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Rial recovers unexpectedly

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© Tehran Times / Mohammad Moheimeini

People in Tehran gather in front of foreign exchange shops to trade dollar, euro and other foreign currencies for rial as the national currency starts partially regaining value.

Iran to construct 540MW power plant in Syria

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iranian Mapna Group Company signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Syrian Public Establishment of Electricity for Generation (PEEG) on Tuesday for constructing a 540 megawatt (MW) combined cycle power plant in Syrian port city of Latakia, IRNA reported. The MOU was signed by PEEG's Managing Director Mahmoud Ramadan and MAPNA Group's Managing Director Abbas

Aliabadi on the sidelines of a meeting between Iran's Minister of Energy Reza Ardakanian and Syrian Minister of Electricity Mohammad Zuheir Kharboutli in Tehran. Based on the MOU, the €411-million project will start in the beginning of 2019. The first gas unit of the power plant is expected to be completed in 15 months and the second one will be built in two years. The power plant's feedstock will be supplied from Syria's gas fields through a 70-kilometer pipeline.

Guardian: Saudi funds TV that gave airtime to Ahvaz attack supporter

'A source close to Saudi crown prince says Iran International's money come from the Saudi royal court, estimated to be about \$250m.'

In a report on Tuesday, The Guardian, quoting a source, said the UK-based Iran International TV that gave airtime to a supporter of the terrorist attack in Ahvaz on September 22, is funded by the Saudi royal court.

Following is the text of the report headlined "Ofcom investigates TV network over interview praising attack in Iran": Ofcom is investigating a UK-based Saudi-linked television network after it gave airtime to the spokesman for an extremist separatist group who praised last month's terrorist attack in the Iranian city of Ahvaz, which killed at least 24 people, including children. **→2**

Iranian charity top scorer in global NGO Benchmark ranking

HEALTH **TEHRAN** — MAHAK, a charity society dedicated to treating pediatric cancer in Iran, has become the top scorer in the global SGS NGO Benchmark practice with a score of 97.5% ranking first among 328 NGOs worldwide. SGS (formerly Société Générale de Surveillance which is French for General Society of Surveillance) is a multinational

company headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland which provides inspection, verification, testing and certification services. It has more than 95,000 employees and operates over 2,400 offices and laboratories worldwide. In response to the demand for an independent, globally relevant standard for assessing the accountability of an NGO, SGS has developed the NGO Benchmark. **→9**



ARTICLE
Hanif Ghaffari
Political analyst

From Obama to Al Gore: The Democrats are taking stance against Trump

Overcoming the current president of the United States has turned to the main goal of the Democrats in the United States. American Democrats who have been isolated in the last two years, and lost the White House, the House of Representatives, the Senate, and many governorates, are now planning to win the Congress elections. On the other hand, the public dissatisfaction raised over the performance of the U.S. President has given hope to the Democrats for winning the midterm elections.

The president of the United States, speaking among his proponents, has warned about the Democrats' victory in the U.S. midterm elections.

Trump has explicitly stated that if Democrats win the elections, many of his decisions will be destroyed. The U.S. Democrats believe that if they fail in midterm elections, they won't be able to return to power at least until 2024. Therefore, the Democrats will do their best to succeed in the upcoming elections.

As we get closer to the Congress elections in November, we will see an increase in the verbal and political attacks of Democrats against Trump and his companions at the White House. Some analysts believe that if the Republicans fail in the mid-term elections, we'll see a broad gap formed between the traditional Republicans and the Trump government.

This gap exists at the moment, but the leaders of the Republican Party and its affiliated media avoid from fully disclosing it. However, it seems that if the Republicans lose the U.S. Congress, it will be difficult for the Republican leaders to continue this game! In this case, Trump will be the main accuser of this defeat. The Democrats know well that the Republican defeat in the midterm elections will intensify the disagreement between the party members, and thus will lead to the possible defeat of Trump in the next presidential elections. **→7**

Resolving Qatar crisis is not easy: Murphy

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
By Fatemeh Mohammadipour

TEHRAN — Richard W. Murphy, the former U.S. ambassador to Syria and Saudi Arabia, says "Washington has strong interests in keeping good relations both with Saudi Arabia and Qatar."

Murphy says "Its offer to mediate this dispute has thus far had no positive response from Saudi Arabia or the UAE. It is important to continue to work to help resolve this crisis."

Following is the text of the interview:

■ Camp David meeting is scheduled to be held this autumn in the United States to resolve the crisis in Qatar. Can this American initiative

lead to solving this crisis?

A: One can only hope that the U.S. Invitation to the [P]GCC members will help resolve the crisis over Qatar but it is impossible to predict whether they will all even agree to accept the U.S. invitation to meet.

■ Some believe the reason that United States is at the head of the initiative to solve the crisis in Qatar is Showing Washington's dissatisfaction with Riyadh to solve regional problems. What do you think?

A: Washington has strong interests in keeping good relations both with Saudi Arabia and Qatar. Its offer to mediate this dispute has thus far had no positive response from Saudi Arabia or the UAE. It is important to continue to work

to help resolve this crisis.

■ According to the terms of Saudi Arabia and its allies, Is Qatar ready to give points to the opposite side? If so, what areas may there be a compromise?

A: I have no information on what Qatar may be willing to concede to the Saudi/UAE demands. Predictably Qatar will not totally meet their stated demands. Qatar has a strong interest in good economic relations with Iran which the other [P]GCC members do not share.

■ According to U.S. relations with Saudi Arabia and Qatar, how can Washington resolve the crisis to keep the two sides happy?

A: It is too early to predict the course of future talks between the parties.

'The U.S. strategy is to provoke disappointment through economic hardship'

By Maryam Khormaei

TEHRAN — In an exclusive interview, Mr. Alexis Bandrich Vega Cuban ambassador to Iran discussed a host of issues with Tehran Times and Mehr News correspondent including the US policy towards Cuba, the reason behind the popularity and even recent failure of some socialist governments as well as Tehran- Havana bilateral relations.

■ As the interview focuses mainly on the international relations of Cuba, before going further, I want you to give our readers a better perspective on the regional characteristics of Latin America and the position of Cuba in the region.

A: Latin America refers to the regions of America where Latin languages are spoken, specifically Spanish, French and Portuguese.

The region comprises more than 21 million km2 of surface area (13.5% of the planet's surface), and some 569 million inhabitants. It has a great geographical and biological diversity, practically all climates. It has some of the largest rivers in the world and important food, energy and mineral resources, including its oil, copper, lithium and silver deposits.

Cuba is an archipelago of the Caribbean Sea. Due to its geographical position at the entrance to the Gulf of Mexico, since colonial times it has been known as "The key of the Gulf". It is the largest island in the Greater Antilles. It has an area of almost 110 thousand km2 and 11.2 million inhabitants.

Cuba maintains relations with 197 countries and embassies in 124. Of its 120 ambassadors,

32% are women. It also has 140 consular offices and 158 Cuban Associations in 78 countries. In Cuba there are 113 foreign Embassies.

■ Under Trump's administration, it is forbidden to do business with a long list of entities that allegedly have links with Cuban military, intelligence or security services. Meanwhile, the White House is relaxing some restrictions on exports to private Cuban businesses and embassies are still open, however vacant. What is behind this double standard approach?

A: I do not think there is a double standard. There is only one, clearly defined by the US government 58 years ago, and it maintains an absolute validity, it seemed to be said five minutes ago, I quote: "The majority of Cubans support Castro. There is no effective political opposition." **→7**



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Intl. Resistance Film Festival to screen 35 Iranian shorts

By Manijeh Rezapoor

TEHRAN — A lineup of 35 Iranian shorts has been selected to compete in the 15th International Resistance Film Festival (IRFF).

Among the films are "Until Tomorrow" by Ali Tavakkoli, "Advertisement" by Mohammad-Sadeq Esmaeili, "Thursday" and "Fifth House", both by Rezvaneh Fat'hi, "Daa" by Farshad Salehi, "It Rains Slowly" by Saeid Nejati, "Afternoon" by Amir-Abbas Rabiei), and "Saad's Olive Tree" by Ahmad Zayeri, the director of the festival, Mohammad Khazaei, said in a press conference in Tehran on Tuesday. **→16**



ARTICLE
Martin Love
Political analyst from North Carolina

Banality and crudeness on display in Washington

The latest turn in attention in the U.S. in recent days has been somewhat away from imperial pretensions and overreach, sanctions on other countries, threats of attacks on Syria (and Iran) and any other country, including even Venezuela, that fails to bow to U.S. demands, whatever they may be. Long gone are the days (as when George W. Bush launched the so-called "War on Terror" to believing citizens), when the U.S. government could claim to be spreading (militarily, which is an oxymoron) some sort of enlightened "democracy" across various flashpoints and countries, particularly in Asia.

No one, not even most Americans, believe that any longer, believing instead that what the government has been about is the maintenance of the privileges and power of an entrenched oligarchy of politicians and Wall Street elites and military brass who for too long have been catering to themselves at the expense of most everyone else in the U.S. and a crumbling U.S. infrastructure.

The attention for the moment is on the excruciating wrangling in Washington and across the country over the nomination by Donald Trump of one Brett Kavanaugh, 53, a conservative judge, to the U.S. Supreme Court. Several women have charged him with crude, traumatic sexual advances when he was a younger man, actions not befitting anyone who is entitled to gain a lifetime appointment to what was at least formerly considered the most august deliberative court anywhere.

And if the U.S. Senate does vote later this week, after some albeit restricted FBI probing of the charges, to install Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court, the primary concern is what this entirely banal character might do to the future autonomy of women, over half the U.S. population, to control (to use the words of one widely respected scholar and law professor of the U.S. Constitution, Garrett Epps, who happens to be the former husband of a sister of mine, "their own reproduction, their healthcare, their contraception, their legal protection at work against discrimination and harassment". **→13**

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



40 Daeshis killed in Iran's missile attack: general

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Forty Daesh (ISIL) terrorists were killed in Iran's Monday missile attack on the terrorist group's positions in Syria, commander of the IRGC aerospace division said on Tuesday.

Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh said the dead bodies of Daesh members are still under piles of rubble but further information will be announced soon, Mehr reported.

He also hailed the IRGC's Quds Force for sharing intelligence on Daesh locations which led to a "successful operation".

On Monday, the IRGC rained surface-to surface ballistic missiles on the positions of Daesh in eastern Syria which, along with the al-Ahwazia terror group, had taken responsibility for the deadly September 22 terrorist attack in Ahvaz.



Guardian Council set to review accession to Palermo Convention

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Abbasali Kadkhodaei, spokesman of the Guardian Council, has said that that the council is set to review the bills on Iran's accession to the Palermo Convention and amending the anti-money laundering law on Wednesday.

In a tweet on Tuesday, Kadkhodaei also called on experts to voice their opinion to the council on the issue's religious and constitutional aspects.

Last week, Mohsen Rezaee, secretary of the Expediency Council, said the parliament and the Expediency Council had been holding discussions regarding the government-proposed bills on money laundering and Palermo Convention.



Some handed to courts over Ahvaz terror attack

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Behrouz Nemati, spokesman for the parliament presiding board, said on Tuesday that a number of individuals have been arrested and handed to the courts over the deadly terrorist attack on a military parade southwestern city of Ahvaz.

Nemati said some reports were presented to the parliament by some security officials at the closed session of the parliament earlier in the day, IRNA reported.

The lawmaker also said the respective officials declared that undoubtedly the incident occurred partly due to the inaction of those in charge, and some of them have been referred to the courts.



All Ground Force machineries overhauled

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — All of the Army Ground Force's machineries have been overhauled, using domestic parts, the force's chief Kiomars Heidari has said.

Stressing the importance of producing parts for military equipment and machinery, Heidari said his forces have reached a milestone in producing arms and such progress must continue, Mehr reported on Tuesday.

"The priority of the Army's tank-producing factories is achieving self-sufficiency in producing and fixing necessary parts of the Ground Force's tanks," the brigadier general stated, adding that Iranian experts have taken important steps in reaching that end.



Austria says feels special responsibility for JCPOA

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Austrian Foreign Minister Karin Kneissl has said the Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), is an important deal for the security of the region.

Austria feels a special responsibility for Iran nuclear deal since the agreement was signed in Vienna, IRNA quoted Kneissl as saying.

She also pointed to her bilateral meeting with Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on the sidelines of UN General Assembly, saying constructive talks were held with the Iranian side on the implementation of the JCPOA.



'Missile attack on Daesh shows Iran's might'

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Iran's missile attack on Daesh positions in response to the Ahvaz attack showed the country's military might in the fight against terrorism, President of Russia's Academy for Geopolitical Problems Leonid Ivashov said on Tuesday.

Speaking to IRNA, Ivashov, who is a retired colonel general, said Iran is a "powerful player" that can "change the regional and international equations."

Calling Iran's strategy to block the way to terrorists in the Middle East "a model to follow", the Russian general blasted the role of some countries in the region for supporting terrorist groups.

We took you seriously, Shamkhani tells Bolton after missile attack

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — "We did take you seriously. This Hajizadeh [the IRGC Airspace commander] here took you seriously when he landed missiles three miles away from you," Iranian Supreme National Security Council Secretary Ali Shamkhani said on Tuesday, addressing Trump's national security advisor John Bolton.

Addressing a veterans' conference in Tehran, Shamkhani was referring to the IRGC's missile attacks on Daesh positions in Syria two nights earlier.

A few days earlier, Bolton had warned Iran over any move against its forces in Syria. "I might imagine they would take me seriously when I assure them today that if you cross us, our allies or our partners, if you harm our citizens, if you continue to lie, cheat and deceive. Yes, there will



indeed be hell to pay," Bolton had said.

"He is bullying, that guy with mustaches, Bolton. Yes, 'Boloton'. It would be better to say 'Bulletin', because he talks, saying 'Take us seriously,'" Shamkhani said sarcastically.

He went on to ask: "What is Daesh doing just three miles away from you? You [to audience] are all military men. Is it possible that two opposing groups be as close as 3 miles without a fight?"

"We defeated America with the Revolution. We defeated America by defeating Saddam. By pursuing the revolution over 40 years we defeated America. Today the most evil Americans are ruling America. This is an opportunity for us to defeat this last-generation, evil American and turn ourselves into an unrivaled power, and that is possible."

Syrian FM praises Iran's missile strike on Daesh positions

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Muallem has praised Iran's missile attack on the positions of Daesh in Syria.

In an interview with Al Mayadeen aired on Tuesday, he also said that Iran's presence in Syria is legal.

On Monday, Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps fired six surface-to surface ballistic missiles on Daesh in eastern Syria. The missiles were fired at 02:00 (22:30 GMT on Sunday). They were launched from Kermanshah, western Iran.

The attack was a revenge for the terrorist attack in southwestern Iran which was claimed by both Daesh and the separatist al-Ahwazia terror group.

The missiles, flew over central Iraq, targeted the masterminds of Daesh on the eastern banks of the Euphrates north of Albu Kamal in eastern Syria. The district is one of last remaining positions of Daesh.

It is estimated that there were between 1,500 and 2,000 militants in the area.

On September 22, four gunmen attacked



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

The separatist al-Ahwazia group issued a report giving details about one of the attackers. Daesh also took responsibility for the shooting and published a video showing three of the gunmen being driven to the military parade in a car.

Jahangiri says Iran to pass the difficult time proudly

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri said on Tuesday that Iran will pass the current difficult time proudly and apologized to people for economic hardship.

"We know that the country's situation is difficult and people are under pressure and are going through difficulties. If the intellectuals, political figures and the nation enter (the scene) actively, we will pass this hard time proudly in a shortest period of time," he said during a ceremony.

Commodity prices have risen and the national currency has lost its value since the Trump administration has withdrawn from the nuclear deal and reimposed sanctions on Iran.

Jahangiri said the current situation does not mean that the country has reached a "deadlock".

The country can pass the current difficult situation through planning, he said.

The vice president said that the U.S. has imposed economic and political pressure



against Iran. He added that U.S. President Donald Trump sought to turn the public opinion against Iran in his speech at the UN General Assembly summit last week, however, the result was the other way around.

He added that in his speech at the UNAG on September 25, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani proved that Iran is a "logical" and "powerful" country.

Amano rejects Netanyahu claims about Iran

“IAEA won’t take intel at face value”

The UN nuclear watchdog has said its independence is paramount and it does not take intelligence presented to it at face value, in an apparent response to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's claims of a "secret atomic warehouse" in Iran.

Netanyahu - who opposes the nuclear deal between Iran and major powers that the International Atomic Energy Agency is policing - made the claim in a speech to the United Nations General Assembly last week. He urged the IAEA to visit the site in Tehran. A U.S. State Department official later seconded that call.

"The agency sends inspectors to sites and locations only

when needed. The agency uses all safeguards relevant to information available to it but it does not take any information at face value," IAEA chief Yukiya Amano said in a statement on Tuesday, Reuters reported.

Amano's statement made no specific reference to Israel but it is his first public pronouncement since Netanyahu's speech. He said the IAEA has carried out so-called complementary access inspections, which are often at short notice, at all locations in Iran it has needed to visit.

"All information obtained, including from third parties, is subject to rigorous review and assessed together with other available information to arrive at an

independent assessment based on the agency's own expertise," Amano said.

"In order to maintain credibility, the agency's independence in relation to the implementation of verification activities is of paramount importance," he added.

"As I stated in my reports to the IAEA Board of Governors, evaluations regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities for Iran remain ongoing," Amano said.

"The Agency's work related to nuclear verification is and must always be impartial, factual, and professional," he further stressed.

Iran's logic will win over U.S. bullying: Salehi

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Ali Akbar Salehi, director of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), said on Tuesday that Iran has the upper hand in regional developments.

"Fortunately, we have shown so far that we advance our policies by vigilance and wisdom and we have the upper hand in the regional equations," he said during a ceremony.

He added, "Rouhani's trip to New York proved that Iran negotiates and makes agreements, but the U.S. has violated all its obligations."

He said that at the 73th UN General Assembly Iran was at the center of attention and the U.S. was isolated.

"At the end, Iran's power of logic will overcome the U.S. bullying," he noted.

U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew Washington from the 2015 nuclear deal in May.

During his speech at the 73th UN General Assembly summit, Iranian President



Hassan Rouhani called the U.S. withdrawal "unilateral" and "illegal".

"We concur that, at the end of the day, there is no better way but dialogue. However, dialogue is two-way: it should be based on equality, justice, and human integrity and honor, and conducted in accordance with the rules and norms of international law," Rouhani stated.

ICJ to announce ruling on Iran's complaint against U.S. sanctions today

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — The International Court of Justice (ICJ) plans to announce its ruling on Iran's complaint against the U.S. sanctions today.

The ICJ held a hearing in August on Iran's lawsuit against the U.S. over its move in re-imposing unilateral sanctions.

On July 16, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said Iran had filed a complaint at the ICJ against the U.S. for reintroducing sanctions.

"Today Iran filed a complaint @ CIJ_ICJ to hold U.S. accountable for its unlawful re-imposition of unilateral sanctions. Iran is committed to the rule of law in the face of U.S. contempt for diplomacy & legal obligations. It's imperative to counter its habit of violating int'l law," Zarif tweeted.

U.S. President Donald Trump announced Washington's exit from the 2015 nuclear deal on May 8 and reimposed sanctions. The first batch of sanctions



snapped back on August 6 and the second batch will be returned on November 4.

Iran and the U.S. signed the Treaty of Amity in 1955 which is still valid according to international law. The treaty consists of an introduction and twenty-three articles and emphasizes encouraging mutual trade and investments.

Guardian: Saudi royal court funds TV that gave airtime to Ahvaz attack supporter

I → The investigation by the media watchdog highlights the growing influence of Saudi-linked stations operating from London, which is increasingly becoming a key media battle ground for the proxy wars in the Middle East.

Iran International TV, based in Chiswick, west London, was the first Farsi language media organisation to interview Yacoub Hor al-Tostari, a spokesman for the Arab Struggle Movement for the Liberation of Ahvaz, after the 22 September attack.

Tostari said the National Resistance of Ahvaz, an umbrella group linked to the Struggle Movement, had carried out the attack, and praised the killings, later condemned by the UN Security Council as a "heinous and cowardly terrorist attack", which he said had hit "legitimate" military targets.

Told that civilians were among the dead, he said: "What was targeted was the viewing platform [of the military parade] where officials stood. Ordinary people were not on that platform." He added: "I insist that armed resistance is part of our resistance."

Tostari's group later backpedalled on the claim. The Ahvaz attack has also been claimed by ISIS.

Ofcom confirmed it was investigating the interview. "We are assessing this news programme as a priority against our broadcasting rules," a spokesperson said. It has not opened a formal investigation.

Iran's ambassador to the UK, Hamid Baeidinejad, tweeted that the embassy had filed a complaint.

Iran International is one of an increasing number of London-based television stations backed by Middle East

interests that are trying to influence audiences thousands of miles away. Questions have been raised over the network's funding and its links to Saudi Arabia, Tehran's arch-enemy. Many Iranians compared the interview to giving airtime to ISIS after a terrorist attack in the West.

Rob Beynon, the acting head of the channel, stood by the decision to broadcast the interview and said it had referred to the Ahvaz shooting as a "terrorist attack".

"We and the BBC [Persian] and Radio Farda interviewed the same person during that day and we've already said that it was done because we wanted to find out the background to it," he told the Guardian. "There isn't a ban on interviewing that person as far as I am aware."

He said his network would comply with Ofcom but said he did not think the interview with Tostari had broken the rules since he said the spokesman did not incite violence.

"[Tostari] explained his reasons as he saw them and he was challenged by the presenter," he said. "It doesn't mean that we agree with him." **→3**

'A source close to Saudi crown prince says Iran International's money come from the Saudi royal court, estimated to be about \$250m.'

Lebanon puts on a tour of alleged Hezbollah missile sites to prove Israel wrong

Lebanon will confront any Israeli aggression: Aoun

Lebanon's foreign minister escorted dozens of foreign ambassadors and diplomats to visit a soccer field, a warehouse and a golf course adjoining Beirut's airport Monday to counter allegations by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that Hezbollah has stored precision guided missiles at the sites.

No evidence of missiles or their production was seen, Washington Post reported.

Meanwhile, Lebanese President Michel Aoun vowed Tuesday to confront any Israeli aggression against the Arab country.

"Allegations by [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu are baseless," Aoun said in a statement issued following his meeting with Austrian Foreign Minister Karin Kneissl in Beirut.

"[The allegations] conceal a new Israeli threat to the Lebanese sovereignty and our international airport," he added.

Last week, Netanyahu -- addressing the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly -- claimed that Lebanese group Hezbollah was using "hidden missile sites" near Rafik Hariri International Airport in Beirut.

The Lebanese president called on Austria and the international community "to be aware of Israel's plans towards his country".

