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We are facing psychological warfare

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We have new customers for our oil, Iran says

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran's First Vice-President Es'haq Jahangiri said on Sunday new customers have stepped in for buying crude oil from Iran, IRNA reported. Speaking in a ceremony on the occasion of World Standards Day in Tehran, the official noted that along with the new buyers negotiations are under way with the old oil customers as well on finding

ways for keeping the trade on track. "Americans should know that the countries which are being sanctioned will find solutions to successfully pass the situation," Jahangiri said. Jahangiri further mentioned the increase in oil prices saying, "The U.S. was counting on Saudis to offset Iranian losses and therefore prevent a surge in oil prices; →4

300 terrorist groups have been dismantled: Alavi

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Intelligence Minister Mahmoud Alavi announced on Sunday that so far Iran has succeeded to dismantle 300 terrorist groups. The security forces have dismantled 300 terrorist groups inside the country, killing hundreds of their members, he said at a ceremony in Tehran.

"The Intelligence Ministry is powerful against the enemies, however, we like the people to feel peace when they hear the name of this ministry," he said. According to the Intelligence Ministry, security forces disband dozens of terrorist teams, sponsored by some regional and trans-regional states, every year, the Fars news agency reported.

73 militants, 4 policemen killed in Paktika battle

At least 73 Taliban and four policemen have been killed in a fierce clash in southeastern Paktika province, an official claimed on Saturday, Pajhwok reported. The insurgents claimed overrunning Khoshmand district as a result of the overnight firefight. Police spokesman Shah Mohammad Arian told Pajhwok Afghan News hundreds of militants stormed the district centre

from different directions late Friday night. He said 73 militants were killed in an ensuing air-and-ground operation by the security forces. The bodies of 50 fighters were still lying at the site, he added. Four policemen were also killed, he said, adding the rebel attack was repulsed. But Zabihullah Mujahid, Taliban's spokesman, claimed Khoshmand district was under insurgent control. →13

Deployment of S300 in Syria is Russia's least costly move against Israel: ex-U.S. diplomat

By Fatemeh Mohammadi-pour
TEHRAN — Russians make the least costly reprisal against Israel with deployment of S 300 system in Syria. A reporter at Tehran Times newspaper recently interviewed Ambassador (ret.) Richard D. Kauzlarich. Co-Director, Center for Energy Science and Policy (CESP), Interim Director, Peace Operations Policy Program, and Distinguished Visiting Professor Schar School of Policy and Government George Mason University, to further discuss the issue. Following is the complete text of the interview with Professor Richard Kauzlarich. ■ Following the crash of the Russian plane in Syria, which took place under the trick of Israel, Russia announced that the S 300 will be delivered to Syria. What are Russia's reasons for this?



A: The Russians are making a public gesture because blame Israel for the loss of their aircraft to Syrian missiles. It is the least costly gesture they can make because they are trying to keep close relations with both Israel and Syria. Further, the Russians may believe that the more modern S-300 may avoid the

friendly fire incident that brought down the Russian aircraft. ■ Israel has said that Russia's action is dangerous and will increase tensions in the region. What is the likely reaction of Israel if this plan is operational? A: Of equal concern to Israel are reports that Russia also plans to use electronic warfare to jam navigation, communication, and on-board radar of aircraft operating over the Mediterranean Sea near Syria. The Israelis are likely to counter attack such threats as well as any S-300s deployed. ■ With delivery of S 300 system to Syria, What changes will be made in the balance of power of the region? A: The Israelis are confident they can counter these threats but the deployment of S-300s increases the risks of future friendly-fire incidents in the already over-crowded air space in and around Syria.

Saudi dismisses threat of sanctions over Khashoggi's disappearance

By staff & agencies
 Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi entered the House of Saud regime's consulate in Istanbul on October 2 to obtain a document certifying he divorced his ex-wife. He has not been seen since. Turkish sources have told media outlets they believe the Saudi writer and critic was killed inside the consulate in what they describe as "premeditated murder". The Saudi regime officials have countered that claim, insisting Khashoggi left the building before vanishing. The disappearance of Khashoggi has put the spotlight on the close relationship which Trump's family has nurtured with the House

of Saud regime. ■ **U.S., Britain may boycott 'Davos in the Desert'** The United States Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin is still planning to attend the three-day Future Investment Initiative scheduled to take place on October 23, White House economic adviser Larry Kudlow said on ABC's "This Week." "Mr. Mnuchin will make up his mind as the week progresses and as new information surfaces," Kudlow said. His comments came shortly after Florida Senator Marco Rubio told CNN's "State of the Union" he believes Mnuchin should boycott the event.

