s Lady Qods” was named best documentary in the national competition the 11th Cinema Verite, Iran’s major international festival of documentary cinema, in December 2017.

NEWS IN BRIEF



Iranian foundation, Kazakh union sign MOU on literary cooperation

**C U L T U R E** **TEHRAN** – The Bidel Dehlavi Foundation in Iran and the Union of Writers of Kazakhstan have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to enhance literary cooperation.

The MOU was inked by Bidel director Hadi Saeidi Kiasari and the union’s director Ulykbek Yesdaulet during the Eurasian Forum – the International Conference on Quality Assurance in Education, held in Astana on September 20 and 21.

Programs to introduce Persian and Kazakh literature to the literary figures of both countries have also been planned in the MOU.

CBS faces New York probe tied to ex-CEO Leslie Moonves

**NEW YORK (Reuters)** — CBS Corp is facing probes by both New York city and state officials tied to assault and harassment accusations of its ex-chief executive Leslie Moonves, the company revealed in a regulatory filing on Friday evening.

The disclosure of the probes comes just hours after the new CBS board of directors met for the first time in New York.

The broadcast and media company received subpoenas from the New York County District Attorney’s Office and the New York City Commission on Human Rights related to the allegations against Moonves, CBS News and cultural issues in the company, according to a Securities and Exchange Commission filing bit.ly/2OjogOY.

“Alphabet” picked as best animation at New York festival

**A R T** **TEHRAN** – Iranian director Kianush Abedi’s “Alphabet” has been selected as best animated movie at the Revolution Me Film Festival in the United States, the organizers have announced.

The story in “Alphabet” is set in a town located in nowhere land. It has been years since the people of this town have forgotten the alphabet of life. They have no sight, hearing or speech left... but the words are impatiently waiting to be sung again.

“Pure White” by Sven Windszus, “Wild Woman” by Vanessa Sweet and “Compartments” by Daniella Koffler and Uli Seis were also nominated for the award.

“Alphabet” was also nominated in the Best Story and Best Special Effects categories.

The award for Best Story went to “Push” by Australian director Gabrielle Kempe, and “Caronte” by Luis Tinoco won the award for Best Special Effects.

“Oma” by Daniella Rabbani from the U.S. received the award for best short film, and “Robin” by Toby Schmutzler and Kevin Schmutzler was named best feature film.

“The Revolution Me Film Festival wants the new emerging filmmakers to come together and change the world,” wrote the organizers of the event that took place in New York from September 21 to 23.



“Alphabet” by director Kianush Abedi.

“Pig” named best at Fifigrot Film Festival

**A R T** **TEHRAN** – “Pig” by Iranian filmmaker Mani Haqiqi has won the Golden Amphora (Amphore D’or) at the 7th Fifigrot Film Festival, which took place in the French city of Toulouse last week, the organizers announced.

The film is about Hassan, a filmmaker who has not been able to make any films recently, but his popular starlet can’t wait any longer and wants to leave and work with another director. His wife no longer loves him. His daughter has grown up and feels independent. His elderly mother is suffering from Alzheimer’s disease. A disturbingly beautiful woman tracks him everywhere he goes and wants him to give her a role in his films.

Worse yet, a murderer is killing directors of



“Pig” by Mani Haqiqi.

Iranian cinema in the city, but he has ignored Hassan. Now he is despondent: isn’t he the most important filmmaker of the city? Why then doesn’t the murderer care about him? The situation becomes more intolerable when Hassan is accused as the prime suspect for the murder cases on the social networks. Now he is forced to concoct a clever plan to rebuild his destroyed reputation.

The movie stars Hassan Majuni, Leila Hatami, Leili Rashidi, Parinaz Izadyar and Ali Baqeri.

The People’s Amphore at the Fifigrot Film Festival was presented to “The Invisibles” by Louis-Julien Petit from France, and the Amphorette was awarded to the short film “Petite Avarie” by Léo Hardt and Manon Alirol from France.

The festival ran from September 14 to 23.

“Empty View” wins awards at foreign festivals

**A R T** **TEHRAN** – “Empty View” by Ali Zare Qanatnoi from Iran has won two awards at two international festivals in Canada and India.

The movie was named best animation at the Best Short Fest in the Canadian city of Ontario, the organizers announced on September 23.

“Empty View” also won the Best Message award at the Great Message International Film Festival held in the Indian city of Pune last week.

The film is about a mother who keeps a look out

for her son to return home from war. She knits him a pair of gloves remembering how her son rubbed his cold hands together on the wintry morning he left. The war goes on; the mother waits. She unravels the gloves and knits them over and over again. When their small home is bombed, the gloves burn into ashes. Mother sits atop the rubble, plucks her white hair one by one and knits the gloves with her hair. Finally spring arrives and the war ends. The mother hears the sound of military boots nearing. She gathers all the strength left in her and walks down the stairs with anticipation.



“Empty View” by Ali Zare Qanatnoi.