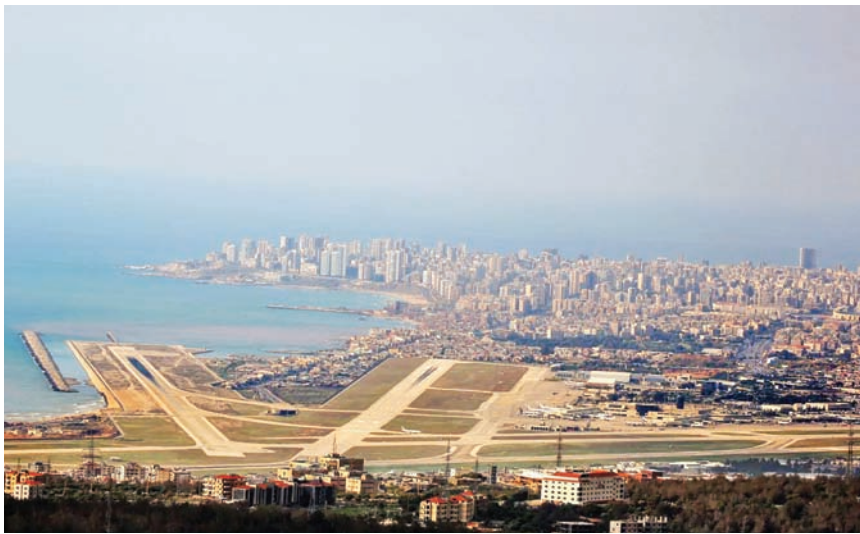
Kneissl, for her part, underlined her country's support for Lebanon's independence and territorial integrity.

The top Austrian diplomat arrived in Beirut on Monday for a two-day visit during which she met with her counterpart Gebran Basil for talks on the repatriation of Syrian refugees.

In 2006, Israel launched a war against Hezbollah during which at least 1,200 people, mostly Lebanese civilians, were killed.

■ Israel seeking to justify another aggression against Lebanon

Lebanon's Foreign Minister Gebran Basil says Israel is seeking to "justify another aggression" against his country after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made "false allegations" against the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah that it has purportedly built missile sites in the midst



of civilian districts of Beirut.

During his speech at the 73rd annual session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on Thursday, the Israeli premier alleged that Hezbollah had built "three" clandestine missile storage facilities "along Beirut's [Rafic Hariri] International Airport", showing some pictures of the so-called sites.

On Monday, the Lebanese top diplomat, however, harshly lambasted Netanyahu's fresh allegations, saying that what he had claimed were "based on inaccurate information."

Basil added that Netanyahu's allegations were supported by no "evidence" whatsoever, and that showing some pictures "does not contain any proof." The resistance movement "has missiles but they are not near the airport", he further noted.

The Lebanese foreign minister also stressed that his country has "the legitimate right to resist until the liberation of all the occupied territories" from Israeli occupation, referring to Lebanon's Shebaa Farms, which were occupied by the Israeli regime during its full-scale war against Arab territories in 1967.

"Today, Lebanon is raising its voice to reach all the countries of the world, especially the permanent members of the United Nations, to reject the Israeli allegations, to prevent any Israeli aggression on Lebanon, which will have implications for the entire region, especially for the Syrian and Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon," Basil further warned.

He also revealed that Israeli military has violated Lebanon's territories through "air, land and sea 1,417 times for the last eight months, that is, more than 150 times in each month."

Meanwhile, Lebanon's Foreign Ministry convened foreign ambassadors to Beirut to respond to Netanyahu's allegations, saying that the ministry would take the convoys on a tour of at least one of the locations in the capital.

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

Hezbollah, for its part, ridiculed Netanyahu's new allegations against the resist-

ance movement, with Mohammad Fneish, a Hezbollah senior member and Lebanon's caretaker youth and sports minister, saying, "Let's leave Netanyahu with his lies and delusions, to speak about what he wants and incite in the way he sees fit."

He also affirmed that Hezbollah "has significant capabilities" as outlined by its Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, vowing that the resistance movement would strongly respond to "any new attack on Lebanon."

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.

This is not the first time that the Israeli prime minister has been known to level baseless accusations against Iran's allies in the region and the Islamic Revolution itself.

Taking the podium to address the 73rd annual session of the UN General Assembly in New York on Thursday, Netanyahu claimed that Iran was working to develop nuclear weapons at "secret" sites.

He used a map and photographs of a building that he claimed was a "secret atomic weapons warehouse" in the Iranian capital, Tehran.

The claims came while Iran has drawn the praise of the world community for remaining fully committed to its 2015 nuclear deal with world powers despite Washington's much-criticized withdrawal from the international document.

Iran's compliance with the deal has been verified in numerous reports by the International Atomic Energy Agency -- the UN's nuclear watchdog, which uses strict mechanisms to monitor the technical aspect of the agreement's implementation.

(Source: agencies)

Indonesia steps up race to find survivors as quake toll passes 1,200



Indonesia is in a race against time to save victims of a devastating earthquake and tsunami on Sulawesi island, the government said on Tuesday, as the official death toll rose to more than 1,200 and looting fueled fears of lawlessness.

Four days after the double disaster struck, officials feared the toll could soar, as most of the confirmed dead had come from Palu, a small city 1,500 km (930 miles) northeast of Jakarta.

Some remote areas have been largely cut off after Friday's 7.5 magnitude quake triggered tsunami waves, destroying roads and bridges, and their losses have yet to be determined.

"The team is racing against time because it's already D+ four," Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, spokesman of National Disaster Mitigation Agency, told a briefing in Jakarta, referring to four days since the quake.

He said rescuers had reached all four of the badly affected districts, which together have a population of 1.4 million, but he declined to give an estimate of casualties.

He gave few details of the conditions rescuers had found, saying they were similar to those in Palu.

Earlier, President Joko Widodo called for reinforcements in the search for survivors saying everyone had to be found.

The official death toll surged to 1,234 with 800 people seriously injured.

There has been particular concern about Donggala, a district of 300,000 people north of Palu and close to the epicenter of the quake, which only a few aid workers have managed to reach.

Nugroho said it had been "devastated" by the tsunami. A video from the district, broadcast by the Antara state news agency, showed widespread destruction, including flattened buildings and a ship hurled into port buildings by the tsunami.

"What we need is food, water, medicine, but to up now we've got nothing," said an unidentified man standing in ruins.

In Palu, tsunami waves as high as six meters (20 feet) smashed into the beachfront, while hotels and shopping malls collapsed in ruins.

About 1,700 houses in one neighborhood were swallowed up by ground liquefaction, which happens when soil shaken by an earthquake behaves like a liquid, and hundreds of people are believed to have perished, the disaster agency said.

Before-and-after satellite pictures showed a largely built-up neighborhood just south of Palu's airport seemingly wiped clean of all signs of life by liquefaction.

Nugroho said Sigi district was "flattened" by liquefaction. Among the dead were 34 children killed at a Christian bible study camp.

■ Leaving and looting

More than 65,000 homes were damaged and more than 60,000 people have been displaced and are in need of emergency help.

Thousands of people have been streaming out of stricken areas. Commercial airlines have struggled to restore operations at Palu's damaged airport but military aircraft have taken some survivors out. Many more want to leave.

The government has ordered that aid be airlifted in but there's little sign of help on Palu's shattered streets and survivors appeared increasingly desperate.

A Reuters news team saw a shop cleared by about 100 people, shouting, scrambling and fighting each other for items including clothes, toiletries, blankets and water.

Many people grabbed diapers while one man clutched a rice cooker as he headed for the door. Non-essential goods were scattered on the floor amid shards of broken glass.

Police were at the scene but did not intervene. The government has played down looting saying victims could take essentials and shops would be compensated.

Indonesia is all too familiar with earthquakes and tsunamis. A quake in 2004 triggered a tsunami across the Indian Ocean that killed 226,000 people in 13 countries, including more than 120,000 in Indonesia.

It has said it would accept offers of international aid, after shunning outside help this year when an earthquake struck Lombok island.

A spokesman for the main U.N. aid coordinating agency, OCHA, said humanitarian agencies were in contact with the government and ready to help.

"There is an immediate need for food, clean water, shelter, medical care and psycho-social support," the spokesman, Jens Laerke, told a briefing in Geneva.

State port operator Pelindo IV said a ship carrying 50 tonnes of supplies including rice and baby milk had arrived in Palu on Monday. It was unclear if the aid had been distributed.

■ 'Buried fast'

Power has yet to be restored and aftershocks have rattled nerves but rescuers in Palu held out hope they could still save lives.

"We suspect there are still some survivors trapped inside," the head of one rescue team, Agus Haryono, told Reuters at the collapsed Hotel Roa Roa as he pored over its blueprints.

About 50 people were believed to have been caught inside the hotel when it was brought down. About nine bodies have been recovered and three rescued alive.

Elsewhere, on the outskirts of Palu, lorries brought 54 bodies to a mass grave. Most had not been claimed, a policeman said, but some relatives came to pay respects to loved ones at the 50-meter (165 ft) trench.

Rosmawati Binti Yahya, 52, was still looking for her missing daughter. But her husband was among the victims laid in the grave.

(Source: Reuters)

U.S. would destroy banned Russian warheads if necessary: NATO envoy

Russia must halt its covert development of a banned cruise missile system or the United States will seek to destroy it before it becomes operational, Washington's envoy to NATO said on Tuesday.

The United States believes Russia is developing a ground-launched system in breach of a Cold War treaty that could allow Russia to launch a nuclear strike on Europe at short notice, but Moscow has consistently denied any such violation.

U.S. ambassador to NATO Kay Bailey Hutchison said Washington remained committed to a diplomat solution but was prepared to consider a military strike if Russian development of the medium-range system continued.

"At that point, we would be looking at the capability to take out a (Russian) missile that could hit any of our countries," she told a news conference.

"Counter measures (by the United States) would be to take out the missiles that are in development by Russia in violation of the treaty," she added. "They are on notice."

The Russian foreign ministry was not immediately available for comment. In the past, it has said it is ready for talks with the United States to try to preserve the treaty and would comply with its obligations if the United States did.

The comments by Hutchison, who was appointed to the NATO post by U.S. President Donald Trump, are the most direct warning of a preemptive strike since a U.S. official said in 2017 the United States would consider its own system if Russia continued to violate the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. The treaty bans medium-range missiles capable of hitting Europe or Alaska. The United States and Russia celebrated its 30th anniversary in Geneva in 2017.

But that same year, the U.S. State Department report found Russia had violated obligations "not to possess, produce, or flight-test" a ground-launched cruise missile with a range capability of 500 km to 5,500 km (310-3,417 miles), "or to



possess or produce launchers of such missiles."

The U.S. accusations are likely to further strain relations between Moscow and the West that are at a low over Russia's 2014 seizure of Crimea, its bombing campaign in Syria and accusations of Russian meddling in Western elections.

"We have been trying to send a message to Russia for several years that we know they are violating the treaty, we have shown Russia the evidence that we have that they are violating the treaty," Hutchison said.

"We are laying down the markers so that our allies will

help us bring Russia to the table," she added.

U.S. Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis said he would discuss the issue with his NATO counterparts at a scheduled two-day meeting in Brussels from Wednesday.

"I cannot forecast where it will go, it is a decision for the president, but I can tell you that both on Capitol Hill and in State Department, there is a lot of concern about this situation and I'll return with the advice of our allies and engage in that discussion to determine the way ahead," he told reporters in Paris.

(Source: Reuters)

Guardian: Saudi royal court funds TV that gave airtime to Ahvaz attack supporter

2 → Iran International was launched in May 2017 shortly before presidential elections in Iran. Two other Farsi-language networks, BBC Persian and Manoto TV, are also based in London. Iran International pays generous salaries -- one employee said pay was double that offered by competitors -- and its 100-strong staff works out of a modern newsroom and studio.

Iran International's licence is held by its parent entity, a company called Global Media Circulating, according to Ofcom's records. Adel Al-Abdulkarim, one of the company's two directors, is also a shareholder, and a Saudi national with a history of working with Saudi Arabian media moguls such as Abdulrahman al-Rashed, the former general manager of the Saudi-owned Al Arabiya, and formerly editor-in-chief of newspaper Alsharq Alwusat.

A source who has worked with the Saudi crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, said Iran International's money came from the Saudi royal court, estimated to be about \$250m (£192m).

"The money is coming from Saudi Arabia, it is from the royal court," the source said, questioning whether private investors would risk that amount of money with such a small chance of return.

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Beynon did not answer questions on the channel's funding. He said the day-to-day editorial and technical operations of Iran International were managed by DMA Media Ltd, which is a UK news company owned by private UK

shareholders. The Guardian has asked Beynon to explain the precise relationship between DMA Media Ltd and Global Media Circulating.

He added: "Iran International can be judged by its output and the editorial policy implicit in that. It is not reflective of the views of any government and aims to provide news and views of interest to all Farsi speakers."

This is not the first time Iran International has been heavily criticized. The television previously gave extensive live coverage to a rally by the Mujahedin-e-Khalq (MeK), a cult-like organisation that espouses regime change and has links to Saudi Arabia.

The controversy over the coverage of the MeK rally led to the channel ceasing its cooperation with Mehdi Jami, a respected journalist who spoke out on internal discontent over the decision. At least one journalist left the network after the coverage of the Ahvaz attack.

Manoto TV, also based in the UK, is perceived to be close to monarchists, focusing extensively on pre-revolutionary Iran and depicting the era as glamorous. It lost £33m in 2016 and 2017, according to its latest accounts. Manoto has not disclosed its sources of funding since 2012 and did not respond to a request to explain these.

STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	188259.4
IFX	2165.54

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	48,600 rials
GBP	54,750 rials
AED	11,430 rials

Source: isna.ir

COMMODITIES

WTI	\$75.39/b
Brent	\$84.93/b
OPEC Basket	\$80.30/b
Gold	\$1,204.65/oz
Silver	\$14.92/oz
Platinum	\$837.85/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

Greece tests creditors and the markets with its 2019 spending plans

Greece could be about to start another fight with its creditors and the financial markets.

The government unveiled last evening the first draft of its 2019 budget plan in which two scenarios were put forward for its spending plans and economic targets for the coming year.

One of them included planned and pre-legislated pension cuts, in line with its creditors' expectations.

The other spending plan does not include pension cuts, however, indicating that the Greek government is willing to make changes to reforms that it had previously agreed with its creditors.

The pension cuts were due to start in January and were one of the most difficult reforms to come to an agreement. Potential changes to pensions, or to other reforms, could spark confrontations with European institutions and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The IMF said last month that the 2019 pension cuts are part of the reforms that the Greek government agreed to, and that Greece needs to show it is investor-friendly.



The 2019 budget is the first in nearly a decade without Greece being subject to a bailout program. Nonetheless, Athens promised on Monday to stick to fiscal targets that had agreed with its creditors. In fact, Greece has said it will over-deliver when it comes to its primary budget surplus.

Greece ended a third financial rescue in August and has vowed to stick to stringent fiscal targets in the coming years in exchange for some debt relief. Under such agreements, Greece must achieve a primary budget surplus of 3.5 percent each year until 2022. However, Athens said on Monday that it will reach a primary budget surplus, excluding debt servicing, of 4.14 percent of GDP in 2019.

"The primary budget surplus has been better than expected over the last years, reaching 4.2 percent in 2017 versus a 1.75 percent demand by the official lenders," Carsten Hesse, European economist at Berenberg, told CNBC on Monday.

This has allowed the ruling Syriza party to make one-off payments of about 1.4 billion euros (\$1.62 billion) to pensioners and other citizens hit by austerity last year.

Analysts told CNBC that expectations are that Greece will hit a budget surplus above 3.5 percent in 2018 too. But the government will only be able to be sure of that later in the year, and more precisely at the start of 2019, when the final figures are released.

This means that reversing reforms, changing pension cuts or any other similar decision might have to wait until later.

■ Why is Athens willing to reverse some reforms?

The center-right and opposition party New Democracy has been leading opinion polls against the ruling anti-establishment party Syriza. In the latest poll, conducted on behalf of the Proto Thema newspaper, showed last month a 10.9 percent difference between the two parties.

"The Greek government is under huge pressure to allow for some fiscal easing as it tries to catch up in polls before the elections in 2019," Ricardo Garcia, chief euro zone economist at UBS, told CNBC via email Monday.

"In addition, New Democracy is increasing pressure in advance of the elections by promising fiscal easing themselves. If Syriza isn't able to deliver fiscal easing before the elections, New Democracy's promises will look more credible," Garcia added.

Backsliding with reforms could also unsettle financial markets at a time when Greece is still vulnerable to shocks that are outside its control, however.

For instance, last week Greece's borrowing costs rose on the back on ongoing concerns regarding Italy, not Greece.

Greece is forecasting a lower public debt pile in 2019, from 183 percent of GDP this year to 170.2 percent next year. Needless to say, its debt pile is still, and by far away, the largest in Europe.

(Source: CNBC)

After repeated record lows, rial recovers unexpectedly

By Haniyeh Sadat Jafariyeh

Following government's Saturday measure to grant authority to the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) to interfere in the foreign exchange market in defense of the rial, the Iranian currency started to regain incrementally.

On Tuesday, in the Iranian capital, money exchange shops offered around 140,000 rials for one U.S. dollar, while the rate stood at 190,000 on Saturday. A downward trend in the price of foreign currencies in Iran pushed down the value of dollar in the unofficial market by almost 50 percent in less than 24 hours. Since Monday evening, people have been gathering, even at night, in the market to sell their dollars.

Foreign currency values began to boost in Iran after the U.S. pulled out from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal in May and announced plans for a fresh wave of sanctions against the country. In the fear of plunge in the value of their assets, shocked by the rampant inflation rate and the unprecedented recession, ordinary people flocked to money exchange markets to exchange their dollars for rial at the time, the move which imbalanced the whole market.

Now, the loop is redirected due to the rush of individual owners of the greenback to the market, this time for exchanging dollar for rial. However, if this will be a permanent rally and whether the CBI's targeted forex



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rates remain unclear because the U.S. sanctions targeting Iran's vital oil industry are to appear in early November. The CBI intends to announce the rate of exchange in the foreign exchange market at an appropriate time, Iranian official say.

Analysts offer various reasons for this week's rally of rial, among which stand six effective factors including:

- Europe's decision for creating financial

relations with Iran undependable to U.S.,

- the plan of China and Russia for making separate financial relations with Iran,
- the probability of ratification of FATF by Iranian legislative institutions,
- having CBI appointed as the body in charge of monitoring the forex market via supervising banks and permitted exchange shops and controlling the exchange rate of hard currencies,

Non-oil exports to China increases 11.6% in 6 months on year

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran's **d e s k** value of non-oil exports to China increased 11.62 percent during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22) compared to the same period of time in the previous year, according to the data released by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

IRICA data show that Iran exported 13.703 million tons of non-oil products worth \$4.633 billion to China during the six-month period of this year, while the figure was 16.216 million tons valued at \$4.151 billion in the same time span of the past year, Mehr news agency reported.

Iran's non-oil exports hit \$23.123 billion in the first half of the present Iranian calendar year, growing 13 percent



in comparison with the same period in the preceding year.

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.

150 CNG stations to go operational by March 2019

ENERGY **TEHRAN** — Some **d e s k** 150 new Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) filling stations are going to be operational throughout Iran by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2019), Mehr news agency reported on Monday quoting a CNG official.

"So far, 2,436 CNG stations have gone operational across the country and with the new sites being set up, this number will reach 2,586 by the end of this year", Mohammad Qasemin, executive director of National Iranian Oil Products Distribution Company (NIOPDC)'s CNG program said.

According to the official, currently gasoline accounts for up to 50 percent of the country's fuel consumption while CNG's share is only 13 percent.



"Replacing gasoline with clearer fuels like CNG will not only have positive environmental impacts but also will result in fuel management and balancing the country's fuel consumption variety," Qasemi noted.

NIOPDC plans to increase the share of CNG in the country's fuel consumption pattern to 20 percent in near future.

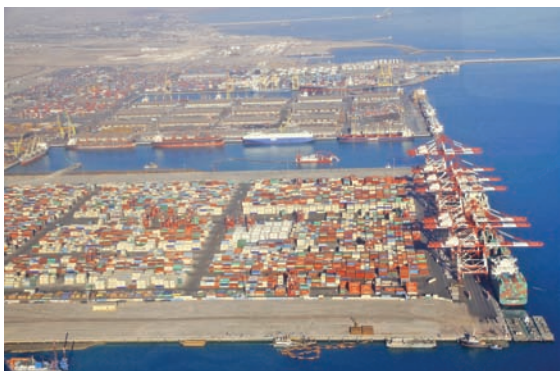
PMO prepares 2 packages to support investment making in ports

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran's Ports and Maritime **d e s k** Organization (PMO) has prepared and approved two supporting packages for the investors that make investment in the country's ports, according to a director in PMO.

One package covers the results and effects of foreign currency policies on the investment contracts and the other one covers those related to the new round of sanctions, Hossein Sadeqinejad, the director general in PMO for port areas and investment, told the news portal of PMO.

Both packages will be in effect by the end of current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2019) and extending them will be upon the approval of the PMO's board of directors, the official said.

In early August, PMO Managing Director Mohammad Rastad announced that his organization offers the best incentives to the investors who make investment



in development of ports.

He said the country's ports are in the way of development both in infrastructures and in equipment and are

ready for the presence of industrial and production units.

In early May, PMO started imposing revised tariffs on port and maritime activities.

The main objective behind revising the mentioned tariffs is to promote Iran's sea trade and transit status. The new tariffs reduce the price for exporters and importers in many fields.

In a press conference in April, Rastad said that tariffs play some important role in pricing of maritime and port services, adding that reducing tariffs is done with the aim of promoting status of ports and increasing the services.

PMO has a key status in setting the price of port services and the organization has specified some short and long-term plans in this due and moves in line with the specified objectives, the official said, adding that in this regard, some specific tariffs have been defined and categorized in a three-year plan.

ECB supervisor sees no room for lowering capital demand on banks

There is no room for lowering capital requirements for euro zone banks but watchdogs should avoid "straight-jacketing" bankers and stifling innovation, a European Central Bank supervisor said on Tuesday.

Pentti Hakkarainen, a member of the ECB's Single Supervisory Board that oversees the euro zone's largest banks, battled back industry complaints over how much cash and capital banks have been asked to set aside in the aftermath of the financial crisis.

He cited a 2010 study that put the ideal level of Tier 1 capital at between 16 percent and 19 percent of risk-weighted assets - higher than current levels in the euro zone.

"I do not see anything within recent research that leads me to think this estimate was too high," Pentti Hakkarainen told an audience in Helsinki.

"As both our minimum standards and global banks' current capital ratios remain somewhat short of this level - I see no room for relaxing capital requirements at this time," he added.

The ECB has put pressure on banks to build up capital since taking over as supervisor four years ago, in a bid to avoid a repeat of the 2008 financial crisis and the ensuing taxpayer-funded



bailouts.

Tier 1 capital ratios in the euro zone have increased on average by 3.4 percentage points since then and are now above 15 percent, Hakkarainen said.

But he said supervisors should be wary of going too far, particularly if their actions have side effects that had not been anticipated when the rules were written.

"We need to avoid straight-jacketing balance sheets excessively," Hakkarainen said.

"We must continue to allow market participants to have the space to decide for themselves their business strategies, giving bankers the space to breathe and to innovate in the interests of customers," he added.

(Source: Reuters)

Euro drops as Italy worries simmer; stocks decline

A downbeat mood settled over markets on Tuesday, as fears surrounding the populist Italian government's fiscal plans topped a list of reasons for caution. The euro dropped a fifth day, European stocks and U.S. futures followed Asian declines, while Treasuries and bunds advanced.

The common currency touched the weakest in six weeks after the head of Italy's lower house budget committee said the nation would have solved its fiscal problems with its own currency, and the leader of the European Commission warned of a Greek-style crisis. Reassurances that the country has no plans to ditch the euro did little to calm nerves, and Italian bonds extended a recent slump, while the region's safer "core bonds" climbed. The Stoxx Europe 600 Index fell for only the second time in six days as equities in Italy declined.