Britain's International Trade Secretary, Liam Fox, also may not attend the "Davos in the Desert", a major investment conference in Riyadh, over concerns that the House of Saud regime is responsible for Khashoggi's reported death. The officials' possible boycott was confirmed to the BBC by "diplomatic sources". If Mnuchin and Fox decide to boycott the Future Investment Initiative conference, they will join investors such as Richard Branson and journalists from The Economist, CNBC and The New York Times, who pulled out of the conference in Riyadh on Friday amid growing concerns over Khashoggi's disappearance. →13

PERSPECTIVE
M.A.Saki
 Deputy editor-in-chief

Khashoggi may awaken world to dangers of MBS

Jamal Khashoggi, a critic of the al-Saud family, vanished on October 2 after visiting the Saudi consulate in Istanbul.

A Turkish security source has said officials had audio and video evidence proving Khashoggi was murdered inside the consulate.

The issue surrounding the fate of Khashoggi is also scandalous for those countries, especially the United States, which have been backing the Saudi kingdom especially its current ruler Mohammed bin Salman or MBS.

Saudi Arabia has been silencing the world, especially the self-proclaimed proponents of human rights in the West, through its lavish arms purchases and bribes.

For example, Donald Trump has ruled out halting military contracts with Saudi Arabia in response to the disappearance of Khashoggi, who wrote for the Washington Post.

"I think we'd be punishing ourselves if we did that," Trump said, according to the BBC. He said, "If they don't buy it from us, they're going to buy it from Russia or... China."

Even now analysts are worried that Saudi Arabia may tempt countries and political figures who are seeking answers about the fate of the journalist.

According to CNN, MBS has contacted the White House after it became clear that he and the royal court were getting blamed for Khashoggi's murder. Citing a person familiar with the call, CNN said MBS asked specifically to speak with Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law and senior adviser, to deny the accusations.

This may be a sign that Saudi Arabia is trying to lure the U.S. through more arms purchases not to pursue the issue.

Professor Hossein Askari, an expert on Saudi Arabia who teaches at George Washington University, tells the Tehran Times that "if this is what happened, then it had to be ordered and sanctioned by MBS."

The Khashoggi case is just the tip of iceberg in comparison to numerous brutal and vicious acts that Saudi Arabia has been doing over the years. When Saudi Arabia exterminates a critic in consulate in a foreign country then it should be noted how it will deal with critics inside the country. →13

ARTICLE
Martin Love
 Political analyst from North Carolina

The beginning of Trump's unravelling may be at hand

You have to wonder about the Saudis who, aside from the Zionists, are considered the number one U.S. ally in the Middle East. And the latest incarnation of Saudi Arabia's "leadership" is Muhammad bin Salman, the designated crown prince of the Kingdom, who for stupidity may know no equal at the moment.

There are many ways to assassinate anyone. Heaven knows long beleaguered Iranians know about this, who have seen a few of its nuclear energy scientists, for example, murdered in recent years, most likely by the Zionists or their paid shills. But to directly lure journalist and Saudi critic Jamal Khashoggi into a Saudi consulate in Istanbul from whence he apparently never left, except perhaps literally in pieces, has to be about the dumbest move "MBS" may have ordered to date. And we know a number of Saudi henchmen were in all likelihood dispatched from Riyadh on a Gulfstream jet to do the dirty deed. Maybe the world will never know for sure what happened to Khashoggi, that he or dismembered parts of him may never turn up, but connecting the dots could hardly be much easier to reach a plausible explanation.