Led Zeppelin must face new trial claiming it stole “Stairway” riff

**LOS ANGELES (Reuters)** — Led Zeppelin was ordered by a U.S. appeals court to face a new trial over whether it stole the opening guitar riff for its 1971 anthem “Stairway to Heaven” from an obscure instrumental written four years earlier.

In a 3-0 decision on Friday, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco threw out a June 2016 verdict in the rock band’s favor, citing a series of errors by the trial judge.

The decision revives one of the music industry’s most closely-watched copyright cases, potentially exposing Led Zeppelin lead singer Robert Plant and guitarist Jimmy Page to millions of dollars of damages.

Lawyers for the defendants had no immediate comment.

The lawsuit had been filed by Michael Skidmore, a trustee for the songs of Randy Wolfe, a guitarist for the band Spirit.

Skidmore accused Plant, 70, and Page, 74, of stealing the iconic opening to “Stairway” from the Spirit song “Taurus.”

He said the songs had similar chord progressions, and that Page may have written “Stairway” after hearing “Taurus” while Led Zeppelin and Spirit were touring together.

Wolfe, who performed as Randy California, had complained in interviews about the songs’ similarities, but did not sue prior to his death by drowning in 1997.

Jurors determined that while Plant and Page, who testified at the trial, had access to “Taurus”, the song’s riff was not intrinsically similar to the opening of “Stairway.”

But in Friday’s decision, Circuit Judge Richard Paez said the trial judge erred in failing to instruct jurors that the trustee could prevail if Wolfe had created a “sufficiently original combination” of



Lead singer Robert Plant (L) and guitarist Jimmy Page of British rock band Led Zeppelin are seen October 9, 2012 and July 21, 2015 in New York and Toronto in this combination file photo. (Reuters/Carlo Allegri, Hans Deryk)

otherwise unprotectable music elements.

Paez also said the judge erred in instructing jurors about the copyrighting of music elements in the public domain, and should have let them listen to “Taurus” while Page testified, to assess his demeanor and help determine whether he had access.

“We do not dispute that Led Zeppelin is one of the greatest bands in history, but their plagiarism indelibly stains their legacy,” Skidmore’s lawyer Francis Malofiy said in an email.

“Led Zeppelin obviously copied ‘Taurus’ by Randy California, a musician they knew well,” he added.

The case was returned to U.S. District Judge Gary Klausner in Los Angeles.

Friday’s decision followed a March 21 copyright ruling by another 9th Circuit panel upholding a \$5.3 million judgment to Marvin Gaye’s children. They accused Robin Thicke and Pharrell Williams of creating the 2013 smash “Blurred Lines” by copying Gaye’s 1977 song “Got to Give It Up.”

Aging Japan: Manga comics turn gray - but spirited - along with readers

**TOKYO (Reuters)** — Japan’s graying population is changing the character of its beloved manga comics, spawning a new genre in which the elderly aren’t pitiable oldsters but protagonists making discoveries and finding friends.

Demand for stories focused on the elderly has grown alongside their audience: 27.7 percent of Japanese are older than 65, up from 21.5 percent just a decade ago.

Readership cuts across society, the publishers say, from retirees looking for plots they identify with to younger Japanese watching their nation age, with growing concern about their later years.

“Different social problems and concerns rise up as opposed to when society is centered around young people, and manga that show the reality of an aging society are in demand from both readers and writers,” said Kaoru Endo, a sociology professor at Tokyo’s Gakushuin University.

Manga, both print and digital, pulled in 430 billion yen (\$3.81 billion) in 2017, according to the Research Institute for Publications. They’re ubiquitous in daily life, showing up everywhere from crowded subways to coffee shops and waiting rooms.

Although no public data exists on the market share for senior-focused manga, the genre is clearly growing. Eight of the 11 most popular such works, according to industry insiders, started publication after 2014. Three were in 2017 and 2018.

“The over-60 generation - in whose youth manga gained wide acceptance - have loved manga since they were kids,” Endo said.

Yuki Ozawa, illustrator of “Sanju Mariko”, about an 80-year-old widow who sneaks out of her crowded family home to live on her own and write, thinks escapism plays a big role too.

“When you watch news about aging,



Yuki Ozawa, the comic book author of “OSanju Mariko,O” poses with her comic book during an interview with Reuters in Tokyo, Japan August 16, 2018. (Reuters/Kim Kyung-Hoon)

there are so many dark, serious topics. It makes people anxious,” she told Reuters.

“There are also a lot of people who are single, who probably will never marry and always live alone, and when they’re feeling gloomy they read Mariko and feel as if they’ve seen a ray of light,” she said.

Virtually no topic has escaped manga since the medium took off about 50 years ago. There have even been manga on the 2011 earthquake and tsunami, including the Fukushima meltdown.

Elderly characters, though, were mostly peripheral: a loving grandma, somebody needing nursing care, a venerable sage.

Manga that did star the elderly, like an early ‘90s series about an aged heavy metal band, didn’t always treat them as normal people.

“Seniors were there, but with an element of surprise. He might be an old man but he’s really smart, a weird superhero,” said Natsuki Nagata, an assistant sociology professor at Hyogo University of Teacher Education in the western city of Kobe. “It was if they were a different species.”