Amid the risk-off mood the dollar climbed against almost all its major peers and emerging-market assets dropped. The pound slumped as Brexit and the annual conference of the governing Conservative Party continued to dominate headlines. Earlier in Asia stocks in Hong Kong underperformed as traders returned from a long weekend, and equities also fell in Australia and South Korea. Japan was a bright spot as the Nikkei 225 Stock



Average ticked up a day after closing at its highest since 1991.

While a deal between the U.S. and Canada to revamp the Nafta trade deal with Mexico gave global risk appetite a boost at the start of the week, investor sentiment remains fragile amid a laundry list of threats to markets. Beyond Italy, Sino-American tensions are back in focus after the Chinese navy dispelled a U.S. missile destroyer from waters near South China Sea islands, in Beijing's account of the incident. Meanwhile, political drama in Washington still swirls around President Donald Trump's Supreme Court nominee, which may feed through to November congressional elections and affect the outlook for the administration's agenda.

(Source: Bloomberg)

Oil trades near four-year peak ahead of sanctions on Iran

Brent oil prices fell on profit-taking on Tuesday but remained near their highest since November 2014 as markets braced for tighter supply once U.S. sanctions against Iran kick in next month.

The international crude oil benchmark lost 48 cents to \$84.50 per barrel by 1002 GMT after reaching a new four-year high of \$85.45 in the previous session.

U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures were up 3 cents at \$75.33 a barrel, having hit a four-year high of \$75.91 earlier in the session.

Brent and WTI have roughly tripled compared with lows seen in January 2016, when the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and allies led by Russia started to curb oil supplies to rebalance an oversupplied market.

Sentiment was lifted by a last-gasp deal to salvage NAFTA as a trilateral pact between the United States, Mexico and Canada, rescuing a \$1.2 trillion a year open-trade zone that had been about to collapse.

More fundamentally, oil markets have been pushed up by looming U.S. sanctions against Iran's oil industry, which at its most recent peak this year supplied nearly



3 percent of the world's almost 100 million barrels of daily consumption.

A Reuters survey of OPEC production found Iranian output in September fell by

100,000 barrels per day, while production from the group as a whole rose by 90,000 bpd compared with August.

"Oil prices continue to climb, supported

by the nearing Iran embargo and related supply concerns," said Norbert Ruecker, head of commodity research at Swiss bank Julius Baer.

HSBC said in its fourth-quarter Global Economics outlook that "our oil analysts believe there is now a growing risk it (crude) could touch \$100 per barrel".

Washington's sanctions start on Nov. 4. Many analysts say OPEC will struggle to cover a decline in exports from Iran.

"The general impression out there currently seems to be that there is either an outright inability or at least a certain unwillingness ... to compensate for the expected continuation of declining Iranian export flows," Vienna-based consultancy JBC Energy said.

Britain's Barclays bank, however, said "OPEC has ample spare capacity".

For now, soaring crude prices and weak emerging market currencies, including India's rupee and Indonesia's rupiah, may erode economic growth.

"Softening demand growth and new supply should cool the bullish sentiment and push prices lower by the end of the year," Barclays said.

(Source: Reuters)

OPEC output edges higher in September limited by Iran Sanctions

OPEC production rose last month as deepening losses in Iran due to looming U.S. sanctions were countered by other members.

The group's 15 nations pumped 32.83 million barrels a day in September, 30,000 more than the month before, according to a Bloomberg survey of officials, analysts and ship-tracking data. Even though Iranian production fell by 140,000 barrels a day to 3.36 million -- the lowest since early 2016 -- Saudi Arabia, Angola and Libya offset the losses.

Iran's decline is expected to accelerate once sanctions formally begin in November. Major buyers of the country's crude have already started to diversify their supplies. India was said to plan no purchases of Iranian crude in November, according to officials at the largest state-run refiners. That followed similar moves by South Korea and Japan.

***Sanctions bite

Iran's crude and condensate exports have dropped by 39 percent since April and will fall further by the time sanctions come into effect in early November.

The Middle Eastern nation's shipments of crude have fallen 1.1 million barrels a day, or 39 percent, since April, according to tanker tracking data compiled by Bloomberg. That outpaces the 11 percent drop in production over the



same period. The tracked shipments exclude volumes held on tankers that remain close to Iran's export terminals, after the nation resorted to storing some of its barrels at sea last month.

Offsetting losses

Combined with deepening losses in Venezuela due to an

economic crisis, the U.S. sanctions on Iran have propelled crude prices to a three-year high above \$80 a barrel in London. While the rally has prompted President Donald Trump to demand the rest of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries open the taps, they've been cautious so far.

Although Saudi Arabia, the most powerful OPEC member, has promised to fill any shortages, it's taking a gradual approach. The kingdom raised output by 80,000 barrels a day to 10.53 million, according to the survey.

Angola, which has been ramping up the Kaombo project operated by Total SA, pumped an extra 90,000 barrels a day. Nigeria and Libya also revived some output halted earlier by internal strife.

Russia, which has partnered with OPEC in a grand coalition established in late 2016, is also pushing ahead with production increases. At one point last month, its output jumped as high as 11.36 million barrels a day, a post-Soviet record, according to a government official. That means the country has fully reversed the cutbacks it implemented with OPEC last year, and is boosting output even further.

(Source: Bloomberg)

Power imports from France could ease Belgium winter supply worries

Belgium could import 1,000 megawatt (MW) of electricity from France during the winter months to make up for its shortfall due to reactor outages, the chief executive of grid operator Elia, told parliament on Tuesday.

"For the months of November and December, France will have an available capacity of 1,000 MW for export from France to Belgium, which is good news and is important," Chris Peeters told a parliamentary hearing. Belgium's parliament is holding a hearing as the

country faces an unprecedented power supply deficit ahead of winter, with only one of seven nuclear reactors operated by Engie's Belgian unit Electrabel scheduled to have been operational in November.

(Source: Reuters)

Kuwait stops exporting crude oil to U.S. first time in over two decades

Kuwait has for the first time in 25 years halted its crude oil exports to the U.S., according to statistics published by the U.S. Department of Energy.

The last time that the U.S. didn't buy Kuwaiti oil was back in 1992, which saw Iraqi troops enter the country, bringing the local oil industry to a standstill. Meanwhile, the climax of Kuwaiti exports to the U.S. fell on 2012-2014, with the latter helping the emirate to diversify supplies.

According to Bloomberg, Kuwait has shifted its focus from the U.S. market to the more blooming Asian ones, which currently take up to 80 percent of the emirate's exports. New possibilities are

opening up in light of the upcoming new batch of U.S. sanctions against countries trading with Iran, expected to take effect beginning in November. Top quality Kuwait-produced oil trades at 80 dollars per barrel across Asia.

Saudi Arabia has in many ways replaced Kuwait recently, becoming a top oil supplier for the U.S., with daily shipping amounting to well over a million barrels of oil in recent months. Iraq, with its over 400,000 barrels per day, is trailing just behind.

Meanwhile, concerns are mounting over a potential shortfall of crude as U.S. sanctions restrict Iranian oil exports, and Trump and Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz on

Saturday discussed over the telephone possible steps to stimulate supplies, Al Arabiya TV reported, without providing more details. The U.S. president earlier roasted the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC states) over high prices.

Earlier the U.S., having withdrawn from the landmark Iranian nuclear agreement in May, voiced its aim to reduce Iranian oil exports to zero, which, however, raised quite a few concerns with OPEC members, with many expressing strong criticism of the move and the subsequent threat of sanctions.

(Source: Sputnik)

OPEC 'powerless to prevent' oil prices jumping

OPEC kingpin Saudi Arabia is ill-equipped to prevent a supply shock in the energy market, analysts told CNBC on Monday, as oil traders prepare for the possibility of \$100 a barrel before year-end.

"Nobody wants to get caught short, full in the knowledge that more Iranian barrels are poised to be removed from the market," Stephen Brennock, oil analyst at PVM Oil Associates, said in a research note published Monday.

Late last month, President Donald Trump urged OPEC producers to ratchet up production levels to prevent further price rises ahead of the mid-term elections in early November.

The Trump administration's push for the Middle-East dominated cartel to start pumping more oil comes as the White House prepares to impose 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.

China initially rejected a U.S. request to choke off the flow of petrodollars to Iran but, amid intense pressure from the Trump administration, China is now reportedly taking steps to comply.

China's top state refiner, Sinopec Corp, was seen halving its loadings of Iranian crude in September, Reuters reported Friday, citing unidentified sources.

The prospect of a reduction from Sinopec would constitute a significant blow for Iran. That's because OPEC's third-largest producer considers China to be its leading oil client at a time when European producers and other global buyers are dramatically reducing Iranian crude purchases to avoid U.S. sanctions.

China has consistently defended its energy trade with Tehran — thought to be worth around \$1.5 billion a month — as transparent and lawful.

"Against this backdrop of dwindling Iranian oil supplies, the focus will turn to meek levels of global, or more accurately, Saudi

spare capacity," Brennock said.

OPEC and non-OPEC producers were initially thought to be reluctant to immediately respond to heightened pressure from the Trump administration, but Saudi Arabia is now expected to put as much as 550,000 additional barrels per day (bpd) onto the market over the next couple of months.

The kingdom has previously claimed to have around 1.5 million bpd available to add to the market if required.

But, Riyadh is thought to be unable to fully offset global supply disruptions over the coming months. And "this essentially leaves the world's only swing producer powerless to prevent a supply shock and subsequent price spike in the final quarter of this year," Brennock said.

■ **\$100 a barrel**

"We are moving into a world where you have lower inventories, lower spare capacity and less protection for buyers," John Driscoll, chief strategist at JTD Energy Services, told CNBC on Monday. "So \$100 a barrel has become more likely, whether we get there or not, it might be a little early to say," he added.

International benchmark Brent crude traded at around \$83.01 on Monday, up around 0.34 percent, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) stood at around \$73.42, more than 0.2 percent higher.

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.

(Source: CNBC)

Frost & Sullivan releases new global renewable energy outlook

By the end of 2018, 154.6 gigawatts (GW) of new renewable power capacity will have been installed globally. The greatest share will come from solar photovoltaics (PV) with almost 90 GW of new additions, followed by 53 GW from wind. Biomass, geothermal, and small hydropower plants are also benefitting from rising electricity demand, decarbonization goals, and government incentives. However, expansion will be slower as they depend on resource availability, have greater risks, and require higher upfront costs. Ocean power will continue growing, but it will be awhile before it reaches the status of other renewables.



To kick-off National Energy Awareness Month, Frost & Sullivan shares its recent analysis, Global Renewable Energy Outlook, 2018, which states the global investment in renewable energy is expected to touch \$228.3 billion in 2018, with a slightly slower year-on-year growth rate of 0.7 percent due to the solar capacity reductions in China. The analysis also presents the key trends, participants, total installed capacity, and forecast capacity additions in the renewable energy market. It covers the power generation technologies of biomass power, geothermal power, small hydro-power (SHP), ocean power, solar PV power, and wind power.

"The Chinese government's announcement of modifications to its solar policy dramatically changed the projections the renewable industry had for 2018 and the following years," said Maria Benintende, Energy & Environment Senior Industry Analyst at Frost & Sullivan. "Worldwide, we see that as the number of countries cutting subsidies increases, the market is compelled to consider purely commercial alternatives to feed-in tariffs, such as competitive auctions and private-sector power purchase agreements."

Key regional highlights from the study include:

"The future of renewable power will be hybrid, with special emphasis on storage solutions. The pace of growth will depend on the level of government backing in terms of setting up support mechanisms to enable 100 percent renewable energy generation," added Benintende. "To succeed in this market, OEMs need to evolve from being equipment and related service providers to being power generation solution providers."

Solutions such as remote monitoring and diagnostics, unplanned maintenance, refurbishment and revamps, and performance-enhancing digital applications are creating numerous revenue streams for OEMs and service providers. In addition to advanced solutions and technologies, developing strategic partnerships with other renewable OEMs and storage and grid service start-ups will open up numerous growth opportunities for participants.

Global Renewable Energy Outlook, 2018 is the latest addition to Frost & Sullivan's Power Generation research and analysis available through the Frost & Sullivan Leadership Council, which helps organizations identify a continuous flow of growth opportunities to succeed in an unpredictable future.

(Source: Market Watch)



Agricultural Support Services Company

INVITATION TO A ONE STEP INTERNATIONAL TENDER

SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT

55/97/14610

03/10/2018



Ministry of Jihad-e-Agriculture

AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES COMPANY

The Agricultural Support Services Company, hereinafter will be referred as ASSC, a subsidiary of the Ministry of Agricultural Jihad of I.R. of Iran, is considering the purchase of 2×30000±%5 MTS of Granular Potassium Chloride (GMOP) through one step international tender.

All of the qualified and interested companies are invited to receive tender documents from Wednesday dated October 3, 2018 until Saturday dated October 13, 2018 (seven working days) from our purchasing committee (located at the 9th floor, no. 1, fourth alley, Gandhi st., Tehran, Iran).

The bidders are requested to submit their letters of introduction, along with remittance bill of I.Rials 1,200,000 to ASSC's account no. 4001039704005791 with SHEBA no. IR250100004001039704005791

at the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran through payment order of SATNA or PAYA with the 30 character identification code of 358039782263500650000000000006 will be possible.

The bid participants are required to submit their sealed and stamped envelopes containing offers latest on Monday dated November 12, 2018 (during official working hours) to our security office, located on the 8th floor. Meanwhile the meeting for the opening of the envelopes will be on Tuesday dated November 13, 2018 at 2:00 PM with the presence of bidders' representatives in our purchasing committee (9th floor, no. 1, fourth alley, Gandhi St., Tehran, Iran).

We would like to emphasize that the bid bond value should be at € 179302 or in equal value of any other foreign currencies, except US dollars, based on exchange rate of CBI on September 23, 2018 for each lot of 30000 MT ± 5% in bank guarantee.

For more information, you may refer to our **website www.assc.ir**, and **<http://iets.mporg.ir>** or contact us by phone no. 00982188776325.

Public & International Relations Department
Agricultural Support Services Company (ASSC)

Erdogan’s Germany trip: Reset relations or not?



By Cui Hongjian

Turkish President Tayyip Recep Erdogan’s visit to Germany has been carrying out in between the red-carpet welcome and street protests. Such a scene reflects the reality of the relationship between Germany and Turkey - although politicians want to “let bygones be bygones,” emotional people are reluctant to follow them and are ignorant to the turmoil in bilateral relations in the past two years.

Germany and Turkey have many reasons to enjoy a good bilateral relation. First, Germany is Turkey’s largest trading partner and a major source of foreign investment, while four million Turks living in Germany constitute the largest ethnic group there.

The two countries are both important members of NATO, and Turkey has been taking the membership of the EU, in which Germany as a core member, as its prior diplomatic goal.

But these do not bring about good relations between the two countries. In the past two years, political differences, challenges of social integration and different foreign policy orientations have brought troubles to their bilateral ties.

Germany opposes Erdogan-led political changes toward “dictatorship” and is concerned that this change may cause political divisions in German society via the Turkish immigrant groups.

In the meantime, Turkey, which regards itself as a regional power, eyes Germany’s political precaution as exclusion and discrimination. Erdogan’s accusation of “Nazi state” is still the main reason for Germans’ reluctance to accept him.

However, the leaders of Germany and Turkey are obviously realist politicians. Given internal and external changes, they need to cooperate to save the bilateral relationship from the trap of being too emotional.

Turkey’s need for easing relations is apparently higher. The country’s deteriorating economy and the sharp depreciation of the Lira call for Germany’s help. Moreover, considering its increasingly tense ties with the U.S., Turkey will benefit from easy relations with Germany and Europe.

Although Germany seems to have taken the initiative in Berlin-Istanbul bilateral relationship, the country’s demand for improving ties with Turkey cannot be overlooked. Germany needs Turkey’s help in stabilizing Europe’s refugee situation and has to take the sentiments of its four million Turkish Germans into full account.

In a broader perspective, Germany, in the face of difficulty, needs warmer ties with Turkey in writing the story of “multilateralism against unilateralism.”

Still, it is risky to conclude that the German-Turkish relationship can be reset and return to the right track. Although mainstream politicians in Germany intend to handle their country’s ties with Turkey from a rational and interest-oriented perspective, other political forces and the public are unwilling to dismiss their political divergences with Turkey.

In addition, spats between Turks and Kurds, as well as the integration of Turkish Germans into Germany, are a long-term challenge for Berlin-Istanbul bilateral relations, especially in the context of rising populism in Europe. This cannot be easily addressed via only one visit.

Simply put, as long as Germany insists labeling Turkish politics as “dictatorship,” improvements in the German-Turkish relationship are unlikely due to a lack of public support.

In spite of pessimistic voices on Berlin-Istanbul ties, any potential improvement in relations will not only help the two countries restore good interactions but also lead to a better Turkey-EU relationship.

Germany and Turkey are facing the same challenges of defending the Iranian nuclear agreement, safeguarding the stability in the Middle East and dealing with Washington’s trade protectionist practices. Even if Erdogan’s visit may not immediately “reset” the German-Turkish relationship, it is expected to form a stable and benign multilateral interaction framework among Germany, Turkey, the EU and even Russia.

(Source: CGTN)

Populists’ infighting will blunt their pan-European appeal

By Tony Barber

Rightwing populists and anti-EU nationalists are licking their lips at the prospect of next May’s European Parliament elections. Some hope to disrupt the EU’s most pro-integrationist institution by winning up to a third of the assembly’s 705 seats. Others, more ambitious, dream of a victory so comprehensive that it drives a stake into the heart of Europe’s liberal establishment. However, those who imagine the insurgent radicals to be an irresistible force, poised to tip the EU and liberal democracy on to the ash heap of history, are wide of the mark. Such alarmism overlooks important differences in policies and mindsets that distinguish the latter-day Enragés from each other. At times these differences flare into serious disagreement. ➔13

How many more massacres are needed before Britain ends its arms sales?

By Andrew Smith

“Unjustified” was the word that the Saudi-led coalition eventually used to describe its bombing of a school bus in Yemen in August. It was a typically cold and understated response to a bombing campaign that has created one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world.

Over 40 children were killed in the attack, which was condemned by rights groups and international organizations around the world. Henrietta Fore, executive director of the UN’s children’s fund, called it, “A low point in Yemen’s brutal war.”

At the time of the assault, the Royal Saudi Air Force refused to concede any fault, describing it as a “legitimate military operation carried out in accordance with humanitarian law.” It was the most recent in a long series of appalling massacres by the coalition.

In March 2015, only two weeks after the war began, Saudi forces bombed a refugee camp, killing 40 people. One year later, in March 2016, the same forces bombed a market place in Yemen’s capital city of Sana’a, killing 97 people. October 2016 saw the bombing of a funeral, in which 140 people were killed. In November last year, 25 people were killed in another market. This April, 20 people were killed at a wedding, including the bride.

Human rights campaigners and politicians from across the world have condemned the latest attacks. For a short time, a “forgotten war” caught the attention of the world’s media. Days later, another 26 children were killed in yet another terrible atrocity. Civilians have paid a terrible price for the war, with the Yemen Data Project estimating that one third of all bombs dropped on Yemen have hit civilian targets.

The intensification of violence has coincided with the collapse of peace talks. It has also come at a time when the UN is warning of a possible new cholera epidemic. This would be on top of what the European Union and UN agencies have already called “the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.”

According to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, almost two-thirds of reported civilian deaths in Yemen have been caused by the Saudi-led bombardment. However, this only counts those who have



According to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, almost two-thirds of reported civilian deaths in Yemen have been caused by the Saudi-led bombardment.

died as a direct result of the bombing, and not those that have died as a result of the crisis that it has created.

It would be almost impossible to calculate an accurate death toll. Reporting from Save the Children, though, has found that 50,000 children died of preventable causes in 2017 alone. In December 2016, UNICEF reported that a child died every 10 minutes from preventable diseases such as diarrhoea, malnutrition and respiratory tract infections.

Despite the terrible backdrop, and intensifying international pressure, the Saudi regime has been able to count on the uncritical political and military support of a handful of powerful and compliant governments. One of those is Britain, which has armed and supported the bombardment every step of the way.

At the outbreak of the war, the then Foreign Secretary, Philip Hammond, pledged that Britain would “support the Saudis in every

practical way short of engaging in combat.” That support has been unwavering, with the government having licensed almost £5 billion worth of fighter jets, missiles and bombs in the years that have followed.

There is no doubt that these weapons have been used in attacks on civilian infrastructure. Thorough and authoritative reports from Human Rights Watch, Sky News and Amnesty International explicitly link British arms to attacks on civilian sites.

In 2016, after months of denial, the Saudi military had to admit that it had used UK-made cluster bombs. The bombs, which had been sold to the Kingdom in the 1980s, would now be banned by the cluster munitions convention.

Such arms sales are opposed overwhelmingly by the British public, with the most recent polling showing that only 13 per cent of people in the UK support arms sales to the Saudi military. That is why hundreds

The world has more confidence in Putin than in Trump

A new public-opinion survey shows just how much the U.S.reputation has slid around the world

By Krishnadev Calamur

It’s well known by now that President Donald Trump isn’t particularly popular in Europe: He has withdrawn from the Paris climate accord and the nuclear pact with Iran, imposed punitive tariffs on steel and aluminum imports from the European Union, and questioned NATO’s usefulness. For a bloc that functions (or doesn’t, if you ask its critics) through unanimity and consensus building, Trump is a shock to the global system that the United States created in the aftermath of World War II. But a new survey from the Pew Research Center released Monday shows not just how unpopular Trump himself is, but also how the extent of that unpopularity is bleeding into how Europeans view the United States as a whole.

Seven in 10 people around the world have no confidence in Trump, according to the survey of 26,112 people in 25 countries carried out from May 20 to August 12. The figures in European countries are far worse for Trump. In Germany, 10 percent said they have confidence in him; in France the figure is even lower: 9 percent, according to the survey. Strikingly, 43 percent of respondents said they had an unfavorable view of the U.S.; 50 percent said they had a favorable view.

“We’ve seen a big shift in America’s image around the world from the Obama to Trump presidencies,” Richard Wike, the director of Pew’s Global Attitudes Research, told me. There are “lower ratings for the U.S. in many countries; and... in the vast majority of countries we surveyed, [there are] much more negative views about Trump than we found about Obama when he was in the White House.” Obama was widely liked in Europe, though his approval did suffer in the wake of revelations that the U.S. had been spying on its allies in Germany and other places, as well as his administration’s aggressive use of drones in counterterrorism efforts in the Middle East.

The Pew survey comes at a critical juncture in American history: Trump is nearing the second anniversary of his presidential election, the U.S. is preparing for a midterm election, and the nation is watching a bitter fight over the president’s nomination of Brett Kavanaugh to the U.S. Su-



Trump is a shock to the global system that the United States created in the aftermath of World War II.

preme Court. One could argue that such contentiousness is a historical feature of American politics, but the Pew survey did not ask respondents this year what they thought of American democracy; this question has received mixed reactions in past years.

Trump’s approval in Europe is comparable to the figures seen for President George W. Bush toward the end of his second term. What’s different, however, as Wike wrote in

A murderous ‘war on drugs’

by supporters insisting that he is exaggerating or joking. His spokesman called his latest remarks “playful”, though widows and orphans are unlikely to consider them lighthearted. The campaign has left 4,500 people dead even on official statistics, and 12,000 dead according to human rights groups, almost all from the urban poor. In the first year alone, 54 children were killed. Though campaigners say the pace of killing has slowed, it also seems to have shifted away from the capital, Manila – and so away from attention.