Khashoggi, in any event, is widely admired as an Arab journalist, and a fearless one, who was a writer committed to finding and reporting the truth, regardless of any threat to himself in doing so. But what's most interesting now is that one might be able to conjecture the beginning of some serious changes in Western attitudes towards leading Middle East countries, namely Saudi Arabia and Iran. The Saudis have in recent years been the Mideast darlings of the Western establishment and the Trump gang. To the extent Saudi Arabia falls from favor, Iran may benefit – not that Iran literally NEEDS favor with the U.S. except to the extent that the U.S. stop meddling in Iranian affairs and trying to wreck its economy.

Trump is currently under pressure by many in the U.S. Congress to completely condemn Khashoggi's disappearance and probable murder by MBS, and even to stop selling arms to the Saudis and to disavow support for the Saudi and U.A.E. war on Yemen. →7



Chicago protest targets Trump's 'anti-woman agenda'

Women angered by the bitter fight over a U.S. Supreme Court nominee and what they called the "anti-woman agenda" of the Trump administration headed into the streets of Chicago on Saturday, October 13, in a display of political might.

The rally, organized by Women's March Chicago, was designed to spotlight the power and determination of women voters ahead of the crucial November 6 midterm elections, which will determine control of the U.S. Congress.

The elections are also being seen as a barometer of President Donald Trump's popularity. "We wanted to lead into the midterms and encourage women to get out and vote," Jessica Schiller, head of Women's March Chicago, told Agence France-Presse.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



196 detained over disrupting forex market

POLITICS TEHRAN — Judiciary spokesman Gholam-Hossein Mohseni-Eje'i said on Sunday that 196 suspects have been detained in Tehran in the past few days over smuggling and corruption in foreign currency market.

Speaking to reporters, Mohseni-Eje'i further said the special court tasked with fighting corruption in foreign currency market has handed down sentences against 49 people, and the cases for 100 suspects are currently under investigation, Mehr reported.

The Judicial official added that 17 people have been arrested in the southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan province due to corruption in the forex banking system and receiving \$100 million of illegal money.



Society of Enlightened Muslim Women to hold meeting

POLITICS TEHRAN — The third meeting of the Society of Enlightened Muslim Women will be held on Thursday, with the attendance of political and social figures, chiefs of political parties and activists in women's affairs.

Azar Mansouri, a member of the society's central council, said on Sunday the statute and regulations of the political organization will be put to vote during the meeting, IRNA reported.

Mansouri explained that the organization was founded by a number of reformist women in 2005 and its activity license was issued in 2007.

She added that the political organization has made great efforts to encourage women's political involvement and pursue women's issues.



Iran, S. Africa hold defense co-op meeting

POLITICS TEHRAN — Military officials from Iran and South Africa have held a second meeting on defense cooperation in Pretoria, Tasnim reported on Sunday.

The meeting was co-chaired by General Mohammad Ahadi, director of the international department at the Iranian Defense Ministry, and South Africa's deputy defense minister.

Highlighting South Africa's place in Iran's foreign policy, the Iranian general said the two countries can work in close cooperation to address regional and international crises, fight against terrorism, oppose weapons of mass destruction, pursue multilateralism, combat poverty and inequality, and fight against separatism and extremism.



Police to fully protect Arbaeen pilgrims

POLITICS TEHRAN — Police Chief Brigadier General Hossein Ashtari told reporters in Tehran on Saturday that his forces would provide full security for citizens traveling to Iraq for the Arbaeen pilgrimage later this month.

Pointing to security arrangements for the upcoming pilgrimage, Ashtari said the police started to take security measures several months ago, Tasnim reported.

The measures aim to facilitate the passage of pilgrims and ensure their security, he said, adding that this year, the police have increased the number of gates to speed up the passage of pilgrims.



Haddad-Adel pushes for academic co-op with Russia

POLITICS TEHRAN — Universities and students can expand scientific, political, and religious relations by putting aside religious disagreements, the head of the Persian Language Academy has said, IRNA reported on Sunday.

"Improving academic and scientific ties in the region, especially with Russia, will lead to [our] benefits from scientific, political and religious discussions," said Gholam-Ali Haddad-Adel in a conference on Iran-Russia Scientific and Cultural Collaborations.

"Students should actualize their potential by using the friendly atmosphere that exists in the ties between Iran and Russia," he added.