This week another critic, Antonio Trillanes, was arrested after an amnesty granted to him

was revoked. Government threats, restrictions and an army of trolls have muted the media, despite the courage of individuals. Maria Lourdes Sereno, the country’s top judge, was ousted from the supreme court in May after opposing controversial government proposals. Civil society, too, is suffering.

This makes external pressure all the more crucial. Duterte has given two fingers to critics. The admiration of Donald Trump has increased his ability to play the U.S. and China off against each other. And though China and the Philippines have their own disputes – notably over the South China Sea – Japan has cozier up whenever

of people took to the streets to protest when the Saudi Crown Prince, Mohammad Bin Salman, came to London in February.

The visit, which included meetings with the Queen, Theresa May and Prince William, finished with the announcement that both sides had moved a step closer to agreeing a deal for Eurofighter military aircraft. The deal, which would be worth billions of pounds, has already received top-level support from British Ministers and civil servants.

The approach of offering fawning and uncritical support in exchange for arms sales was summed up last year by the then Defense Minister, Michael Fallon. In an appearance in front of the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, he urged MPs not to criticize the Saudi government’s human rights record and the conduct of the war in Yemen in case it impacted on them. “Criticism of Saudi Arabia in this parliament is not helpful,” he said, while stressing the need to secure the Eurofighter deal.

The message this sends to the Saudi government is one of total support. However, the one that it sends to the people of Yemen is that their lives are of less consequence than profits for BAE Systems and the other arms companies that have profited from the war. As Radhya Al-Mutawakel, Director of the Yemen-based Mwatana for Human Rights, has observed, UK policy “reflects the triumph of economic interests over the blood of innocent people.”

Every time these terrible atrocities take place we are assured by ministers that they are aberrations or mistakes. Very occasionally, such as in the instance of the school bus bombing, a Saudi-coalition spokesperson will eventually admit fault. Nothing changes, though. The war and the air strikes continue. So do the civilian deaths.

When the history books are written they will remember who inflicted the terrible war, and those who have allowed it to happen.

Even at this late stage, after three and a half years of war, Theresa May, Jeremy Hunt and their colleagues must finally do the right thing. If not now, then how many more deadly “mistakes” do there need to be? It’s time to end the arms sales to Saudi Arabia. (Source: Middle East Monitor)

The Atlantic in May, is that America’s previous unpopularity came from what its critics viewed as overreach in Iraq. The disapproval in the Trump years stems from the U.S. disengaging, in its critics’ view, from the rest of the world. Indeed, the latest Pew survey bears that thesis out: 37 percent of respondents said the U.S. was less involved in the world compared to past years, 34 percent said the U.S. involvement was about the same, and about 14 percent said the U.S. had increased its global role.

To be sure, there have always been strains of anti-Americanism among certain European elites, especially over U.S. involvement in Vietnam, Iraq, and the global war on terrorism, but Wike said that “attitudes about American foreign policy didn’t have a big impact about what European [citizens] are thinking about the United States.”

“The U.S. still has a lot of soft power in Europe and other parts of the world ... But when you look at American policies, attitudes toward the American president, those are right now very negative in Europe,” he said. “It’s those things that are driving down the overall ratings for the United States in Europe.”

Indeed, Trump is viewed with less confidence than German Chancellor Angela Merkel (52 percent confidence), French President Emmanuel Macron (46 percent), Chinese President Xi Jinping (34 percent), and Russian President Vladimir Putin (30 percent). Additionally, when Trump does find support in Europe, it is often from supporters of radical-right parties in the U.K., Sweden, France, Italy, the Netherlands, and Germany, who are more likely to view him favorably than their compatriots.

Still, the world’s views about the U.S., or indeed its president, don’t mean that the alternatives to U.S. power are particularly attractive. When asked if it would be better for the world to have the U.S. or China as the leading power, 63 percent said the U.S.; 19 percent wanted China. Support for the U.S. was particularly high in Asian countries (73 percent) and in western Europe (64 percent). Or to put it another way: The world may not like Trump or the direction the U.S. is headed in, but the alternatives look worse.

(Source: The Atlantic)

it senses the Manila-Beijing relationship might be cooling.

But the international criminal court has opened a preliminary examination of the killings. There is growing support among members of the UN human rights council for an investigation. Duterte has reacted with defiance and threats. Yet those around him may not be as bullish as they contemplate their future. The national police are particularly sensitive; its chief has blamed “scalawags” in the force for deaths. International pressure could yet have an impact. It must be exerted. (Source: The Guardian)

Cuban ambassador: The U.S. strategy is to provoke disappointment through economic hardship

➔ The only possible means to annihilate internal support [to the regime] is to provoke disappointment and discouragement through economic dissatisfaction and hardship. We must weaken economic life (in Cuba). One measure that could have a very strong impact would be to deny all financing and deliveries to Cuba, which would reduce monetary income and real wages and provoke hunger, despair and the overthrow of the government"

During the Obama administration the blockade was maintained with a strong rigor, even set records in fines to international financial institutions for their relations with publicly owned banks or Cuban companies, for a value of almost 14 thousand 400 million USD, and continued to prevent to these the dollar use.

It is true that almost the few economic reliefs related to Cuba adopted by Obama were directed to the private sector, but most of this did not escape, nor escapes, the effects of the Blockade. The Blockade affects all of us. It is the most unjust, severe and prolonged system of unilateral sanctions that has been applied against any country, and I can assure you that it is the main obstacle to the development of the Cuban economy and the full enjoyment of all the human rights of all the Cuban people.

The adoption by President Trump of the "Presidential National Security Memorandum on Strengthening US Policy towards Cuba" (June 16, 2017), endorsed among its objectives the reinforcement of the blockade against the island and represented a serious setback to bilateral relations with Cuba. Subsequently, the regulations to which you refer (November 2017) of the Treasury, State and Commerce Departments, imposed additional obstacles to the limited opportunities of the North American business sector in Cuba and restricted the right of its citizens to travel to the Island. These measures not only affect the Cuban state economy, but also the non-state sector of the country.

The strengthening of the extraterritorial application of the blockade is another example of the hardening of this policy, with a marked impact on Cuba's international financial and credit relations. With Trump, the permanent persecution of Cuban financial transactions and our banking and credit operations on a global scale has continued, causing serious damage to our economy, in particular, to the commercial activities of Cuban companies and banks in their links with international banking. In 2018 dozens of banks in all regions of the world decided to close their relations with Cuban or foreign companies, to eliminate any link of their activity with Cuba, even operations with Cuban citizens just because they have that nationality.

The United States must end the blockade unilaterally and unconditionally.

In favor of the lifting of the blockade and the normalization of relations between the two countries, the majority support on behalf of the American public has been expressed, of the international community and of Cuban emigration in the USA. The empire has ignored it. On October 31, 2018, we will denounce the resurgence of this policy and we will present once again, before the General Assembly of the United Nations, the draft resolution entitled "Need to end the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the Government of the United States against Cuba". We will not renounce our principles nor will we stop claiming the total elimination of the blockade.

I would like to take advantage of your question to express Cuba's profound gratitude to the Iranian Government and people for demanding the cessation of this policy, which will never prevent us from defending our sovereignty and the right to freely choose our future.

■ Some experts believe that by returning to the cold war policy, Trump lost the opportunity that brought a historic change in the leadership of Cuba. On the other hand, there are some experts who say that Obama's opening policy did not show any tangible results since close work with Venezuela continues and human rights concerns remain. What is your opinion on this matter? We go by part and I will organize the answer in chronological order.

A: Obama wrote a unique chapter in the history of Cuba - United States relations. In the new relationship that began in December 2014 between Havana and Washington, three of the five Cuban heroes who remained in US prisons returned to Cuba, Cuba was removed from the State Department's list of terrorist states, the practice of granting automatic residency to any Cuban emigrant who stepped on US soil were stopped, diplomatic relations were restored at the embassy level and 22 mutually beneficial agreements were signed in areas of common interest. The trips of US citizens to Cuba were authorized, although not to do tourism, within a people-to-people policy that seeks to influence Cubans but also transforms perceptions about Cuba into American society. In addition to the bilateral impact, there was an impact on US allies that decided then to rapprochement



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with Cuba.

In April 2016, Barack Obama visited Havana. His communication strategy insisted mainly on two objectives: Erase the idea of the United States as an adversary of the Cubans (in other words, erase our history) and emphasize internal causes as the source of the daily difficulties that Cubans face. Of all this he spoke without taking into account the blockade, much less the growing political, economic and military aggression of his administration against Venezuela, the country that had the largest trade with Cuba at that time, and declared it as an "unusual and extraordinary threat" to the national security of the US, increased the financial harassment (economic war), and increased its open support for the opposition violence that sought to take the government of Nicolas Maduro.

Obama elaborated on the changes his government wanted to see in Cuba, seeking to increase pressure from the bottom up.

In spite of everything, with new and old challenges, Venezuela and Cuba are still standing, and will be.

You talk about the change of the historical leadership of Cuba. I can tell you that if any feature distinguishes more the current President and Cuban government is continuity. President Miguel Diaz Canel said: Cuba "will not make concessions against its sovereignty and independence, will not negotiate principles, nor will it accept conditions. Our goal is to give continuity to the Revolution that began on January 1, 1959. I assume this responsibility with the conviction that every Cuban, from the position we occupy, will be faithful to the example of the historical leader of the Revolution, Fidel Castro, and his comrade Raul Castro. In times like these, Cuba expects us to be like the historical generation, who were able to fight all the battles".

That is, the election of a new President and a new Council of Ministers did not give Trump any opportunity other than the one he already had (and has). He has really wasted any opportunity, increasing the sanctions on Cuba, returning to a very aggressive, disrespectful, disqualifying rhetoric, with abundant falsehoods and a strong dose of ignorance.

At the end of your question you mentioned human rights. It could be a topic for another interview. I just want to remind you of what was expressed by Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez Parrilla before the UN General Assembly on November 1, 2017: "the USA, where flagrant violations of human rights are being committed, which arouse deep concern on the part of the international community, do not have the slightest moral authority to criticize Cuba, a small, solidary country with a wide and recognized international trajectory; a noble, hardworking and friendly people, that empire "is responsible for most of the wars being fought on the planet today, which kill innocents, and is the decisive factor of world instability and of grave threats to peace and international security, trampling on International Law and the Charter of the United Nations".

■ A few months ago it happened to me to speak with the ambassador of Nicaragua. We discussed a number of issues, including the current crisis in Nicaragua, the economic war against Venezuela and foreign fingerprints on all the turmoil in Latin America. Now here's the question: what is behind the obvious hostility of some countries against the leftist governments of Latin America?

A: I recommend reading the base document of the XXIV Meeting of the Forum of Sao Paulo held in Havana, Cuba from July 15 to 17 of this year. It addresses in a broad, detailed, critical and above all very self-critical, the current situation in Latin America, US policy towards it, the complexity of the neoliberal oligarchies, the problems of the left, etc.

Latin America and the Caribbean people live today, again, under the effects of a multifaceted counterrevolutionary offensive, the fruit of convergent interests and combined

efforts between the world elites of transnational capitalism, the US government as its hegemonic nucleus, as well as the oligarchic fractions and the dependent bourgeoisies of our region, which suffer again the inequalities resulting from the restored neo-liberal policies. The political and social setbacks in some countries show this dramatically.

Undoubtedly, the current US administration has increased its interventionism in Latin America. I speak of a very dangerous interventionism, with a presence of 76 military bases, support for military and judicial coups, as well as persecutions against presidents and former presidents, attempted assassination of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, sanctions and economic blockades, the use of the discredited OAS against progressive governments, the cultural war, support for ultraconservative, neoliberal and corrupt figures. Efforts are perceived to encourage division and submission among Latin American governments, create alliances against progressive governments, demobilize politically the social and popular sectors and movements, promote the supposed non-viability of socialism or the application of social justice policies from the States, the strengthening of non-governmental initiatives, anti-systemic campaigns, the cooperation of judicial powers with organizations controlled by Washington to wage a selective and brutal war against the left in the region.

What is behind all this is to completely reverse the gains made by the popular governments and with anti-imperialist projections in the last decades, and to assure the imperial, domination, expansionist and predatory interests of the USA in our region. ■ Despite the efforts of the United States to make the puppet states of Latin American countries, independent states such as Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua managed to survive. Even after a decade, we are witnessing the emergence of a leftist movement in Mexico. What are the reasons behind the popularity and, of course, the recent failure of some socialist governments?

A: The counterrevolutionary, imperialist and oligarchic offensive has done a great deal of damage to the forces of the left, which have not considered, have not known or have not been able to identify and resolve their own mistakes and inadequacies. The divisions in the popular field are undeniable when facing the restored neoliberal agendas; the abstentionism and disdain for politics favor the plans of the right in important countries of the region, and the public strengthening of fascist figures and projects in several countries.

There have been defeatist attitudes, sponsorship or tolerance of personalism and sectarianism, loss of confidence in the political capacity of our exploited peoples. This not only constitutes an affront to the heroes and martyrs of the struggles for the emancipation of our continent, but is a gratuitous and unnecessary concession to the US, its allies in the world and in the region.

This reality explains in a fundamental degree the adverse change in the correlation of forces prevailing today.

The cases of the Bolivarian Revolution of Venezuela, the Sandinista of Nicaragua and the Cuban socialist are the result of long processes of struggle, in which the people have been liberated and dignified, have received important benefits from social programs, have been winning political consciousness and unity. A political direction has been forged and consolidated, with an important popular root. Unity, consciousness, leaderships are very important keys.

■ There is an argument that Trump's policy could push Cuba into the arms of Russia and China. The recent visit of the Russian warship to the port of Havana, the oil trade of Rosneft to Cuba and the rumor that Russia is behind the "sonic attack" against US diplomats in Cuba. Is President Vladimir Putin here to upset Latin American relations with the United States?

A: The relations between Cuba and Russia are excellent, and are based on traditional

ties of friendship between the peoples of both countries. They register a growing positive trend in areas of common interest, among which the high-level political dialogue, the economic-commercial and scientific-technical relations, as well as the cultural and educational one stand out.

It is known that we maintain a high level of agreement in the vision towards different topics of the international agenda, the defense of peace and the role of international organizations.

Something similar happens in our relations with China.

As for the alleged incidents with the American diplomatic personnel in Havana, I can assure you that Cuba has no responsibility in them and that the US lies deliberately about it.

There is not the least evidence of the occurrence of the alleged incidents.

Cuba rigorously fulfills its obligations regarding the protection of foreign diplomats, without exception.

Anti-Cuban elements in the US have politically manipulated this issue with the purpose of reversing relations between the two countries. Its hasty, unfounded and unacceptable decisions have seriously affected the functioning of embassies and ties, including official dialogue, bilateral cooperation, exchanges, travel of Americans to Cuba and family visits.

There is a media agenda to keep the public attentive to this issue. I do not know how far they want to go with this. They are experts in fabricating pretexts to start conflicts. First was the theory of sonic attacks, then viral, and now with microwaves. Tomorrow we do not know what it will be. Everything is false and absurd. They know it. There is no scientific evidence, nor seriousness in what they say.

Against Russia have been many campaigns. Every day is in the news. They do not know what they are going to say or invent. The truth is that Russia is making a huge contribution to the global balance, to avoid a unipolar world and that bothers some sectors of power in the US.

■ We have heard about Trump's suggestion of the military invasion against Venezuela and the assassination of Bashar al-Assad. What is your reaction to the news?

A: Both in Venezuela and in Syria the plans of the USA have been defeated.

The use of force and assassination are desperate options, which have never been outside the agenda of US policy. There are many examples in history. Only in the case of Fidel Castro there are proofs that they tried to kill him more than 600 times.

The only recommendation I can make to the US government about these cases is that they think it over and make no mistake, because it can cost them dearly.

■ At what level are the political and economic relations between Iran and Cuba? In what areas can we expect more cooperation and convergence?

A: The relations between our nations have been consolidating since the triumph of the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

Both countries work hard to develop and bring to the same level as political relations, the economic, trade and cooperation ones. There are several areas where we have identified common interests, some are already working with results, and others are in the exploration phase: biotechnology (medicines, vaccines), energy, mini industries, nanotechnology, academic sector, tourism, and media, among others. .

Cuba has expressed its profound rejection of the decision of the US government to withdraw from the Nuclear Agreement and the decision to impose sanctions or unilateral coercive economic measures.

Failure to comply with this international commitment violates the rules of coexistence between States and can have serious consequences for regional and international stability and security.

We call on all signatory parties to respect the nuclear agreement with Iran, while recognizing the legitimate right of any State to produce and make use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Finally, I would like to reiterate that Cuba has counted on the valuable support of Iran in favor of the just claim of the end of the blockade of the United States of America against Cuba, which we will always appreciate.

From Obama to Al Gore: The Democrats are taking stance against Trump



➔ In recent days, many of the American Democrats have intensified their verbal and political attacks on President Donald Trump. Former Secretary of State John Kerry implicitly stated that he would not rule out running for president in 2020. Kerry was the Democratic nominee for president in 2004 but ultimately lost the election to former US President George W. Bush. He had also emphasized on the critical situation of the United States following the presence of Trump at the White House. Also Al Gore, the former vice president and Democratic presidential candidate, publicly called for President Donald Trump to resign. Moreover, former US President Barack Obama challenged the existing policies in the United States during John McCain's funeral, without naming Trump. Delivering his eulogy, Obama said: "So much of our politics, our public life, our public discourse can seem small and mean and petty, trafficking in bombast and insult and phony controversies and manufactured outrage."

The fact is that one of the main goals of the American Democratic Party leaders in their recent political attacks on Trump is winning the U.S. mid-term elections and the conquest of the House of Representatives and the Senate. Right now the republicans hold the majority of the Congress, and many members of the party, while opposing Trump's policies, are not willing to confront him and stand up against the White House. But the Democrats, on the other hand, are trying to provide the ground for their victory in the 2020 presidential elections by explicitly criticizing, and even resisting to some of Trump's decisions. Democrats such as John Kerry, believe that if the Republicans fail in the Congress midterm elections and lose their dominance on the House of Representatives and Senate, it will be difficult for Trump to win the 2020 presidential elections. However, if the democrats fail this time against Republicans, just like the way they did in 2016, and lose seats in the House of Representatives and the Senate, Trump will not have a difficult way to win the next presidential election. Many American think-tanks and analysts believe that the mid-term elections this year (2018) will turn into a rigorous opposition between Trump's supporters and opponents.

It should be noted here that Democrat candidates for the presidential election in 2020 are not yet introduced. As John Kerry has announced, this is supposed to be after the Congress elections. Bernie Sanders, Joe Biden and John Kerry are considered as possible candidates for the next US presidential elections. However, some Democrat leaders believe that they should introduce a new figure for this battle.

It is yet not clear that who will be the final nominee of the Democrats, but it seems that many of the party's supporters do not have much confidence in their leaders anymore! In the run-up to the 2016 presidential election, Bernie Sanders became the sacrifice of the secret lobbies of the Democrats' senior figures. Later on, it became clear that Democrat leaders had agreed on Hillary Clinton's presence from the very beginning, and the impartial gesture in the Clinton-Sanders competition was nothing but a lie. This caused many of the American citizens to vote for Trump instead of Sanders. Anyway, this time the Democratic Party has a hard time to persuade the party's supporters, and the Congress elections will, to a great extent, depict the political and social composition in the United States ...

First Announcement



N.I.S.O.C

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Ms.Diba: 09128103206

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Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

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Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

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Ms.Diba: 09128103206

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بهترین مشاوره، برترین سرویس، بالاترین رضایت

مالکین محترم املاک مبله و غیرمبله، مسکونی، اداری و تجاری، ویلا و مستغلات شما را جهت اجاره به سفارتخانه ها و شرکت های خارجی نیازمندیم.

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Shahrak-e- Gharb,Villa
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Iranian charity top scorer in global NGO Benchmark ranking



1 → NGO benchmarking empowers organizations to detect risks and weaknesses and correct them before it is too late. This is paramount for any organization that aspires to achieve a long lasting impact through the transparent, efficient and effective use of financing.

Since it was first benchmarked in 2007, MAHAK has made considerable efforts to improve its transparency and accountability, with focus on continuous improvement as a principle, SGS official website wrote.

MAHAK decided to apply for re-certification to make sure its organization keeps up with high standards of quality and integrity, and ultimately it reached this impressive rank on its 8th audit.

SGS NGO Benchmarking offers a holistic good governance assessment covering all major risk areas for NGOs, and it has helped MAHAK to achieve sustainability, increase the public trust in its organization, and better improve the quality and quantity

of services provided to cancer-stricken children and their families.

Being 27 years old MAHAK has become the top scorer NGO worldwide among 328 NGOs participating the 8th round of benchmarking audit, the CEO of MAHAK Arash Ahmadian said, adding that 172 NGOs from America, 24 NGOs from Europe, 51 NGOs from Africa and 81 NGOs from Asia took part in the audit.

Ahmadian highlighted that MAHAK is the first NGO in the Middle East to receive NGO Benchmarking certification.

According to SGS website NGO Benchmarking certification audit was developed by SGS in 2001 to provide a universal 'trust standard' for NGOs. A consolidation of various codes and standards, the benchmark provides NGOs with the critical independent insight about their governance and accountability. It empowers organizations to set measurable improvement steps. To date hundreds of NGOs have been benchmarked against International Best Practices, across 54 countries in the world.

MAHAK decided to apply for re-certification to make sure its organization keeps up with high standards of quality and integrity, and ultimately it reached this impressive rank on its 8th audit.

Ahmadian went on to say that the ever-expanding family of MAHAK has been supporting cancer-stricken children and their families for 27 years. As a result of the benevolence of Iranian society in all circumstances, whether good or bad, the treatment of children with cancer has not been stopped even in economic hardships.

"Over the years, as a result of the constant patronage and care of the ever-expanding family of MAHAK toward children with cancer and their families thousands of children have received treatment and supportive services and over 6,000 children have survived cancer.

"This important milestone is an honor for Iranians and we congratulate this success to Iranian philanthropists and hope that we can have the lowest rates of cancer and the highest survivorship rates, which will only be possible if you stand by children with cancer and their families," Ahmadian concluded.

Nobel medicine prize awarded for cancer immunotherapy research

James Allison, from the University of Texas, and Tasuku Honjo, from Japan's Kyoto University, worked in parallel as they tried to stimulate the immune system's ability to attack tumors.

Scientists from the U.S. and Japan both looked at how the immune system's ability to attack tumors could be stimulated.



Two scientists have been jointly awarded the Nobel Prize for medicine for "landmark" research into how the body's natural defenses can fight cancer.

Dr Allison looked at a protein that acts as a brake on the immune system.

Separately, Prof Honjo discovered a new protein on immune cells, finding that that too acts as a brake.

They will share prize money of 9m Swedish kronor (£776,000). Their work constitutes a "landmark in our fight against cancer", said the Nobel Assembly of the Karolinska Institute, which awarded the prize. The institute added that therapies based on Prof Honjo's discovery "proved to be strikingly effective in the fight against cancer".

Among those to have received such treatment is former US president Jimmy Carter, who was diagnosed in 2015 with the skin cancer melanoma, which had spread to his brain.

In 2016, after being treated with a drug inspired by Prof Honjo's research, he announced that he no longer needed treatment.

Prof Honjo said the award came "completely out of the blue" and "of course, I was very happy, delighted at the same time, but shocked".