Iran's legal victory over U.S. in ICJ unrivaled: professor

POLITICS TEHRAN — The legal success of the Islamic Republic of Iran against the United States was unprecedented in The Hague-based International Court of Justice (ICJ), a University professor has said.

"This international legal effort should be pursued," said Hassan Abedi Jafari, the former trade minister, IRNA reported on Sunday.

He added, "In my opinion, the words of [U.S. President Donald] Trump is more about the content of the dreams that he has at night and is unlikely to make his words functional. On the other hand, Trump does not have the power of making consensus against our country."

U.S. has launched its psychological warfare project: Rouhani

POLITICS TEHRAN — President Hassan Rouhani said on Sunday that the U.S. been seeking to delegitimize the Islamic Republic system and has started its project through a "psychological warfare".

"They started their work by a psychological war and economic war is their mid-term objective. War against efficiency of the system is their third objective and delegitimization of the system is their final objective. The regime change that they talk about is being sought through delegitimization which is being followed through psychological and economic wars," Rouhani said in a ceremony marking the beginning of the academic year.

Rouhani called the current Trump administration the "most spiteful" one in comparison to other administrations in the U.S. since the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

However, he said that the country will foil all the plots through unity.

"Disappointment does not solve problems. It is bad to deny and say that there is no problem. Problems exist, but it is not right to say that problems cannot be solved. The short term future may get worse, but the long term future will definitely get better. Why would not it get better? Why would not we pass the problems?" he said.

Elsewhere, he pointed to the U.S. withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal, saying except for a few certain countries, all said that Washington took a "wrong" decision.

He noted that in the recent UN General Assembly summit in New York all the 15 members to the UN Security Council supported



Students attending Rouhani's speech at the University of Tehran

Rouhani assures people that reimposition of the second of round of U.S. sanctions Iran is just a psychological warfare because the U.S. has done anything it could.

the nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Rouhani said, "We will withdraw from the JCPOA whenever we like. There is no problem with that. Withdrawing is like destroying a wall which is easy to do. Building is difficult."

He noted that protecting the "national interests is more important than remaining or not remaining in the JCPOA".

Elsewhere, Rouhani pointed to reimposition of the second of round of sanctions Iran in early November, saying the people should not be worried because the U.S. has done anything it could.

"There is nothing that makes the people worried and everything is just commotion," he said.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Rouhani said

that restriction on the freedom and independence universities is "harmful".

"We will be harmed if we restrict university's independence and freedom. There is nothing wrong if students and universities help the (political) parties, but university should not be a place for activities of the parties, because science is open and has no boundary," he remarked.

The president notes that protecting the "national interests is more important than remaining or not remaining in the JCPOA".

"It is bad to deny and say that there is no problem. Problems exist, but it is not right to say that problems cannot be solved".

Leader declares path to progress

Ayatollah Khamenei calls on intellectuals to study document on Islamic-Iranian model of progress and announce their views

POLITICS TEHRAN — Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has called on intellectuals and scientific centers to study the document related to the Islamic-Iranian model of progress and exchange views on it.

"This document has prepared the most important principles and reasons of progress and has depicted prospect of the country for the next five decades. Implementation

of the document is difficult, however, possible and sweet," the Leader stated in his declaration published on Sunday.

He called on the Expediency Council, parliament, the administration, the Supreme National Security Council, universities and seminary schools to study the document and give views on improving it.

Ayatollah Khamenei also called on the Center for the Islamic-Iranian Model of Progress to receive the views, use

them and present the final and improved version of the document in two years.

The Leader said that the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) should also inform the people about the activities being done in this respect.

Elsewhere, Ayatollah Khamenei said that "faith", "determination", "national efforts", "patience" and "persistence" are required on the path to progress.

Jaberi Ansari: Massacre in Syria's Idlib is Iran's red line

The potential massacre of civilians while trying to retake the last major stronghold of anti-government militants in Syria — namely Idlib Province — is a red line for Iran, says the Iranian chief negotiator in the peace process for Syria.

Hossein Jaberi Ansari, senior assistant to the Iranian foreign minister on special political affairs, told Press TV's website in an exclusive interview published on Sunday that Idlib has a special status and has to be dealt with accordingly.