He told reporters he has feelings of "immense joy" when people tell him they have recovered because of his work.

A member of his golf club approached him and thanked him for his efforts, he said.

"I had lung cancer," the member was quoted as saying, "and thought I was playing my last round of golf. But now I am able to play golf again."

Prof Honjo wants to continue his research, "so that this immune therapy will save more cancer patients than ever".

Dr Allison, 70, said he was "honored and humbled to receive this prestigious recognition".

(Source: news.sky.com)

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Valiasre-Bagheferdos 3 Bdrs,fully furn,brand new,5th fl., 150 sq.m ,indoor spj,\$1900
Mirdamad-Naft 3 Bdrs,fully furn,5th fl.,200 sq.m, \$ 2000 Close to Paladium Shopping center 3Bdrs,180 sq.m,fully furn,lobby,sp,garden,\$2000

VILLA

Elahiyeh Triplex-800 sq.m built up,1000 sq.m land,Semi-furn,7 Bdrs,spj,\$9000
Zaferaniyeh Duplex, 4 Bdrs,unfurn,350 sq.m,spj,\$8000
Niavaran 2000 sq.m land,green garden,500 sq.m built up area,indoor spj,4Bdrs,fully furn,triplex,\$15000
Darous 1000 sq.m land,400 sq.m built up area, flat.4 Bdrs,spj.\$7000
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Zaferaniyeh Triplex villa,800 sq.m,built up,1000 sq.m land,12 rooms,\$8500
Niavaran Triplex villa,2000 sq.m land,600 sq.m built up ,spj,all facilities,\$15000
Darous Duplex villa,600 sq.m built up,1000 sq.m land ,all facilities,\$8000
Other areas: Farmaniyeh Aghdasiyeh Shahrak Gharb Shariati-Pasdaran Valiasre Tajrish Jordan Vanak Arjantin Zafar... nice cases ready to move in.

ISA to celebrate World Space Week

TECHNOLOGY **TEHRAN** — The Iranian Space Agency (ISA) provide different events during the World Space Week, October 4 to 10, for Iranian citizens, ISNA reported.

The days of the week are named space, youth and new ideas, space and tourism development, space and communication development, space and life quality, space and resource management, space and economic development and space law and international cooperation.

ISA plans to hold a space startup event from October 7 to 10. During the event, startups, which are active in the field of marketing and commercialization compete with each other.

The ISA also provides a program to promote space section according to which, the agency aims to boost international cooperation in space education, the secretary of the World Space Week headquarters Mohammad Jafar Mohammadi announced last week.

The ISA aims to develop the international connections, space diplomacy, national and international conference on technical aspects of space, he added.

On December 6, 1999, The United Nations General Assembly declared World Space Week as an annual event celebration to be commemorated between October 4 and 10.

The choice of dates was based on recognition of two important dates in space history: the launch of the first human-made Earth satellite, Sputnik 1, on October 4, 1957; and the signing of the Outer Space Treaty on October 10, 1967.

The 2018 theme of for UN-declared World Space Week 2018 will be Space Unites the World, which is inspired by UNISPACE+50, a historic gathering of world space leaders which will occur in 2018.



SOCIALLY SAFE

Safety tips for price comparison websites

Price comparison or 'aggregator' sites have grown enormously in popularity in recent years. In general, they represent a major step forward — enabling you to secure better value when buying insurance, financial services, utilities, telecoms and other products quickly and easily — and will undoubtedly increase in popularity as online sales contribute to grow.

■ Using Price Comparison Sites Safely

- Protect your data by checking the price comparison site's terms and conditions dealing with data and privacy.
- If you do not want your personal information to be passed to other companies, ensure that you have the ability to 'opt out' of doing so on the website, for example by ticking a box to say that you do not give your consent for your information to be shared.



- Make the comparison by requesting the results which are most helpful to you, for example not only by price but perhaps the excess on an insurance policy, or flexible terms with a loan.
 - Check if your results are presented by relevance, price, or popularity and what the website says about how often it updates its information on prices and availability of goods.
 - Use a number of different sites: not every deal is found on every site despite the presence of expressions such as 'we've found the best deal' or 'we've searched the market'.
 - Know who you are doing business with. Make sure that the site reveals the identity of the business (not just the name of the website) and their business address, both legal requirements.
 - If possible, use a site accredited by the relevant regulatory body, such as Consumer Focus for energy products, Ofcom for telecoms and the Government-backed Money Advice Service for financial services.
- The above advice also applies to any websites you are directed to by the price comparison site.
- #### ■ And always remember...
- Use strong passwords. Never reveal your website access or online payment passwords to anybody.
 - If you think that your online payment account has been compromised, take action immediately. Check the site's online help page.
 - Be wary about clicking on links provided in unsolicited emails. For example, it is better to enter your bank's website address into your browser directly, or use a bookmark that you created using the correct address.
 - If you pay by payment card, remember that a credit card offers greater protection than with other methods in terms of fraud, guarantees and non-delivery.
 - The web address should begin with 'https://'. The 's' stands for 'secure'.
 - Always log out of sites into which you have logged in or registered details. Simply closing your browser is not enough to ensure privacy.
- Keep receipts.
- Check credit card and bank statements carefully after shopping to ensure that the correct amount has been debited, and also that no fraud has taken place as a result of the transaction.

(Source: getsafeonline.org)

Sharif University, National Cartographic Center plan to boost technical ties

TECHNOLOGY **TEHRAN** — The knowledge-based companies at the Sharif Entrepreneurship Center, affiliated to Tehran's Sharif University of Technology, and the National Cartographic Center of Iran plan to boost technical cooperation in the near future.

The National Cartographic Center's head Masoud Shafiei paid a visit to the Sharif Entrepreneurship Center at the Sharif University of Technology in Tehran on Monday, ISNA reported.

The two sides cooperate in different fields including airborne imagery, national navigation applications as well as other technical fields.

The Sharif University of Technology is now focused on improvement of technology and entrepreneurship, the deputy director of the Sharif Entrepreneurship Center Mohammadreza Hosseini said during the visit.

The Sharif Entrepreneurship Center is now cooperating in the field of IT and ICT with other organizations out of the university, he announced.

Over 300 knowledge-based companies are now active at the center and the university has already began the process of commercialization of many knowledge-based products and services, he announced.

He said that the center is facing problems for providing digital media camera and some other GPS and GNSS equipment, which is made by the western countries.

"Unfortunately the center is not digitalize completely," he lamented.

He said that they plan to improve technological aspects at the National Cartographic Center of Iran in near future.

The National Cartographic Center of Iran is the main authority for production of maps and spatial information under the planning and strategic supervision of vice presidency for science and technology.



A satellite image of Tehran's Azadi Tower

Energy development tech center to be established



TECHNOLOGY **TEHRAN** — The Energy Development Technology Council and the Anzali Free Trade Industrial Zone Organization signed an agreement to establish an energy development technology center in the northern Anzali port, IRNA reported.

The secretary of the council, Kambiz Mehdizadeh Farsad, and the managing director of the organization, Reza Masrour, signed the agreement on Sunday.

The council, which is affiliated

to the science and technology vice presidency, plans to hold educational courses for knowledge-based companies and NGOs to promote renewable energy at the region.

The two sides cooperate in attracting hi-tech industries in the field of energy as well as holding seminars on energy and environment in Anzali.

According to the agreement, there would be a synergy in strengthening corridor between Iran, China and Kazakhstan to transfer energy-based products.

How to uncover Unique Selling Proposition (USP) for your startup?



Put yourself in your customer's shoes. Too often, entrepreneurs fall in love with their product or service and forget that it is the customer's needs, not their own, that they must satisfy. Step back from your daily operations and carefully scrutinize what your customers really want. Suppose you own a pizza parlor. Sure, customers come into your pizza place for food. But is food all they want? The answer might be quality, convenience, reliability, friendliness, cleanliness, courtesy or customer service.

Remember, price is never the only reason people buy. If your competition is beating you on pricing because they are larger, you have to find another sales feature that addresses the customer's needs

and then build your sales and promotional efforts around that feature.

Know what motivates your customers' behavior and buying decisions. Effective marketing requires you to be an amateur psychologist. You need to know what drives and motivates customers. Go beyond the traditional customer demographics, such as age, gender, race, income and geographic location, which most businesses collect to analyze their sales trends.

Uncover the real reasons customers buy your product instead of a competitor's. As your business grows, you'll be able to ask your best source of information: your customers.

(Source: entrepreneur.com)

Telecom Innovation 2018 opens today in Tehran



TECHNOLOGY **TEHRAN** — The 19th International Exhibition of Telecommunications, Information Technology, known as Telecom Innovation 2018, will open today at the Tehran Permanent International Fairground.

The exhibition, which runs until October 6, is held in the field of innovative Communications and Information Technology (CIT).

The exhibition is organized by the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Ministry, the Communications Regulatory Authority, the Telecommunications Infrastructure Company (TIC) and the Telecommunications Company of Iran (TCI).

The exhibition showcases a broad picture of the whole telecom market in Iran, with stands from equipment and infrastructure vendors, satellite operators, wholesale carriers, VAS solutions suppliers, OSS/BSS vendors and more.

Over four days, the market's most dynamic companies across the telecoms ecosystem will be attending the event.

The exhibition covers mobile communications, communication and internet services, navigation, networks, information technology, peripherals and components, storage systems and equipment, services, card technologies, office automation - equipment, accessories and system software.

A beginner's guide to blockchain-part four



By allowing digital information to be distributed but not copied, blockchain technology created the backbone of a new type of internet. Originally devised for the digital currency, Bitcoin. (Buy Bitcoin) the tech community is now finding other potential uses for the technology.

Bitcoin has been called "digital gold," and for a good reason. To date, the total value of the currency is close to \$112 billion US. And blockchains can make other types of digital value.

■ The idea of decentralization

By design, the blockchain is a decentralized technology.

Anything that happens on it is a function of the network as a whole. Some important implications stem from this. By creating a

new way to verify transactions aspects of traditional commerce could become unnecessary. Stock market trades become almost simultaneous on the blockchain, for instance — or it could make types of record keeping, like a land registry, fully public. And decentralization is already a reality.

A global network of computers uses blockchain technology to jointly manage the database that records Bitcoin transactions. That is, Bitcoin is managed by its network, and not any one central authority. Decentralization means the network operates on a user-to-user (or peer-to-peer) basis. The forms of mass collaboration this makes possible are just beginning to be investigated.

(Source: blockgeeks.com)

Cold plasma pyrolysis could revolutionize plastic waste, scientists say

In the adventure classic back to the future, Emmett “Doc” Brown uses energy generated from rubbish to power his DeLorean time machine. But while a time machine may still be some way off, the prospect of using rubbish for fuel isn’t too far from reality. Plastics, in particular, contain mainly carbon and hydrogen, with similar energy content to conventional fuels such as diesel.

Plastics are among the most valuable waste materials — although with the way people discard them, you probably wouldn’t know it. It’s possible to convert all plastics directly into useful forms of energy and chemicals for industry, using a process called “cold plasma pyrolysis.”

Pyrolysis is a method of heating, which decomposes organic materials at temperatures between 400 and 650, in an environment with limited oxygen. Pyrolysis is normally used to generate energy in the form of heat, electricity or fuels, but it could be even more beneficial if cold plasma was incorporated into the process, to help recover other chemicals and materials.

■ **Converting waste plastics into hydrogen**

Cold plasma pyrolysis makes it possible to convert waste plastics into hydrogen, methane and ethylene. Both hydrogen and methane can be used as clean fuels, since they only produce minimal amounts of harmful compounds such as soot, unburnt



hydrocarbons and carbon dioxide (CO). And ethylene is the basic building block of most plastics used around the world today.

As it stands, 40 percent of waste plastic products in the U.S. and 31 percent in the EU are sent to landfill. Plastic waste also makes up 10 to 13 percent of municipal solid waste. This wastage has huge detrimental

impacts on oceans and other ecosystems. Of course, burning plastics to generate energy is normally far better than wasting them. But burning does not recover materials for reuse, and if the conditions are not tightly controlled, it can have detrimental effects on the environment such as air pollution.

Both hydrogen and methane can be used as clean fuels, since they only produce minimal amounts of harmful compounds such as soot, unburnt hydrocarbons and carbon dioxide (CO).

In a circular economy — where waste is recycled into new products, rather than being thrown away — technologies that give new life to waste plastics could transform the problem of mounting waste plastic. Rather than wasting plastics, cold plasma pyrolysis can be used to recover valuable materials, which can be sent directly back into industry.

■ **Cold plasma pyrolysis**

In our recent study we tested the effectiveness of cold plasma pyrolysis using plastic bags, milk and bleach bottles collected by a local recycling facility in Newcastle, UK.

We found that 55 times more ethylene was recovered from high density polyethylene (HDPE) — which is used to produce everyday objects such as plastic bottles and piping — using cold plasma, compared to conventional pyrolysis. About 24 percent of plastic weight was converted from HDPE directly into valuable products.

Plasma technologies have been used to deal with hazardous waste in the past, but the process occurs at very high temperatures of more than 3,000°C, and therefore requires a complex and energy intensive cooling system. The process for cold plasma pyrolysis that we investigated operates at just 500 to 600 by combining conventional heating and cold plasma, which means the process requires relatively much less energy.

(Source: Newsweek)

130-year-old brain coral reveals encouraging news for open ocean: new study



When nitrogen-based fertilizers flow into water bodies, the result can be deadly for marine life near shore, but what is the effect of nitrogen pollution far out in the open ocean?

A 130-year-old brain coral has provided the answer, at least for the North Atlantic Ocean off the East Coast of the United States. By measuring the nitrogen in the coral’s skeleton, a team of researchers led by Princeton University found significantly less nitrogen pollution than previously estimated.

“To our surprise, we did not see evidence of increased nitrogen pollution in the North Atlantic Ocean over the past several decades,” said Xingchen (Tony) Wang, who conducted the work as part of his doctorate in geosciences at Princeton and is now a postdoctoral scholar at the California Institute of Technology.

Earlier work by the Princeton-based team, however, did find elevated nitrogen pollution in another open ocean site in the South China Sea, coinciding with the dramatic increase in coal production and fertilizer usage in China over the past two decades.

■ **Coral skeleton samples**

In the new study, the researchers looked at coral skeleton samples collected in the open ocean about 620 miles east of the North American continent near the island of Bermuda, a region thought to be strongly influenced by airborne nitrogen released from U.S. mainland sources such as vehicle exhaust and power plants.

Although the team found no evidence that human-made nitrogen was on the rise, the researchers noted variations in nitrogen

that corresponded to levels expected from a natural climate phenomenon called the North Atlantic Oscillation, Wang said.

The result is in contrast to previously published computer models that predicted a significant increase in human-made nitrogen pollution in the North Atlantic.

The work may indicate that U.S. pollution control measures are successfully limiting the amount of human-generated nitrogen emissions that enter the ocean.

■ **The nitrogen impact**

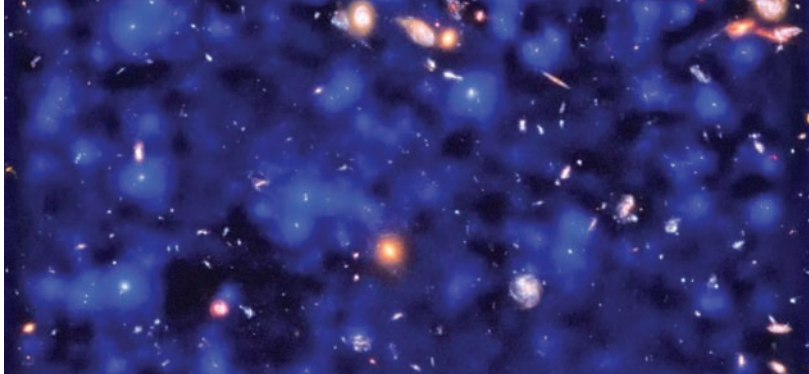
“Our finding has important implications for the future of human nitrogen impact on the North Atlantic Ocean,” said Wang. “Largely due to advances in pollution technology, human nitrogen emissions from the U.S. have held steady or even declined in recent decades,” he said. “If emissions continue at this level, our results imply that the open North Atlantic will remain minimally affected by nitrogen pollution in coming decades.”

Nitrogen, when in its biologically available form and supplied in excess, can cause overgrowth of plants and algae and lead to severe ecosystem harm, including marine “dead zones” that form when microorganisms consume all the oxygen in the water, leaving none for fish. Fertilizer production and fossil fuel burning have greatly increased the production of biologically available, or “fixed,” nitrogen since the early 20th century.

When emitted to the atmosphere, fixed nitrogen can influence the ocean far from land. However, the impacts on the ocean are difficult to study because of the challenges involved in making long-term observations in the open ocean.

(Source: eurekaalert.org)

Nearly the entire sky in the early universe is glowing with Lyman-alpha emission



Deep observations made with the MUSE spectrograph on ESO’s Very Large Telescope have uncovered vast cosmic reservoirs of atomic hydrogen surrounding distant galaxies. The exquisite sensitivity of MUSE allowed for direct observations of dim clouds of hydrogen glowing with Lyman-alpha emission in the early Universe -- revealing that almost the whole night sky is invisibly aglow.

An unexpected abundance of Lyman-alpha emission in the Hubble Ultra Deep Field (HUDF) region was discovered by an international team of astronomers using the MUSE instrument on ESO’s Very Large Telescope (VLT).

Astronomers have long been accustomed to the sky looking wildly different at different wavelengths, but the extent of the observed Lyman-alpha emission was still surprising. “Realizing that the whole sky glows in optical when observing the Lyman-alpha emission from distant clouds of hydrogen was a literally eye-opening surprise,” explained Kasper Borello Schmidt, a member of the team of astronomers behind this result.

“This is a great discovery!” added team member Themiyá Nanayakkara. “Next time you look at the moonless night sky and see the stars, imagine the unseen glow of hydrogen: the first building block of the universe, illuminating the whole night sky.”

■ **In otherwise remarkable area**

The HUDF region the team observed is an otherwise unremarkable area in the constellation of Fornax (the Furnace), which was famously mapped by the NASA/ESA Hubble Space Telescope in 2004,

when Hubble spent more than 270 hours of precious observing time looking deeper than ever before into this region of space.

The HUDF observations revealed thousands of galaxies scattered across what appeared to be a dark patch of sky, giving us a humbling view of the scale of the Universe. Now, the outstanding capabilities of MUSE have allowed us to peer even deeper. The detection of Lyman-alpha emission in the HUDF is the first time astronomers have been able to see this faint emission from the gaseous envelopes of the earliest galaxies. This composite image shows the Lyman-alpha radiation in blue superimposed on the iconic HUDF image.

MUSE, the instrument behind these latest observations, is a state-of-the-art integral field spectrograph installed on Unit Telescope 4 of the VLT at ESO’s Paranal Observatory. When MUSE observes the sky, it sees the distribution of wavelengths in the light striking every pixel in its detector. Looking at the full spectrum of light from astronomical objects provides us with deep insights into the astrophysical processes occurring in the Universe.

However, as this faint omnipresent glow is thought to be ubiquitous in the night sky, future research is expected to shed light on its origin.

“In the future, we plan to make even more sensitive measurements,” concluded Lutz Wisotzki, leader of the team. “We want to find out the details of how these vast cosmic reservoirs of atomic hydrogen are distributed in space.”

(Source: Science Daily)

Scientists think they’ve finally found the crushing limits of gravity humans could survive

In 2015, the strong man and Game of Thrones actor broke a millennium-old record by taking — or more accurately, staggering — five steps with a 650 kilogram (1,430 pound) log on his back.

To most of us, this was simply an extraordinary example of heroic strength. To scientists, this feat marked a crushing limit to the gravitational pull any mortal could ever hope to endure, setting a boundary on the mass of planets we might expect to colonize.

According to a small team of physicists from the University of Zagreb in Croatia, we really wouldn’t want to be setting our sights on planets with a mass that’s any greater than four times that of our Earth’s. And that’s after no small amount of training.

The scientists arrived at this critical figure after taking into account the compressibility of human bones, the flexion of our muscles, and the swinging nature of our legs as we stride across a planet’s surface.

Our bones are impressive structures as far as engineering goes. In fact, our tibia could handle something like 90 times Earth’s gravity (g) before splintering.

That’s an insane amount of force, but things change if



we try to take a step on such a supersized world. Dynamic stresses and twisting effects would make short work of our skeleton, lowering the actual limit to something closer to 10 g.

■ **Taking into account**

That is until you take into account the fact we’d need to move. Crunching the numbers on the power of human muscle, the researchers determined with rigorous training we just might be able to push against gravity that’s no more than around 5 g.

Walking upright is a different story, though. We humans are pretty good at the whole walking upright thing. We’ve

been doing it for about 3.6 million years, taking advantage of its energy efficiency, and without getting too cocky we’ve pretty much nailed it by now.

Still, our bipedal gait was mastered under a gravitational pull equivalent to about 9.8 Newtons of force for every kilogram of body mass.

So the physicists wanted to know what ramping up the pull of extra gravity would do to the pendulum swing of our perambulating meat-sticks.

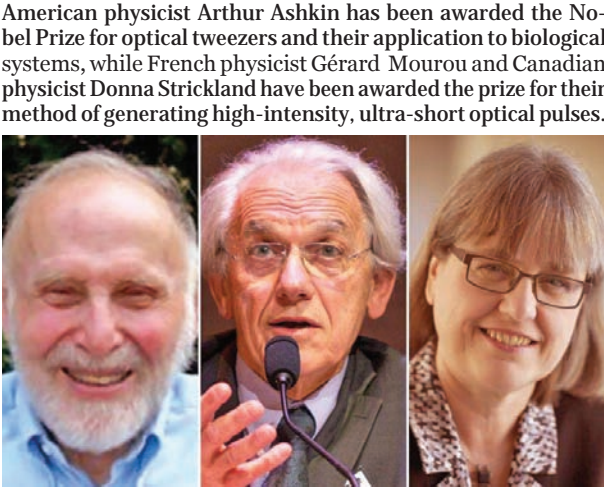
Walking is essentially a cycle of controlled falling, where the swing of each leg prevents our face from meeting the ground. This fall-reset-fall-reset pattern causes our center of mass to bob up and down, which is where most of the work is concentrated.

The physicists developed their own model for what’s described as an “inverted pendulum gait”, taking into account the oscillations of a person’s center of mass and the timing of their swinging legs.

Björnsson’s record setting five steps establishes a pretty good benchmark for the upper limits of what a human gait could achieve.

(Source: sciencealert.com)

Nobel Prize in Physics is shared by a woman, the first in 55 years



American physicist Arthur Ashkin has been awarded the Nobel Prize for optical tweezers and their application to biological systems, while French physicist Gérard Mourou and Canadian physicist Donna Strickland have been awarded the prize for their method of generating high-intensity, ultra-short optical pulses.

Strickland is the first woman in 55 years to be awarded the prize, while 96-year-old Ashkin, becomes the oldest Nobel Laureate.

The Nobel laureates in Physics are announced at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in Stockholm, Sweden.

Marie Curie was the first-ever woman to win a Nobel Prize in Physics in 1903, recognized for her co-discovery of radiation, followed by Maria Goeppert-Mayer in 1963 for discoveries about nuclear structure.

“We need to celebrate women physicists because we’re out there. I’m honored to be one of those women,” Strickland said in a news conference following the announcement in Stockholm.

Speaking about being the third woman to ever win the award, she said she thought there might have been more, adding: “Hopefully in time it will start to move forward at a faster rate.”

The announcement comes one day after a senior scientist with Cern, the academic home to a number of Nobel Prize winners, was suspended for saying that physics was invented and built by men.

In announcing the award, the Royal Swedish Academy said both inventions “revolutionized laser physics.”

“Advanced precision instruments are opening up unexplored areas of research and a multitude of industrial and medical applications,” The Nobel Prize shared in a post on Twitter.

(Source: cnn.com)

Fossil of oldest flowering tree in North America discovered

A fossil log found in the Mancos Shale of Utah reveals that huge angiosperms were part of the forest canopy in North America at least 15 million years earlier than previously believed. The preserved log was nearly 6 feet (1.8 meters) in diameter, 36 feet (11 m) long and probably came from a tree about 164 feet (50 m) tall, according to a new study published online Sept. 26 in the open-access journal Science Advances. It would have shared the forest with gymnosperms like conifers and ginkgo trees.

The fossil is the first documented angiosperm greater than 9.8 feet (3 m) in diameter from prior to 75 million years ago, study researcher Michael D’Emic, a biologist at Adelphi University in New York, told Live Science in an email.

The petrified log dates to between 94 million and 90 million years ago, part of the late Cretaceous period. At the time, a vast interior seaway cut North America in two. The log was found in what was once an ancient river delta by this seaway.

The finding is important, D’Emic said, because it’s unusual to find fossil wood from the Cretaceous. That led to the question of whether the wood simply wasn’t being preserved in the fossil record or whether flowering trees simply weren’t around in that period.

Stephanie Pappas is a contributing writer for Live Science. She covers the world of human and animal behavior, as well as paleontology and other science topics. Stephanie has a Bachelor of Arts in psychology from the University of South Carolina and a graduate certificate in science communication from the University of California, Santa Cruz. She has ducked under a glacier in Switzerland and poked hot lava with a stick in Hawaii. Stephanie hails from East Tennessee, the global center for salamander diversity.

(Source: Live Science)

Microbial “spacesuits” help bacteria convert CO2 to useful chemicals, team finds

Bacteria have been found living in some pretty hostile environments, but they’re not invincible. Researchers at the University of California, Berkeley have now developed “spacesuits” that wrap around bacteria to not only protect them from the elements, but turn them into biohybrids that capture carbon dioxide and turn it into useful chemicals.

The so-called spacesuits are made of metallic organic frameworks (MOFs). These structures have some of the highest surface areas of any material, with one gram holding the equivalent surface area of a football field. That incredible hidden space means MOFs can absorb quite a lot of molecules, and have been used in the past as industrial carbon-capture filters, “electronic noses” for detecting chemicals, and membranes that can separate drinking water and useable minerals out of seawater.

In this case, the UC Berkeley researchers used MOF meshes to protect bacteria and even feed them. The overall goal was to use these bugs as a hybrid artificial photosynthesis system, which takes in carbon dioxide and produces certain chemicals that are needed in industrial use.

They started with bacteria like Morella thermoacetica and Sporomusa ovata, two species that produce acetate (vinegar) and are anaerobic, meaning they don’t breathe oxygen.

To boost that process, the researchers first fed the bacteria cadmium, which causes them to decorate themselves with cadmium sulfide. This natural semiconductor efficiently absorbs light and uses it to feed electrons to the bacteria. Essentially, this is using light and carbon dioxide to produce vinegar or other chemicals.

“We picked these anaerobic bacteria because their selectivity toward one chemical product is always 100 percent,” says Peidong Yang, lead researcher on the project.

(Source: New Atlas)

1,700 schools inaugurated nationwide

SOCIETY TEHRAN — Some 1,700 new schools were simultaneously inaugurated nationwide in a ceremony which was held in a school in Tehran on Tuesday.



This year, some 8,000 classrooms have been inaugurated compared to the last year's number of 5,000, Education Minister Mohammad Bat'haei said during the ceremony, Fars news agency reported.

"We have achieved the significant growth, despite the cruel sanctions imposing on the country," Bat'haei highlighted.

He went on to say that a significant number of the country's schools are being constructed and inaugurated by the generous donation made by philanthropists.

According to the report, 15 trillion rials (nearly \$360 million) was invested in the project.

Out of the 1700 schools, 169 are located in Khorasan Razavi province, placing it at the first rank. Khuzestan and Sistan-Baluchestan provinces come next with 161 and 144 schools, respectively. In Tehran province, 65 schools were inaugurated, the report added.

Tehran plays host to International Nutrition Congress

SOCIETY TEHRAN — The 3rd International Nutrition Congress aiming at improving public health through innovation and research regarding food and nutrition, will be held in Tehran on December 19-21, the congress's secretary general has announced.

The Iranian Nutrition Congress, is one of the most important scientific events in the field of nutrition science in the country and also in the region, as many researchers, scientists and policymakers, discuss their latest scientific achievements in the fields of food and nutrition, ISNA quoted Tirang Neyestani as saying on Tuesday.



Held annually in Iran the congress will open under the theme of "Sustainable Nutrition for an Active Happy Life" emphasizing the goal of food and nutrition scientific community to improve public health outcomes through innovation, research, and discovery.

The congress is attended by over 2,000 participants and several international delegates, including scientists from the disciplines of clinical nutrition, community nutrition, food and nutrition policy, nutrigenomics, sport nutrition and food safety who will present the most recent advances in different fields of studies in nutrition.

The congress will include keynote address, plenary lectures, scientific lectures, symposiums, original study presentations, debates and round tables by renowned national and international speakers.

This year's theme emphasizes the role of nutrition in improving the community's quality of life, as sustained nutrition depends on many factors, such as agriculture and sustainable economies, which demonstrate the importance of national and international collaboration to improve people's quality of life through sustainable nutrition, Neyestani further explained.

The congress's main topics are nutrition security, food safety, nutrition and diseases, nutrition care in hospital, food and nutrition policies, nutrition for special groups and conditions, he addressed.

Sport nutrition, cellular and molecular nutrition, novel technologies in nutrition, nutrition and sustainable happy life and advances in nutrition science are among the subjects to be discussed at the event, he concluded.

LEARN ENGLISH Purchasing Manager

A: Good morning, Angela, how have you been lately?
B: Morning, Michael. I've been very busy lately. One of our other vendors is going out of business and I've been searching for a suitable replacement.
A: Well, rest assured that you can count on us to be here for the long run sit down. Coffee?
B: No, thanks. I've been trying to cut down on the caffeine.
A: Ha-ha, I could never do that. I'd be a zombie if I didn't have my morning coffee fix. Let's get down to business then.
B: Yes. I've come to talk with you about ordering the eight megapixel cameras for our new MePhone. The demand for phone cameras is growing, and Pear has been falling behind in the market.
A: That's great! I'm glad to hear that Pear has finally jumped on the bandwagon. Right now our contract is for the five megapixel cameras. Is Pear still interested in having those?
B: No, we're changing all the cameras to eight megapixels. We were hoping that by making your company our sole supplier for cameras we could negotiate a better deal.
A: Surely. Let's get started by drafting a new contract.

■ Key vocabulary
suitable: having the right qualities
assured: to be sure, certain
long run: a long period of time
contract: a formal written agreement between two or more people
sole: unique; one and only
supplier: person or company who sells you goods
negotiate: to reach an agreement on money, terms, etc.
■ Supplementary vocabulary
lead time: time needed to ship or manufacture goods
payment terms: terms or conditions for payment
backorder: order which cannot be taken or filled now
wholesale: sale of goods and services to retailers
buyer: professional purchaser specializing in a specific group of materials, goods, or services

(Source: irlanguage.com)

Iran's Noncommunicable Diseases Committee receives UNIATF award

SOCIETY TEHRAN — The UN Interagency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (UNIATF) award went to the Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) Committee of Iran's Ministry of Health for making an outstanding contribution to NCD prevention and control.

Deputy Director General of Programmes at the World Health Organization (WHO), Somia Swaminatan, has granted the award to the representative of the Non-Communicable Diseases Committee during the "Friends of the Task Force" meeting on the sidelines of the third High-level Meeting on NCDs at the United Nations General Assembly in New York on September 27, 2018, IRNA news agency reported on Tuesday.

UNIATF at its 10th meeting in Vienna in February 2018 initiated the UNIATF award to recognize those making an outstanding contribution to NCD prevention and control.

The UNIATF awards are issued to individuals or groups of individuals for achievements in the area of multisector action in the prevention and control of NCDs for getting countries on the right trajectories in achieving NCD-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In line with WHO's activities to combat NCDs, in 2015, a committee has been established in Iran called National Non-Communicable Disease Committee at the Ministry of Health headed by the Health Minister, Hassan Qazizadeh Hashemi. There are six subcommittees affiliated with this committee



Due to the efforts made over the past 40 to 50 years on improvement of the quality of fresh water, roads, education, electricity and health services, Iran is among the countries where trachoma is eradicated.

responsible for controlling cancer, cardiovascular diseases, metabolic disorders, air pollution and inter-sectoral collaboration, traffic injuries, and a subcommittee for monitoring and evaluating whole action plan for

the NCDs in Iran.

The national plan to combat NCDs was endorsed by President Hassan Rouhani, Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani, the then Director-General of WHO Margaret Chan

UNFPA lauds Iran's efforts to provide services to the elderly

SOCIETY TEHRAN — The representative of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to Iran hailed Iranian organizations for the effective services they provide for the older persons.

Leila Joudane praised Iran's efforts to provide senior citizens with appropriate services helping them live safe and added that responsible organizations have worked well to serve the senior population in the community.

She made the remarks in a ceremony held in Tehran on Monday concurrent with the International Day of Older Persons, Tasnim news agency reported.

Over 81 percent of the elderly in Iran live with their family members, Joudane added.

According to the United Nations, almost 700 million people are now over the age of 60, she noted.

The aging population in the world will reach almost 1.4 billion by 2030, she stated, adding, by 2050, 2 billion people, over 20 percent of the world's population, will be over the age of 60 and "we need to prepare for this condition before the population grow older."

The increase in the number of older people is happening worldwide even in developed countries and Iran is no exception, she added.

She went on to say that "In the future, the aging population will constitute one-third of the country's total population, and the number of older women will even be higher than men."

According to the latest census, some 81 percent of the elderly in Iran live with family members, but the number of those who live without a wife or husband and family is also rising, she highlighted.

Elsewhere in her remarks, Joudane explained that some 50 percent of female elderly in the country are breadwin-

ners or are living alone, a significant proportion of whom are I financial distress.

Therefore it is of great importance to pay more attention to this group, she stated, adding, given that they can play an active role in the development of the community, enhanced attention to the particular needs and challenges faced by many older people is clearly required.

She further explained that for sustainable development, we need to study the demographic trends to use the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century and due to the fast growing of aging population, the 60-year-old population should come into greater focus in the future.

"A survey on aging population is underway in Iran under the auspices of the UNFPA, which can be effective in planning for and serving the elderly," she also highlighted.

"Our other task is to take steps toward elderly education and training, which is partially done by the Ministry of Co-operatives, Labor, and Social Welfare," she added.

She also went on to say that UNFPA Iran, Welfare Organization, and HelpAge International also will coordinate to co-host the biennium HelpAge Regional Conference on Population Ageing which will be held in Tehran on October 23-25, with a main theme of "Family, Community and State in Ageing Societies".

The conference brings together 130 foreign experts from 28 countries around the world, with representatives of government, international organizations, academic institutions, civil society organizations, parliamentarians and private sector, she concluded.

According to UNFPA, the day one of the conference assesses the trends in population ageing and family dynamics, as well as how communities and governments across Asia



have responded. Through parallel streams on day two, the conference will then examine policies and community services to ease adaptation to ageing trends particularly in relation to social inclusion, income security, and health and care.

On December 14, 1990, the United Nations General Assembly voted to establish October 1 as the International Day of Older Persons. The holiday was observed for the first time on October 1, 1991, which is celebrated by raising awareness about issues affecting the elderly, such as senescence and elder abuse. It is also a day to appreciate the contributions that older people make to society.

As the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) turns 70 this year, the International Day for Older Persons celebrates the importance of this Declaration, and reaffirms the commitment to promoting the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by older persons.

First Announcement



Permit No. 1397.3162

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY
AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO. : 01-31-9250342

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

Items	Material Description	Quantity.
2	P/F"BROOM & WADE" RECIP. AIR COMPRESSOR REF.BROOM & WADE LTD.	2.050

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their Intention to participate letter via fax to the following number not later than 14 days after the second announcement. The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 2,964 Euro or 143,500,000 RIAL in favor of NISOC

Iranian vendors shall submit their resume according to Quality Assessment Forms available at www.nisoc.ir
FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
Bldg NO 104, Material procurement Management Complex
Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site) Ahvaz, Iran
Tel. No.: +98-61 -34123455 fax NO.: +98-61 -34457437
Public Relations
WWW.shana.ir
www.nisoc.ir
<http://iets.mporg.ir>

روزنامه: تهران تایمز نوبت اول ۹۷/۷/۱۱ نوبت دوم: ۹۷/۷/۱۴

First Announcement

Aria Banader Iranian Chabahar
Marine and Port Services
Development Company
International Public Tender Notice



Tenders (two titles) Subjects: *Manufacturing, Shipment, Training and Delivery of Four Units of 4400 HP ASD Tugboat for Shahid Beheshti Port of Chabahar No. ME/1011/97 and One Unit of Buoy Tender Vessel for Shahid Beheshti Port of Chabahar No. ME/1009/97*

It is hereby notified that Aria Banader Iranian Chabahar Marine and Port Services Development Company as the company in charge of procuring equipment for phase 1 of Shahid Beheshti Port of Chabahar expansion project is calling for tenders for the international public tender of manufacturing, shipment, training and delivery of the above mentioned vessels in a two-stage manner and after the quality assessment.

All manufacturers with the experience of manufacturing any of the vessels mentioned in the above-mentioned tender subjects are invited to receive the CD containing the quality assessment forms and the tender documents by presenting a written introduction letter and the original bank receipt of 5,000,000 IR Rials (for each tender) deposited to the bank account no. 0203568843007 of Aria Banader Iranian Chabahar Port and Marine Services Development Company, by Bank Day in a maximum of two weeks after the publishing date of the advertisement.

The deadline for submitting the documents and evidences and the completed quality assessment forms is at the latest by Monday, November 19, 2018; 10:00 A.M. (local time)

- Purchase and delivery address of the tender documents:
No. 40 ,Kish St., Jahankoodak Crossroads, Nelson Mandela Blvd., Tehran, IRAN, Postal Code: 1518814111, Phone: +982188190677-9 , FAX: +982188190679, Email Address: m.niapak@abiports.com.

- Tender deposit: unconditional bank guarantees extendable for multiple times in amount of EUR 400,000 (four hundred thousand euros) or its equivalent of 50,000,000,000 (fifty billion) Rials for the tender no. ME/1011/97 and EUR 170,000 (one hundred seventy thousand euros) or its equivalent of 20,000,000,000 (twenty billion) Rials for the tender no. ME/1009/97.

The aforesaid guarantee will be received after the tenderers qualification in quality assessment stage concurrent with the submission of the bid and technical proposals.

- To keep the date of the documents delivery, any question is allowed until 72 hours before the deadline of the documents delivery.

- All manufacturers are obliged to abide by the Maximum Utilization of Local Capabilities Law.

- The cost of the advertising is undertaken by the tender winner.

- After the quality assessment the qualified companies will be invited to provide the technical and commercial documents.

Russia deploys S-300 to Syria by largest military transport aircraft

Russia has reportedly been using the world's largest military transport aircraft to transport S-300 missile defense systems to Syria amid tensions with Israel over the fatal crash of a Russian plane in the Arab country, which Moscow blamed on Tel Aviv.

Israel's Ynet news site reported on Monday that the Russian-made Antonov An-124 Ruslan (also known as the Condor), which are used by the Russian Air Force as well as several cargo operators, had been spotted on the Russia-Syria air route over the past several days.

The first An-124 plane, the report said, had been spotted arriving at Russia's Hmeimim airbase in Syria's Latakia Province on Thursday evening.

Last month, Moscow vowed to bolster Syria's air defense capabilities by deploying the modern S-300 surface-to-air missile system to the Arab country.

The announcement came in the wake of the accidental downing of an Il-20 reconnaissance aircraft with 15 servicemen on board by Syria's S-200 air defense systems which were at the time responding to a wave of Israeli strikes on state institutions in Latakia.

Moscow held Israel responsible for the September 17 incident, saying the regime's



pilots had intentionally used the Russian plane as cover to conduct air raids, effectively putting it in the crosshairs of the Syrian air defenses.

On Friday, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov confirmed that Russia had begun delivering the S-300 surface-to-air missile system to Syria.

"The delivery started already and as President (Vladimir) Putin said, after that [downing] incident ... the measures that we will take will be devoted to ensuring 100 percent safety and security of our men," he told a news conference at the United Nations.

Moscow's decision to supply the air de-

fense system to Syria has raised worries in Israel.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu criticized Russia's decision as "irresponsible," saying Tel Aviv "will continue to do what it has to do to defend itself."

On Saturday, a senior unnamed Israeli official admitted that Russia's S-300 delivery to Damascus will pose a "complex challenge" to Tel Aviv.

He also stressed that Israel was working on "different ways" to deal with Russia's recent move.

"Putin made a move, but it's a big playing field and he understands that," the official said.

Russian jets have been targeting positions held by terror outfits inside Syria at the Damascus government's request since September 2015. The airstrikes have helped Syrian forces advance against the militants, who have been wreaking havoc in the Arab country since 2011.

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

(Source: Press TV)

North Korea says peace declaration not a bargaining chip

North Korea warned Washington through its state media Tuesday that a declaration ending the Korean War shouldn't be seen as a bargaining chip in denuclearization talks - but suggested lifting sanctions might be.

The North's official news agency issued a commentary claiming Pyongyang has taken significant measures to end hostile relations between the two countries but said the U.S. is "trying to subdue" it through sanctions, a not-so-subtle call for Washington to lift sanctions if it wants further progress in their stalled nuclear negotiations.

The commentary said a declaration replacing a 65-year-old armistice to formally end the war "is not just a gift from a man to another," and added, "it can never be a bargaining chip for getting the DPRK denuclearized."

The DPRK is short for the North's official name - the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The commentary was directed at supporters of the U.S. policy to maintain maximum pressure and sanctions on North Korea until it has made clear and significant moves to denuclearize.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo - a vocal advocate of that policy - is expected to travel to Pyongyang soon to try to revive the negotiation process and set the stage for a second summit between President Donald Trump and leader Kim Jong Un.

The commentary echoes a speech by North Korea's foreign minister, Ri Yong Ho, at the United Nations last week

in which he claimed North Korea is ready to implement the agreements Trump and Kim made during their first summit, in Singapore in June, but also accused Washington of failing to demonstrate its willingness to ease tensions and build mutual trust.

"Without any trust in the U.S., there will be no confidence in our national security," he said, "and under such circumstances there is no way we will unilaterally disarm ourselves first."

The North's emphasis on lifting sanctions and building trust above all else puts a spotlight on the rift between its position and Washington's since the Singapore summit, when Trump and Kim issued a vague statement about a nuclear-free peninsula without describing when and how it would occur.

Negotiations between Washington and Pyongyang have since been rocky, with neither side able to agree on a starting point and widespread skepticism in the United States over whether Pyongyang is serious about renouncing an arsenal it sees as the only way to guarantee its safety.

Hopes for progress in the talks got a boost last month, when South Korean President Moon Jae-in met with Kim in Pyongyang for their third summit.

The summit resulted in a joint statement in which the North expressed willingness for a "permanent" dismantling of its main nuclear facility in Nyonghyon - if the United



States takes corresponding measures - and the dismantling of a missile engine test site and launch pad in northwestern North Korea.

What the North would see as corresponding measures wasn't specified. But Tuesday's commentary and the U.N. statement suggest sanctions are a primary concern.

The 1950-53 Korean War ended in what was intended to be a temporary ceasefire. Moon and Kim are pushing for the end-of-war declaration by December. The declaration would be less difficult to make than a formal peace treaty, and Moon says he and Kim have agreed such a "political declaration" wouldn't require the pullout of 28,500 U.S. troops stationed in South Korea.

(Source: AP)

Saudi Arabia admits 'certain mistakes' in strikes on Yemen

Under increasing pressure from international bodies and rights groups, Saudi Arabia has admitted committing "certain mistakes" in conducting military strikes on Yemen, where the Saudi-led coalition strikes have killed and maimed civilians, including many children.

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child denounced the death of children in Saudi airstrikes on Yemen as it examined the Saudi record on compliance with a treaty protocol on children in armed conflict on Monday.

"This has been going on a number of years. But still, there is no information that any perpetrators or people responsible for these kinds of actions have been prosecuted or sanctioned or dealt with in any way," said Clarence Nelson, the panel's vice-chair.

Osaiker Alotaibi of the Saudi Defense Ministry told the panel of 18 independent experts that coalition investigations had uncovered "the existence of certain unintentional mistakes in a number of these operations."

"The task force recommended that perpetrators should be held to account and victims should enjoy redress," he added.

"You say it's an accident"

Riyadh on Monday claimed it was working to correct mistaken targeting, but UN rights experts remained skeptical.

Renate Winter, the panel's chairwoman,



wondered why schools and hospitals had been targeted repeatedly. "You say it's an accident. How many such accidents can you bear and how many such accidents can people in the country (Yemen) bear?"

She also referred to an August airstrike on a school bus in Yemen's Sa'ada Province, which killed at least 40 children and 11 adults.

Riyadh has even said that the bus was a "legitimate target."

Saudi Arabia and a number of its regional allies launched a deadly military campaign against Yemen in March 2015, with the aim

of bringing the government of Yemen's former president, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, back to power. The aggression has killed some 15,000 people and injured thousands. 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.

Late last month, the UN Human Rights Council renewed a probe of war crimes in Yemen, despite attempts by Saudi Arabia and its allies to hinder that investigation.

"Suspected cholera cases triple in Yemen's

Hudaydah'

In related news, an international non-governmental organization, Save the Children, said on Tuesday that the suspected cholera cases have nearly tripled in Yemen's Hudaydah since the start of a Saudi-led offensive on the port in June. "Health facilities supported by Save the Children across (Hudaydah) governorate recorded a 170 percent increase in the number of suspected cholera cases, from 497 in June to 1,342 in August," a report by the London-based NGO said.

In late July, "airstrikes resulted in the damage of a sanitation facility and water station that supplies Hudaydah with most of its water," the report added.

"After this incident, suspected cholera cases almost doubled," between July and August, in health centers supported by the NGO, it said.

Backed by Saudi-led airstrikes, Emirati forces and militants loyal to the former Yemeni government launched the assault on Hudaydah on June 13 despite warnings that it would worsen the impoverished nation's humanitarian crisis.

According to the UN and the World Health Organization, Yemen faces a third cholera epidemic as autumn rains have increased the risk of infection, as a result of the Saudi-led war.

(Source: Press TV)

U.S.: Chinese destroyer came dangerously close to warship

A Chinese destroyer came aggressively close to a U.S. Navy ship in the South China Sea, forcing it to maneuver to prevent a collision, the U.S. Pacific Fleet said Tuesday, describing an encounter that could worsen tensions between the nations.

The Chinese warship approached the USS Decatur in an "unsafe and unprofessional maneuver" on Sunday near Gaven Reefs in the South China Sea, said U.S. Pacific Fleet Spokesman Lt. Cmdr. Tim Gorman.