He said armed and terrorist groups have blended into a large civilian population there, which makes a retake of the region complicated and, in Iran's viewpoint, eliminates the possibility of a quick fix.

Jaberi Ansari called the situation in Idlib "the epitome of the complexities of the Syrian conflict."

"On the one hand, three million people are currently settled in Idlib. About half of that population is native to the region, and the other half comprises displaced persons from other areas," he explained.

Of the second half, some are people normally displaced by the war, and others are the families of armed Syrian government opponents who have, along with their men, migrated there as part of previous deals, the senior Iranian official further said.

"On the other hand," he said, "Idlib is the concentration point of numerous armed and terrorist groups" and as such, could not be left to itself.

Conflict erupted in Syria back in 2011, when a small group of opposition forces took up arms against Damascus. Soon,



however, a mixture of international terrorists and paid mercenaries mingled with and then largely sidestepped the armed Syrian opposition groups, effectively turning the Arab country into a battlefield for foreign governments opposed to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

But the Syrian military, with advisory help from Iran and Russia — and a Russian aerial bombardment campaign — has retaken control of much of the country, and the conflict is generally believed to be winding down.

Over the past couple of years, armed groups that have been defeated in battles with the Syrian military have been bused into Idlib under agreements with Damascus. While those groups have mostly had to leave their heavy weaponry behind under

those deals, they have been allowed to take their small arms with them.

Jaberi Ansari said that figures about the number of the armed and terrorist groups present in Idlib vary from one source to another, but he added they generally numbered in the tens of thousands.

He also said that the groups have widely different orientations, making it even more difficult to deal with the matter straightforwardly.

While the return of Idlib to Syrian government control could hypothetically take place swiftly with a full military assault, such an offensive would only lead to massive collateral damage, the Iranian official noted.

That, he said unequivocally, is a red line for Iran.

Any such massacre would also have "grave humanitarian and moral, as well as political costs, which is unacceptable," he stressed.

Given the complexity of the matters in Idlib, he said, Iran sought in negotiations with its partners in the Astana process to make the case for a solution that is exclusive to Idlib and its special status.

Jaberi Ansari believed the solution is phased and composite to include security, military, and political components that would have to be agreed upon.

He said that the Iranian proposal faced "initial resistance" from Russia and Turkey, Iran's two partners in the Astana process that support the Syrian government and opposition, respectively.

He said Russia was inclined to resolve the Idlib matter more quickly, while Turkey sought to indefinitely delay any resolution of the issue.

Just as concerns were spiking about an all-out war and a potential humanitarian crisis in Idlib, and to everyone's relief, Russia and Turkey reached a deal to avert disaster. At the end of a summit in Sochi on September 17, Moscow and Ankara agreed on, among other things, establishing a demilitarized zone in Idlib that would cover an expanse of 15-20 kilometers of land. Militants would have to entirely clear that area by October 15.

The agreement was welcomed not only by the Syrian government and opposition but also by international observers. Iran called it proof that "diplomacy works."

Former MP blames government and domestic media for 2017 protests

POLITICS TEHRAN — Former senior lawmaker Mohammad Reza Bahonar says the government as well as domestic media outlets are to blame for last year's unexpected protests which broke out in dozens of cities and towns across Iran.

In an interview with the Etemaad newspaper published on Sunday, Bahonar said after a thorough study of the causes of the protests, which started late in December 2017 and lasted for a week, "we reached a number of conclusions which we submitted in a letter to top authorities."

Bahonar, who served in the parliament for 28 years, said, "To put it in a nutshell, I should say we fully accept that there are inefficiencies and corruption in some areas, and that people's demands have not been fully satisfied."

"But the fact of the matter is that regardless of the measures taken by the foreign [media outlets], including the BBC [Persian], Voice of America [Persian], Mossad, Telegram [app] and so on, compared to how we ourselves provoked the people to think the system is inefficient



and corrupt and that the people should scream their demands, they didn't do anything and most measures in this regard were taken by the state-run media, which is really strange."

The former lawmaker added, "In the letter, we said, 'very well, now that we cannot prevent the BBC, VOA, Telegram and others, at least we ourselves should stop.'"