The Chinese destroyer "conducted a series of increasingly aggressive maneuvers accompanied by warnings for Decatur to depart the area," Gorman said in an emailed statement.

It approached within 41 meters of the Decatur's bow, forcing it to maneuver, Gorman said.

China claims most of the strategic waterway and has built islands on reefs and equipped them with military facilities such as airstrips, radar domes and missile systems.

The Chinese defense ministry said Tuesday it opposes the U.S. warship's entry into the waters "around China's islands and reefs." It confirmed that the Luoyang, a Chinese missile destroyer, was immediately deployed to identify the U.S. warship and drive it away.

The Chinese foreign ministry said it strongly urged the U.S. to stop its "provocative" actions.

Relations between the U.S. and China have deteriorated over an escalating trade dispute. But ties have worsened in recent weeks with a U.S. decision to issue economic sanctions over the purchase of Russian fighter jets and surface-to-air missile equipment.

Beijing said the U.S. had no right to interfere in Chinese military cooperation with Russia. In response to the sanctions, China summoned the American ambassador and defense attaché to deliver a protest, and recalled its navy commander from a U.S. trip.

U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis has since dropped plans to visit China in October for talks.

■ **China says security dialogue postponed at U.S. request**

China has postponed upcoming security talks with the United States at the request of Washington, a Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman said on Tuesday, amid rising tensions between the two sides over trade, Taiwan and the South China Sea.

Spokeswoman Hua Chunying said in a statement posted

on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the two sides had initially agreed "in principle" to hold the second round of security talks in October.

"The United States has recently expressed its wish to postpone the dialogue," she said, adding that the two sides would continue to "maintain communication" on the talks. She did not elaborate.

The meeting of the U.S. China Diplomatic and Security Dialogue, which first took place in Washington last year, was due to be held with U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis.

A U.S. official confirmed on Sunday that the meeting had been canceled, though he did not say whether it was related to an escalating trade dispute, concerns about U.S. arms sales to self-ruled Taiwan, which Beijing claims as its own, or Chinese military activity in the South China Sea.

Sources in Beijing said last week that China's People's Liberation Army was unhappy with U.S. sanctions on the Chinese military and its approval of a new round of arms sales to Taiwan.

(Source: agencies)

Populists' infighting will blunt their pan-European appeal

➦ Rooted as they are in each party and movement's distinctive national origins, the differences render sustained co-operation at the European level extremely difficult. One example is the intensifying dispute between Austria and Italy over the northern Italian territory of Alto Adige, known in German as Südtirol (South Tyrol). Austria's far-right Freedom party is exploiting its role as junior member of the ruling coalition in Vienna to advance its pet project of offering Austrian passports to South Tyrol's German-speaking majority. This initiative annoys most Italians. They regard it as barefaced interference in a province that was won from the disintegrating Habsburg Empire in 1918 after great expenditure of Italian blood and treasure.

For Italy's League, a populist, anti-immigrant party that entered the national government in June, the quarrel over Alto Adige is an unnecessary irritant. On the one hand, the League emphasizes its ideological affinities with Austria's Freedom party. It has even had warm words for a small, ultra-right German-language party in South Tyrol, in spite of that party's demand for the province's secession from Italy. In this spirit, Matteo Salvini, the League's leader, who is Italy's interior minister, voices a breezy confidence that the passports dispute will be amicably sorted out. On the other hand, the cross-border love-in of the League and the Freedom party has its natural limits. Neither Salvini nor his League comrades can afford to be seen as too accommodating towards Austria, let alone the South Tyrolean separatists, on issues relating to Italy's national dignity and territorial integrity. After all, the League's political credibility rests to some extent on its defiant vow that the government of which it forms part will be the first in decades to stop other EU countries from taking Italy for a mug.

Similar frictions undermine trust and friendship between Hungary's conservative nationalist government, led by prime minister Viktor Orban, and rightwing movements in countries with substantial ethnic Hungarian minorities — above all, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine (the latter is a non-EU state but aspires to join the club). Indeed, the Austrian and Italian parties have co-operation agreements with the United Russia party of Vladimir Putin, the Russian president. Meanwhile, the League and Brothers of Italy, a party with post-fascist roots, have both aligned themselves with Steve Bannon, godfather of the U.S. alt-right, in his campaign to defeat the liberal establishment in next year's EU legislative elections. However, other rightwing populists are standing aloof. Austria's Freedom party says it does not want to be "under the leadership of someone from another continent".

Even economic policy can be a divisive issue among rightwing populists and nationalists. In France, Marine Le Pen's National Rally, formerly the National Front, draws on quintessentially Gallic traditions of statism and protectionism. Across the Rhine, however, Alternative for Germany is a self-professed advocate of free-market economics and criticizes its French sister party's policies as "too leftwing". There are other reasons why Alternative for Germany arouses misgivings among rightwing nationalists elsewhere in Europe. Alexander Gauland, the party's co-chair in the Bundestag, won few friends in June when he said: "Hitler and the Nazis are just a speck of bird shit in more than 1,000 years of successful German history." To be sure, the rightwing radicals have some cards to play. Their message on immigration, national identity and Islam's place in Europe is strident and simple. They tap into public frustration with the EU's shortcomings. But the nationalism that brought them success in domestic politics will be, in the end, the same nationalism that limits their effectiveness on the European stage.

(Source: FT)

Banality and crudeness on display in Washington

➦ The question is, Epps writes, whether the U.S. "shall move backwards to the chimera of past American greatness...when the role of women was -- supposedly for biological reasons -- subordinate to that of men". Moreover, Professor Epps has written, this theme became obvious when Trump before the 2016 election said he would pick judges who would overturn landmark legislation that obviated punishment for women who sought abortions for an unwanted pregnancy. It is possible that this platform propelled Trump to victory in 2016 because many "Christian" evangelicals chose to ignore Trump's own perennial immorality, believing he would end any women's control over reproduction.

Indeed, Trump's "base" of evangelicals has surely informed and amplified his dangerous and obtuse foreign policies in the Middle East, especially when evangelicals claim that "Israel" will usher in the return of Jesus Christ and some sort of Apocalypse -- which would, if it ever occurred and it won't at least as they imagine, be the ruination and extinction of all of humanity, including those of Jewish faith, too. Trump and his supporters in the Republican Party, in any event, really don't care what evangelicals or anyone else literally believe regarding religion as long as this bloc of voters continue to support the current status quo of power and privilege in Washington and elsewhere.

You'd think that anyone of sincere faith, whatever their religious faith, would have long ago rejected Trump since he is a man with no morals whatsoever, and has proven it time and again since he became an adult. As for entirely banal Brett Kavanaugh, who once advised and cheered on George W. Bush during the disastrous war on Iraq, he may well become a Supreme Court justice in a few days, but for Trump and the GOP this could become a welcome disaster for them with female voters and liberals in the midterm elections on November 6th, and GOP legislators seem unconcerned about that possibility or just blind to it.

In the broadest terms, as a "empire" of sorts that is faltering and pretends otherwise, and has few real friends overseas, any extant presumption in the U.S. that rationality and wisdom prevail, and that the U.S. is a beacon of it AND an exemplary "democracy", has to be the sad joke of the century, and most Americans tremble at the growing divisions inside the U.S. that may make the country virtually ungovernable before too long. Iran, meanwhile, a storied country with thousands of years of fascinating history, whatever its current make up and government, whatever its merits and demerits (and governmental and cultural perfection has always and everywhere been a complete chimera) suffers again because the U.S. just won't let it and other nations alone to work out any internal social or political issues they may have.

However, despite the urgings of Trump's Neocon advisors and the Zionists, it remains hard to believe that as long as Iran and Iranians manage to remain intact and forbearing during this difficult period, that the U.S. will literally attack Iran militarily. That would surely be the undoing of any credibility the U.S. government still has. It was anyway refreshing to hear President Rouhani speak at the U.N.: his words were thoughtful and measured, and he wasn't even close to being laughed at by the General Assembly as Trump clearly was.

Halep suffers herniated disc

World number one Simona Halep's participation in this month's WTA Finals was thrown into doubt after a scan on Tuesday revealed she had suffered a herniated disc in her back.

French Open champion Halep was injured while training at last week's Wuhan Open, where she lost in the second round to Slovakia's Dominika Cibulkova. Romanian Halep aggravated the problem during her China Open first-round match on Sunday against Ons Jabeur and was forced to retire after losing the first set.

"I had an MRI on my back and found out I have a disc hernia," Halep said on Twitter. "I will discuss with doctors in the next few days but hope to be back soon and will keep you updated."

Halep, who won her maiden Grand Slam trophy in Paris this year, became the first player to qualify for the season-ending WTA Finals in Singapore from Oct. 21-28.

(Source: Reuters)

Goalkeeper Petkov gets Bulgarian call up at 42

Slavia Sofia's 42-year-old goalkeeper Georgi Petkov has rejoined the Bulgarian national squad ahead of their UEFA Nations League matches against Cyprus and Norway.

Petkov, who was born in March 1976, last appeared for the Balkan country in a friendly international against Switzerland in February 2009 and has been selected several times since.

Known for his aggressive on-field manner, often arguing with referees and other players, Petkov became the oldest player to appear in the Bulgarian top flight in a game in August.

He marked the occasion with a man-of-the-match performance in a goalless draw against champions Ludogorets.

A month before Petkov had become the second oldest player to appear in the Europa League during Slavia's game against Croatia's Hajduk Split, behind former Tottenham Hotspur keeper Brad Friedel, who was 42 years, 10 months and 2 days old when he played against Benfica in 2014.

Bulgaria, who top Group 3 of the UEFA Nations League's third division with six points from two matches, host Cyprus on Oct. 13 and visit second-placed Norway three days later.

"Of course I'm happy to get back to the national team. I'm ready to play but (coach) Petar Hubchev will decide if this happens. I'm glad that my work is appreciated ... I hope that we'll beat Cyprus to increase our chances," Petkov told local media on Tuesday.

It is the inaugural season of the Nations League competition, which aims to replace international friendly matches and is played on soccer's world governing body FIFA's international match calendar. The competition is linked with European Championship qualifying, providing teams with another chance to reach the Euro 2020 finals.

(Source: Eurosport)

Tottenham facing injury crisis vs. Barcelona

Tottenham are facing a number of injury worries ahead of their Champions League game against Barcelona with Christian Eriksen, Jan Vertonghen, Mousa Dembele and Serge Aurier all missing training on Tuesday. Dele Alli and Michel Vorm are already ruled out due to hamstring and knee injuries respectively, while Eriksen, who was unable to face Huddersfield on Saturday due to an abdomen problem, did not recover in time to train ahead of Wednesday's match. Vorm will return to training later in the week but the rest will be missing until after the international break.

Aurier also missed the game at Huddersfield due to a thigh injury and, although he was spotted working by himself on Tuesday, his inability to practice with the rest of the squad takes him out of contention. Vertonghen and Dembele were both forced off at half-time at Huddersfield. Vertonghen has a hamstring injury while Dembele missed Wednesday's session after suffering a kick last Saturday. Young center-back Juan Foyth and winger Georges-Kevin Nkoudou trained with the squad but are unable to face Barcelona because they have not been registered in Tottenham's squad for the Champions League group stage.

Spurs captain and No. 1 goalkeeper Hugo Lloris was also on the practice pitch ahead of Wednesday's match, and will be available to return having missed the last six games with a thigh injury.

(Source: Soccernet)

Kaka set to come out of retirement to play for Silvio Berlusconi-owned Monza

Former Brazil international Kaka is set for a shock return to football with Silvio Berlusconi-owned Monza.

The 36-year-old retired a year ago after a glittering career, but is being lined up by former AC Milan owner Berlusconi - who is looking to make his mark after buying the Serie C club.

According to Spanish publication Marca, Berlusconi admires Kaka from their time working together at Milan and wants his former charge to head Monza's push for promotion this season.

Kaka is thought to be keen on the switch after working under Berlusconi at the San Siro, where he spent six years between 2003 and 2009 before rejoining briefly in 2013.

He is currently without a club following a three-year stint at MLS side Orlando City. Known for his elegant dribbling and goal-threat from attacking midfield, Kaka picked up the 2007 Ballon d'Or and also played for Spanish giants Real Madrid.

Less than 18 months after selling AC Milan, Berlusconi's family holding company Fininvest announced last week that it had acquired 100 percent of Monza in a deal reportedly worth between £2.2million and £2.6m. The 81-year-old Berlusconi, who has served as prime minister of Italy three times, sold AC Milan to a Chinese-led consortium for \$800million (£618m) in April 2017. US-based hedge fund Elliott Management then took over control of Milan two months ago after the Chinese owner missed a deadline to repay part of a loan. Former Milan vice president Adriano Galliani was nominated Monza's CEO, with the new ownership team pledging to bring Monza, which is located just outside Milan, up to Serie A. Societa Sportiva Monza 1912, as the club are officially named, have never made it to the top division.

(Source: Daily Mail)

Nevada woman sues soccer star Ronaldo for alleged sexual assault

A Nevada woman has sued Cristiano Ronaldo and is participating in a police investigation of the global soccer star for an alleged rape at a Las Vegas hotel in 2009, according to a complaint filed by her lawyer.

Lawyers for Ronaldo, one of the world's best-known athletes, on Friday threatened to sue a German magazine that published the accusation.

Kathryn Mayorga sued Ronaldo in a district court in Clark County, Nevada on Thursday, and is also seeking to void a \$375,000 settlement she alleges she was coerced into signing to keep quiet, according to the complaint seen by Reuters and according to Mayorga's lawyer.

On Monday, Ronaldo's agent, Gestifute, said they had no comment beyond a Friday statement by Ronaldo's lawyer Christian Schertz, who called the German magazine report "an inadmissible reporting of suspicions in the area of privacy."

The lawsuit contends that Ronaldo met Mayorga at a Las Vegas nightclub in June 2009 and the next night invited a group of people, including Mayorga, back to the pent-house suite where he was staying.

That night, the lawsuit alleges, Ronaldo asked the woman to perform a sexual act on him in a bathroom as she was changing into attire to wear in a hot tub. He then pulled her into a bedroom and raped her as she screamed "no, no, no," the lawsuit said.

"When Cristiano Ronaldo completed the sexual assault of the plaintiff, he allowed her to leave the bedroom stating he was sorry, he was usually a gentleman," the lawsuit said.

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police on Monday said an incident report with the number listed in Mayorga's lawsuit was filed on the night of the alleged attack, and said the case was reopened last month after the



unidentified victim came forward with new information. They declined to say whether the athlete was the subject of an investigation.

Contacted late on Monday, Ronaldo's representatives did not immediately return a request for comment about the reopening of the case by Las Vegas police.

Lawyers for the Portuguese athlete said in a statement on Friday they would sue German magazine Der Spiegel after it published "blatantly illegal" accusations by Mayorga. They did not respond to specific questions about the content of the Der Spiegel report.

Der Spiegel's deputy editor-in-chief, Al-

fred Weinzierl, on Sunday said the magazine stood fully by its story.

"We have worked professionally as journalists, confronted, and laid out the evidence. Schertz claims that this is illegal. We say: It is allowed under Germany's press law," Weinzierl said in a statement to Reuters.

Leslie Stovall, Mayorga's lawyer, said in a statement on Monday that his client wanted to "obtain justice by holding Cristiano Ronaldo accountable for his conduct."

The lawsuit, which seeks more than \$200,000 (153,409 pounds) in damages, names as defendants Ronaldo and an un-

named team of fixers described as "personal reputation protection specialists" hired to make the situation go away.

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.

Ronaldo has been named player of the year five times and transferred to Juventus from Real Madrid this summer for 100 million euros (\$116 million). The Italian club declined to comment on the Der Spiegel report on Friday.

(Source: Reuters)

Ryder Cup spectator 'loses sight' in right eye after being hit by tee shot



A spectator hit by a Brooks Koepka tee shot at the Ryder Cup says she has lost sight in her right eye and is considering legal action, AFP reports.

The incident happened on the opening day of the event when the American's drive on the par-four sixth hole veered off course, striking 49-year-old Corine Remande, who had travelled from Egypt. "Doctors told me I had lost the use of that eye," she told AFP. Mrs Remande said the reason for legal action was to help cover medical bills.

She added: "It happened so fast, I didn't feel any pain when I was hit."

"I didn't feel like the ball had struck my eye and then I felt the blood start to pour. The scan on Friday confirmed a fracture of the right eye-socket and an explosion of the eyeball," Mrs Remande also criticized the Paris tournament organizers for "not making contact" after the incident to find out how she was. She also claims there was "no warning shout from the course official when the ball was heading towards the crowd". A Ryder Cup spokesperson told the BBC: "It is distressing to hear that someone might suffer long-term consequences from a ball strike."

"We have been in communication with the family involved, starting with the immediate on-course treatment and thereafter to provide support, helping with the logistics of repatriation, including pro-

viding a transfer for the family from Paris to Lyon. We will continue to offer support for as long as necessary. "Ball strikes are an occasional hazard for spectators but this kind of incident is extremely rare. "We can confirm that 'fore' was shouted several times but also appreciate how hard it can be to know when and where every ball is struck if you are in the crowd."

"We are hugely sympathetic and will do everything we can to support the spectator, insofar as that is possible under very difficult circumstances."

Mrs Remande did praise three-time major winner Koepka, who went over to see how she was. She said she downplayed the incident so that the golfer "would stay concentrated". "It looked like it hurt," the 28-year-old said afterwards. He added: "It's hard to control a golf ball, especially for 300 yards, and a lot of times the fans are close to the fairway. "You can yell 'fore' but it doesn't matter from 300 yards, you can't hear it."

Europe's winning Ryder Cup captain Thomas Bjorn said: "It's terrible, it's a freak accident that's happened, and all our thoughts are with her."

There are an average 12,400 golf-related injuries which require hospital treatment each year in the UK alone, according to specialist insurance company Golf Care.

(Source: BBC)

Federer focusing on future with new sponsor Uniqlo



Roger Federer said on Tuesday his decision to end a 20-year association with Nike and embark on a new chapter with Uniqlo was influenced by the Japanese clothing company's commitment to stay with him long after his playing days are over.

While no financial details have been announced, media reports have said the new deal would be worth around \$30 million a year, compared with the \$10 million a year agreement Federer had with Nike.

The 37-year-old, who has won 20 Grand Slam singles titles — a men's record — signalled the end of his association with Nike in July when he walked out onto Wimbledon's Centre Court dressed in Uniqlo apparel.

Federer said the belief shown in him by Uniqlo's CEO Tadashi Yanai and Executive Creative Director John Jay had been key.

"John Jay in New York, where I had an event there, said it very nicely: 'One day I will retire from tennis but I will not retire from life,'" said Federer, who was presented as Uniqlo's new global brand ambassador.

"Life will go on and Uniqlo and Mr. Yanai believed in me very strongly as being very important to their brand, even though maybe my playing days are going to come to an end at some point."

By incorporating Federer in their Life-Wear range, Uniqlo appear to see the Swiss

as a brand off court as much as on it.

One of Federer's goals after he retires is to develop the charity work started through his foundation, which aims to empower children in poverty through education, and he said Uniqlo shared that vision.

"Some people cannot go to school, even though they want to, some people do go to school but do not get a quality education and so this is where the Roger Federer Foundation has tried to make a difference in the region of Southern Africa," he said.

Federer's switch to Uniqlo comes at a boom time for Japanese tennis after Naomi Osaka claimed the country's first Grand Slam singles title at the U.S. Open last month. Federer, a five-time winner at Flushing Meadows, praised the mental strength of the 20-year-old, who has also qualified for the season-ending WTA Finals.

"I think winning Indian Wells helped her to believe that she could also win another big title," said Federer, who is planning an exhibition match in Japan next year.

"I think she is a champion in the sense that she doesn't shy away from the big stage. Indian Wells is the second biggest tennis court we have in the world and the U.S. Open is the biggest one."

"She succeeded in both of them and that shows a winner's mentality."

(Source: Reuters)

Lionel Messi and Gerard Pique 'at odds amid relationship breakdown'

Lionel Messi and Gerard Pique are long-time friends but according to reports the Barcelona duo are currently at odds amid a tricky period for Ernesto Valverde's side.

The Spanish champions were stunned by lowly Leganes in La Liga last week, falling to a 2-1 defeat, having drawn the previous match with Girona.

And with Messi only a substitute at the weekend - rested ahead of the Champions League clash with Tottenham on Wednesday - the Catalan giants were held 1-1 by Athletic Bilbao at Camp Nou.

Argentine superstar Messi is captain this season following Andres Iniesta's exit in the summer.

But the 31-year-old has said little after the first of those two fixtures - something Pique is believed to have taken exception with. According to reports in Spain, there has been a 'complete breakdown' in the long-standing relationship between the pair. "El Chiringuito de Jugones" claims Pique has hit out at Messi for not facing the press when the going gets tough, claiming Messi only faces the media when back home in Argentina. It's claimed Messi's response was to hit back at Messi and the side's defence, stating that they're conceding too many goals and that the



defence needs to do more. Noticeably the Argentine then fronted up in the wake of the Athletic result.

When asked if the squad is too dependant on him, he stated: "We have the squad and the players to be a great team, to be a strong team and not depend on anyone. This is Barca. We have enough players, we don't need to depend on one."

Pique scored in the 2-2 draw with Girona, but the former Spanish international has been heavily criticised in his

hometown for his performances thus far this term.

Already Barcelona have conceded eight times in seven La Liga matches - no side in the top seven has conceded more - conceding in each of their last five games and Pique has been culpable of a number of errors.

Messi meanwhile has scored eight times and added five assists in nine games in all competitions thus far.

But his comments at the weekend appear telling, particularly in a season where he and others at the club have placed added pressure on themselves to end Real Madrid's Champions League dominance.

Los Blancos were well off the pace in La Liga last term, while Barcelona lost only one league game all season. But for some, all people think about when pointing to the two sides' seasons is Madrid's success in Kiev and Barca's quarter-final collapse against Roma; their domestic double largely forgotten. That goes some way to explaining Valverde's decisions to rotate his squad during a run of three La Liga games in seven days. And with both Atletico and Real being unable to truly take advantage of Barca's slip, they remain top of the table.

(Source: Mirror)

Iran's Persepolis defeat Al Sadd of Qatar in ACL semis

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Persepolis d e s k of Iran earned a remarkable 1-0 win over Qatari giants Al Sadd in the first leg of the AFC Champions League semi-finals.

In the match held in Doha's Jassim bin Hamad Stadium, Ali Alipour was on target from the penalty spot in the 86th minute.

Persepolis won the match without their three key players. Kamal Kamyabinia and Mohammad Ansari were suspended and Hossein Mahini has missed the rest of the season due to injury.

Al Sadd and Persepolis had met in the AFC Champions League for the very first time in this year's group stages. Both sides won their respective home games.

Al Sadd have reached the AFC Champions League semi-finals for the second time after 2011, when they eventually went on to win the competition.

Kashima Antlers of Japan will host South Korean Suwon Samsung Bluewings on Wednesday in East Region.

The 2018 AFC Champions League knockout stage is played from 7 May to 10 November 2018.

A total of 16 teams compete in the knockout stage to decide the champions of the 2018 AFC Champions League.



Iran's Petrochimi claim FIBA Asia Champions Cup title



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Petrochimi claimed title of the 2018 FIBA Asia Champions Cup campaign as the Iranian team defeated Japan's Alvark Tokyo 68-64 on Tuesday.

The competition was held from Sept. 27 to Oct. 2 in Nonthaburi, Thailand. Seoul SK Knights from South Korea beat Meralco Bolts 91-87 in the third place match.

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, took place in Nonthaburi, Thailand from 27 September to 2 October 2018.

A total of eight teams participated in the seven-day basketball tournament.

Team Iran athletes depart for Asian Para Games



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran delegation departed for the 3rd Asian Para Games in Jakarta, Indonesia Tuesday morning.

Team Iran will participate at the Games under the motto of "We Can Do It With Trust And Effort".

The delegation will partake in the competition under the name of "Self-belief and Hope".

A minute of silence was held in honor

of martyrs of Ahvaz terror attack before traveling to Indonesia.

Iran will be represented by 209 athletes in the Asian Para Games, with 136 men and 73 women competing in 13 disciplines.

Team Iran finished in fourth place in the past two editions in Guangzhou (2010) and Incheon (2014).

The 2018 Asian Para Games will be held from October 6th to 13th at the Bung Karno Sports Complex in the capital city of Jakarta.

Mourinho and Manchester United must make changes to salvage season

So it comes down to this: Can Jose Mourinho ever produce the exciting and successful Manchester United side that fans crave? You sense they would accept the endless sideshow that comes with this manager -- even accept not winning things -- if they could see a team worth watching again.

In other words, can he reinvent himself as a coach in the way the late David Bowie did repeatedly as a rock star? Can Mourinho accept that the formula, which brought him so much success, does not work so well in the modern era? One of Bowie's signature tracks was called "Changes" and that is what Mourinho needs, with the biggest being in his approach on and off the pitch.

The old, largely pragmatic style is looking stodgy, outdated and ineffective, especially when set aside the exciting brand of football being played by Liverpool, Chelsea, Manchester City and others.

Meanwhile, his moody, combative and confrontational personality -- compared to the smiling, relaxed public relations of Jurgen Klopp or Mauricio Pochettino -- has become tiresome. Mourinho still provides great copy, but no longer with the dash, charm and cheeky smile of distant days.

He asks for respect but gives little back, while the words "lower" and "profile" are just not in his vocabulary. Since when did he decide he would throw his players under the bus? What happened to the unbreakable bond he once had with his teams (notwithstanding his fallout with Iker Casillas and others at Real Madrid)?

Recent victims have even included a blameless, long-serving pro like Antonio Valencia, about whom Mourinho said in July: "He looks like he's had too much holiday."

In addition, after last week's Carabao Cup defeat to Derby, was it necessary for the manager to say he knew United were in trouble if they had to use Phil Jones and Eric Bailly in the penalty shootout?



Alexis Sanchez, with only three goals in 23 games since his move from Arsenal in January, was axed for Saturday's game at West Ham; Marcus Rashford has been rebuked for failing to warm down correctly after a Champions League game.

Then there is the ongoing feud of Mourinho with Paul Pogba who, in response to a request for comment on Saturday's performance, shouted to reporters: "Do you want me dead?" All this has been played out in the full glare of publicity; nothing seems to be kept in house.

(Not that Pogba and his busy agent Mino Raiola have been blameless, with veiled criticism of tactics and undenied stories of a desire to play for Barcelona. Truth be told, Pogba might struggle to get a game at the Camp Nou playing as he often has for United.)

So relationships at Old Trafford are tense, morale is low and that is showing on the pitch. Mourinho's job is apparently safe for now, but his only hope of salvaging the situation is to rip it up and start again. An amnesty, ceasefire; call it what you will.

Perhaps there also needs to be a clear-the-air meeting

at which he might start by admitting a mistake or two although, to quote another famous rocker, sorry seems to be the hardest word.

Then there needs to be a commitment to playing in a more expansive fashion, especially at home, as well as a conscious effort to stop washing United's dirty linen in public; you can guess what Sir Alex Ferguson and Sir Bobby Charlton think on that latter front, especially.

Mourinho is paid to get the best of Pogba, Sanchez and others but that is clearly not happening, so he has to address that issue urgently. More starts for Rashford and Anthony Martial might help and a bit of extra dynamism in midfield would not go amiss.

The defence, second-best in the Premier League last season, has only one clean sheet. That is not just the result of failing to buy a new center-back in the summer and Mourinho's decision to use young midfield man Scott McTominay on the right of a back three vs. West Ham bordered on the desperate.

The manager might argue he needs better support in the transfer market from executive vice-chairman Ed Woodward to have a serious chance of revival, but the fact is Mourinho has more than enough talent to do much better.

There needs to be a sea change in the way this world famous club operates and that starts with Mourinho backing off a little, Woodward showing he is not only obsessed with the brand and bank balance and the players buying into a new project.

However, it might be too late for the manager to turn back a tide that may soon swamp him. Does he enjoy being United manager? It does not look like it while things continue as they are. Only change can save Mourinho; if not, he might as well go.

(Source: Soccer.net)

Juventus' Cristiano Ronaldo will 'suffer a little' in Serie A - Cafu

Brazil legend Cafu expects Cristiano Ronaldo to "suffer a little" in Serie A after his league-record move to Juventus this summer.

The former Real Madrid striker struggled to score for his new club early on, going three matches before finally breaking his duck with the Bianconeri when he twice found the net against Sassuolo on Sept. 16.

Ronaldo has been a force ever since, scoring a goal and providing four assists in the following three league matches. However, Cafu reckons the five-time Ballon d'Or winner won't find life as easy as he did in La Liga or the Premier League.

Asked what the former Manchester United man's impact would be on Serie A, the two-time World Cup winner, speaking in his role as a Special Olympics ambassador, was blunt.

"He is going to give more visibility to Serie A," Cafu said. "He will suffer a little in the Serie A because Serie A is a lot more difficult than La Liga in terms of the contrast in teams and in terms of the physical contact.

"But Ronaldo is always Cristiano Ronaldo. [He is the] best player in the world and will give a little more star power to Serie A."

Cafu spent a majority of his career in

Italy when it was Europe's top league. But the former Roma and AC Milan man admitted the league has seen a dip in form over the years.

"We've had a much more competitive Serie A than now. In my adolescence, everyone would like to play in Italy. Roma, Milan, Lazio, Juventus, Sampdoria, Napoli," he added.

"You had an obsession to play in the Italian Championship. Unfortunately, [now] it is less competitive than the Premier League, Bundesliga and La Liga. It has to return to the Serie A that we saw before."

(Source: ESPN)



Del Potro powers past Ramos-Vinololas in Beijing opener

U.S. Open finalist Juan Martin del Potro swatted aside Spain's Albert Ramos-Vinololas 7-5 6-2 on Tuesday to reach the China Open second round.



Del Potro, playing his first match since losing to Novak Djokovic in the U.S. Open final last month, looked in fine form as he fired 10 aces and won 86 percent of points on his first serve to seal victory in 90 minutes.

The 30-year-old Argentine can qualify for next month's ATP Finals in London for the first time since 2013 if he reaches the final in Beijing. He plays Russia's Karen Khachanov next.

Rafael Nadal, Djokovic and Roger Federer have secured their places in the season-ending tournament.

Bulgaria's Grigor Dimitrov, a finalist in Beijing two years ago, began his campaign with a solid 7-5 6-3 victory over American Tennys Sandgren.

"It's never easy when you've never played against a guy," said world number eight Dimitrov, who next faces Serbia's Dusan Lajovic.

"So it took me quite a few games to kind of get in a rhythm, see what kind of game plan he had (and) just try to get comfortable in the match."

Spain's Fernando Verdasco was made to work hard before beating France's Gael Monfils 2-6 7-6(3) 7-6(5) in two hours and 23 minutes.

(Source: Reuters)

Lionel Messi loses charity tax court case, ordered to pay costs

Barcelona forward Lionel Messi has lost a court case in Spain against two journalists that reported "irregularities" in the finances of his foundation.

Messi claimed that three articles in Spanish daily newspaper ABC had damaged his honour and demanded €202,786 in compensation.

He filed a claim in June 2017 against ABC director Bieto Rubido, and its investigative newspaper editor Javier Chicote.

The court hearing took place on July 18 in Gava, Barcelona, and the ruling has now emerged with Messi having to pay the court costs.

According to ABC newspaper, judge Patricia Batlle Ferrando of the Gava District Court dismissed the claim and highlighted the "professional diligence" shown by the journalists.

She stated that the "figures [published] were true because the journalists have complied with the requested diligence and because the information, it's not only true but it hasn't been proven otherwise."

The judge also said Chicote tried to contact the foundation in order to contrast the figures he published but did not get a response.

The court found that "the figures and information provided by the journalist are true, because they are obtained from a rigorous and objective source."

The ABC articles claimed Messi's foundation had not reached the legal minimum that an entity of its type must donate to social purposes and the foundation had a lack of transparency in its accounts from 2007 to 2012.

The ruling stated that: "Messi's representation was limited to proposing two witnesses, members of the Leo Messi Foundation who, within the knowledge they said they had about the numbers of the foundation, recognised the veracity of the lack of registration of the entity until 2013."

The judge added that two witnesses said that "nearly 90 percent of the foundation's resources came from FC Barcelona."

Messi, who was found guilty of three counts of tax fraud in July 2016, can appeal against the sentence.

(Source: ESPN)

Tokyo 2020: Test event schedule announced

Tokyo 2020 announced the first part of its planned test event schedule ahead of the next Olympic and Paralympic Games.

It will kick off this Japanese autumn and run until May 2020, with around 50 test events being held. Some of them will take place as part of international sporting events due to be staged in Japan in the build-up to the 2020 Games.

The test events will give organizers the opportunity to assess the facilities and sports, as well as to provide its management and operations staff with hands-on experience of running events. It will also allow them to collaborate with delivery partners to ensure the smooth operation of the Games.

At the same time, the Japanese public will have the chance to get a glimpse of what the world's best Para athletes can do before they compete at the biggest stage of all.

Test plans for each sport have been drawn up and reviewed in close collaboration with the respective International Federations based on a needs-assessment conducted for each sport.

The test events themselves will be operated with equipment, facilities and venues that will be used for the Tokyo 2020 Games.

In addition, each functional area of Tokyo 2020 will test the technical operations focusing on three aspects: field of play, technology and staff. The experience gained will be shared as part of the organization-wide learning pathway.

(Source: Paralympic.org)

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Intl. Resistance Film Festival to screen 35 Iranian shorts

➔ The lineup also includes “Maryam” by Morteza Hosseinalizadeh, “Again Silence” by Razieh Seraji, “Salam” by Mohammadreza Hajigholami and “That Man Came” by Siyavash Chavoshi.

The festival has received over 1400 submissions, including feature, short and documentary films, from over 70 countries this year.

Most of the submissions are from America and France. In addition, filmmakers from Germany, Turkey, England, Italy, Canada, Spain, Brazil and dozens of other countries have also applied to participate in the event.

The festival is dedicated to productions on wars and the repercussions of armed conflicts in the world.

It also puts a spotlight on the resistance of the Palestinian people against the Zionist regime, ISIS and their terrorist attacks in the region, and the world’s tyrants and their backing of ISIS.

The festival is being organized every year by the Revayat Cultural Foundation and the Film Association of the Islamic Revolution and the Sacred Defense in collaboration with different cultural organizations.

The 15th edition of the festival will be running at the Felestin Theater Hall in Tehran from November 26 to December 1.

Vocalist Alireza Qorbani joins Vancouver Opera Orchestra for “Resurrection”

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian vocalist Alireza Qorbani d e s k will join the Vancouver Opera Orchestra to perform his fellow musician Ahmad Pejman’s “Resurrection” during a concert at the Orpheum Theatre in Vancouver, Canada on January 20, 2019.

The concert has been organized to pay tribute to Pejman, the U.S.-based Iranian maestro who is famous for his notable operatic and symphonic works, the organizers have announced.

Works by celebrated Iranian composer Hushang Kamkar will be also performed at the concert that will be conducted by Leslie Dala. The Vancouver Bach Choir will also accompany the orchestra during the performance.

The orchestra will also be performing in company with Iranian soprano singer Talin Ohanian and solo pianist San-az Sotudeh.

For the very first time in Canada, over 150 musicians will grace the magnificent Orpheum Theatre to perform masterpieces by renowned Iranian composers on the Persian night concert.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Istanbul gallery hangs works by Iranian artists

A R T TEHRAN — The 7 Art Gallery in Istanbul d e s k is hanging a selection of works by Iranian artists in an exhibition named “Abstraction”.

A collection of 30 works by nine Iranian artists, including Iraj Shayestepur, Giti Noruzian, Maryam Moqaddam, Saba Musavi and Arash Razavi, will be on display until October 15, the gallery has announced.

“Candle in the Wind” Diana lyrics head for auction

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) — The lyrics of some of Elton John’s biggest hits - “Rocket Man”, “I’m Still Standing”, and the Princess Diana funeral version of “Candle in the Wind” - are going up for auction as the British musician’s longtime collaborator clears out his archives.

Songwriter Bernie Taupin, the man behind more than 40 of John’s hit songs, is selling a collection of his original lyrics, as well as colorfully illustrated versions of songs like “Bennie and the Jets” and “Yellow Brick Road”, Julien’s Auctions said on Monday.

Taupin’s typed and annotated rewritten lyrics of “Candle in The Wind”, which John performed at Princes Diana’s funeral in London in 1997, are expected to fetch about \$10,000-\$15,000 at the November auction in New York.

The song was originally written in 1973 as an ode to Marilyn Monroe but the 1997 version, dedicated to “England’s Rose”, is the second-biggest selling physical single of all time.

Taupin is also auctioning an original program for Diana’s funeral, along with hand-drawn, illustrated lyrics to songs including “Daniel” and “Don’t Let the Sun Go Down On Me.”

Taupin, who was brought together with John through a British newspaper ad in 1967, said he wanted to share his work with others.

Iran sends four submissions to Asia Pacific Screen Awards

A R T TEHRAN — The Iranian House of Cinema announced on Monday that it has submitted two feature films, “Astigmatism” and “Orduckly”, (“Ordakli”) and two documentary films, “Iran’s Lady Qods” and “Finding Farideh”, to the 12th edition of the Asia Pacific Screen Awards (APSA).

“Astigmatism” directed by Majidreza Mostafavi has been selected for the Feature Film category.

The film is about a man who has returned after a few years of separation from his family and wants to take back his house from his wife, son, daughter-in-law and grandson. His son, who farms leeches in the basement and hopes to get rich by doing that, tries to reconcile his father with his mother to stay at home.

Directed by Behruz Gharibpur “Orduckly” has been picked for the Youth Feature Film competition.

The film tells the story of Ordakli’s father who is a technician at the Tabriz Railway Station. He is forced to move to Tehran to treat his wife who is suffering from a terminal illness. Once in Tehran, he registers his clever son at a renowned school without thinking about the tragic consequences he will be facing.

“Iran’s Lady Qods” is about Khadijeh Saqafi, the wife of Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic. Mostafa Razzaq-Karimi is the director of the documentary.

“Finding Farideh” co-directed by Azadeh Musavi and Kurosh Atai. The film is about Farideh, an Iranian woman who was adopted by a Dutch family during her childhood in a Tehran orphanage. In this film, she wants Iranians to help her find her real parents.

Both of the films have been submitted to the Documentary Feature Film competition.

This year’s APSA nominees for various categories will



“Orduckly” directed by Behruz Gharibpur is one of Iran’s submissions to the 12th edition of the Asia Pacific Screen Awards.

be selected by an international council, which is chaired by long-time member Hong-Joon Kim from South Korea. Tusi Tamasese from New Zealand, Sherwood Hu from China, Bina Paul from India, Anne Démy-Geroe from Australia, Gulnara Abikeyeva from Kazakhstan and Delphine Garde-Mroueh from France are members of the council.

The APSA is scheduled to announce the nominees in the feature narrative competition during an exclusive event at the Brisbane City Hall on October 17 and winners will be awarded on November 29.

IRIB launches music video festival to celebrate 40 years of Islamic Revolution

A R T TEHRAN — Islamic d e s k Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) has launched a festival for music videos to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, the IRIB Music and Poetry Office announced on Monday.

Speaking at a press conference, the director of the office, Mohammad-Baqer Mo’allem, said that the event has been named “The Fajr National and International Music Video Festival”.

“Integrating music with imagery deepens its effects and this is the main reason for making a music video,” Mo’allem stated.

He said that the music video has turned



IRIB Music and Poetry Office director Mohammad-Baqer Mo'allem attends a press conference on October 1, 2018 to elaborate on the Fajr National and International Music Video Festival.

Kenyan children’s musical roars in to U.S. for off-Broadway premiere

NAIROBI (Reuters) — Feathery costumes, multi-colored makeup and East African instruments are packed into boxes, ready for shipping as Kenya’s National Theatre prepares to take its popular children’s show “Tinga Tinga Tales” to New York.

The cartoon by multiple BAFTA award-winner Claudia Lloyd and Kenyan singer-songwriter Eric Wainaina features Kenyan children’s fables to explain questions from the animal kingdom, such as why the giraffe’s neck is long and how the chameleon got its colors.

The 2016 musical adaption, brought to life by a breakdancing Rastafari tortoise, a soul singing hippopotamus and a jazz savvy elephant, takes musical inspiration from gospel, funk

and hip-hop — genres rooted in the United States.

“I’m thrilled to be able to give back to an audience that I’ve borrowed so much from,” said Wainaina, who is the show’s composer, music director and also plays the lead character Monkey.

“We all borrow from each other and I’m really happy to go and show this African manifestation of all this music that I’ve been listening to.”

The cartoon, named after a colorful Tanzanian art-style, was first commissioned by Britain’s public broadcaster, the BBC.

Lloyd said she was excited to bring East African children’s tales, visual arts and music tradition to the United States,

where the team will perform for two weeks in October at New Victory Theatre, an off-Broadway theater for children.

She said she believed the show had the potential to reach a much broader audience than the one it has so far entertained with full theaters in the Kenyan capital.

“When they all get up and scream and shout, that’s why we are doing this,” said Lloyd, adding she still tears up with joy when she sees families or school classes engage in the tale and move to the beats.

“There’s no reason why this couldn’t tour around the world. I would love it to go to pan-African capital cities and spread the Tinga-love a bit.”

Charles Aznavour, beloved French crooner, dies at 94

PARIS (Reuters) — French singer Charles Aznavour, who stole the hearts of millions with decades of haunting love songs, has died aged 94, his spokeswoman said on Monday.

Aznavour passed away overnight at one of his homes, in the village of Mouriès north of the French port city of Marseille.

The singer, who sold more than 100 million records in 80 countries, began his career peddling his words and music to the Paris boulevardiers of the 40s and 50s - Edith Piaf, Maurice Chevalier, Charles Trenet.

But it became evident that Aznavour himself best interpreted the bittersweet emotions of such songs as “Hier Encore” (Yesterday When I Was Young), “Après l’Amour” (After Love) and “La Bohème”. Others were “She” and “Formidable”.

In his autobiography, “Aznavour by Aznavour”, he recalls that after a period trying to play the role of a tough guy, he was goaded one evening into climbing on the bandstand to sing.

“There, I had a revelation. I saw that the girls looked at me much more, their eyes moist and their lips apart, than when I played a terror... I was only 15 or 16, but I understood,” he wrote.

Aznavour’s ability to achieve an intimate rapport with audiences in solo concerts also brought him acclaim as an actor in non-singing roles, notably in movie director Francois Truffaut’s “Tirez Sur le Pianiste” (Shoot the Piano Player, 1960).

He discovered his songwriting talent while doing the rounds in cabarets with partner Pierre Roche, with Roche playing the piano and Aznavour singing.

Following the war, Piaf noticed the duo performing and took them with her on a tour of the United States and Canada, with Aznavour composing some of her most popular hits.

After living in the shadow of stars like Piaf, for whom he also penned hits,



French singer Charles Aznavour attends the annual dinner of CCAF (Co-ordination Council of Armenian organizations of France), in Paris, France, February 8, 2017. (Reuters/Christophe Ena)

Aznavour’s career finally took off in his mid-30s with gold albums and world tours.

Sometimes described as France’s Frank Sinatra, Aznavour was born in Paris on May 22, 1924, to Armenian parents - his birth name Shahmour Aznavourian.

He grew up on Paris’ Left Bank and began performing at the age of nine. His father was a singer, cook and sometime restaurant manager, and his mother an actress. His first public performances were at Armenian gatherings where his father and older sister Aida sang and Charles danced.

Short in stature at 160 cm (five foot three inches), Aznavour possessed a magnetic stage presence that brought rapt audiences to their feet at venues such as the Olympia in Paris and New York’s Carnegie Hall.

Fans admired his mature storytelling ability and quavering vibrato voice, rich in sensitivity and range.

“I have the kind of voice that gels with the type of songs I write,” wrote Aznavour in his biography.

His ability to perform in French, Spanish, English, Italian and German helped.

As a student, French President Emmanuel Macron was a big fan of Aznavour and sang his songs at karaoke nights, according to former classmates.

Jean-Claude Arnault, man at center of Nobel scandal, jailed

LONDON (The Guardian) — Jean-Claude Arnault, the man at the center of a sexual abuse and financial misconduct scandal that forced the postponement of this year’s Nobel Prize in literature, has been convicted of rape.

In a unanimous verdict, Stockholm district court sentenced Arnault – the husband of a member of the Swedish Academy, which awards the world’s most prestigious literary prize – to two years in prison, the minimum sentence.

The judge, Gudrun Antemar, said there was “sufficient evidence, consisting mainly of statements during the trial by the injured party and several witnesses”, to convict the defendant of one of the two counts of rape with which he had been charged.

The verdict came at the start of Nobel Prize week, shortly before the award for medicine was announced.

Arnault’s lawyer, Björn Hurtig, earlier told local media his client would appeal if convicted. He has said his client strenuously denies all charges against him, describing them as a witch-hunt based on fundamentally flawed evidence.

After a trial held behind closed doors, the public prosecutor, Christina Voigt, had called for the Frenchman to be sentenced to at least three years in jail. The maximum sentence for rape in Sweden is six years.

In a statement, the court said Arnault, who reportedly bragged of being the academy’s “19th member”, had been found guilty on the first count and acquitted on the second. “The injured party has been awarded compensation for damages,” it added.

The scandal first erupted last November when the Dagens Nyheter newspaper published detailed allegations by 18 women accusing Arnault – who describes himself as a photographer – of rape, sexual harassment, physical abuse and harassment over a period of more than 20 years, in Sweden and France.



Jean-Claude Arnault was convicted of one of two counts of rape. (Jonathan Nackstrand/AFP/Getty Images)

Eight women filed formal complaints, but all but one of the cases were subsequently dropped for lack of evidence or because they had exceeded the statute of limitations.

The woman in the case that came to trial – a writer and academic – told police of the 2011 assaults a few days after the Dagens Nyheter report was published, saying she had not come forward earlier because Arnault was a good friend of her manager.

Bitter internal disputes over how to handle the accusations against Arnault led to the departure of seven of the academy’s 18 members, including his wife, Katarina Frostenson, a poet and playwright who stepped down in April at the same time as the organization’s then permanent secretary, Sara Danius.

In May, the academy – which was founded by King Gustav III in 1786 and is still under royal patronage – announced that in view of its “currently diminished” membership and the public’s “reduced confidence” in its deliberations, it would not be awarding a prize this year. Two laureates are to be announced in 2019.

For many years, Arnault and Frostenson ran Forum, a club in Stockholm that showcased exhibitions and readings by prominent cultural personalities including Nobel laureates. The club was partly funded by the academy, prompting secondary allegations of a conflict of interest.