"I'm not saying we do not have any problems. Inefficiencies, corruption and unmet demands do exist, but I claim we provoked the people's minds ten times more than what the realities suggested," he remarked.

Bahonar further illustrated his point with an example drawn from the government's handling of an earthquake which hit western Iran in November 2017, saying the national media reported the incident unjustly.

"I have been present as an official at a number of earthquakes since the beginning of the Islamic Revolution, but while I was not an official in the recent earthquake in the country's west, I testify that the Kermanshah earthquake was managed much better than the previous incidents," he stated.

"However, we all [only] depicted the inefficiencies," Bahonar pointed out.

Afghan Taliban officials: 'U.S. agrees to discuss troops pullout'

The United States has agreed to discuss the withdrawal of its troops from Afghanistan in a direct meeting with Taliban representatives in Qatar, officials from the armed group said.

In a preliminary meeting in Doha on Friday, Taliban representatives and U.S. envoy Zalmay Khalilzad discussed the Taliban's conditions to end the 17-year war in Afghanistan, two top Taliban officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, told Al Jazeera.

"Six U.S. delegates arrived in Doha to have a meeting with our (Taliban) leaders [and] agreed to discuss all issues, including the pullout of foreign troops," one of the officials said.

"But, it was a preliminary meeting and all issues were discussed in general, not in detail," he added, saying more talks were expected to take place in the near future.

Last year, U.S. President Donald Trump increased the number of U.S. forces in the country as part of a new strategy against the Taliban. There are now about 14,000 U.S. soldiers in the country. The Taliban has previously said the presence of foreign troops was the biggest obstacle to peace in Afghanistan.

In addition to the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan, the Taliban's conditions include the lifting of sanctions on its leaders, the release of their fighters imprisoned in Afghanistan, and the establishment of an official political office.

At the request of the U.S., a Taliban office was established in Doha in 2013 to facilitate peace talks but it was shut shortly after opening when it came under pressure over a flag hung outside the office, the same flag that was flown during the Taliban rule in Afghanistan.

Then Afghan President Hamid Karzai subsequently halted peace efforts, saying the office was presenting itself as an unofficial embassy for a government-in-exile.

The flag has since been taken down and the office has been empty with no official announcements about a possible reopening.

Talks with the Taliban have since been taking place elsewhere in Doha.

U.S. officials in Kabul and Zalmay Khalilzad were not immediately available to comment on Saturday's gathering in the Qatari capital.

It was the second time that U.S. officials met the group in Qatar. The first meeting took place in July, and included U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Alice Wells.

In recent months, Khalilzad, who was appointed as U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation in September, has met officials from Pakistan, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in a bid to renew the long-stalled direct talks with the Taliban.

'U.S. puppets'

The Taliban, Afghanistan's largest armed group which was toppled from power by a U.S.-led invasion in 2001, has repeatedly turned down offers of talks with the Afghan government, calling them "U.S. puppets," despite calls from Afghan President Ashraf Ghani to start negotiations.

Instead, they demanded to meet U.S. officials for talks primarily on foreign troops withdrawal.

In July, the U.S. announced it was ready for direct talks with the Taliban to seek negotiations and to "discuss the role of international forces."

Abdul Salam Zaeef, a former Taliban ambassador to Pakistan who is now based in Doha and in contact with the Taliban representatives, confirmed the U.S. decision to discuss a pullout from Afghanistan.

He was not present at the meeting, but said the withdrawal of foreign troops "now only requires a timeline for implementation".



"As per my information, the U.S. has reached an agreement with the Taliban to withdraw troops from Afghanistan but the U.S. officials have not yet agreed on a date," he said.

"The U.S. is not winning in Afghanistan. They are aware of that, which means they have to agree on the Taliban's conditions for ending the war in the country."

Some analysts, however, fear the withdrawal of foreign troops will not end the long-running conflict in Afghanistan.

In recent months, there has been a surge in violence across the country, with heavy clashes between the Taliban and Afghan security forces from the provinces of Badakhshan, Baghlan and Faryab in the north to the province of Farah in the west.

Power-sharing

Faizullah Zaland, a political analyst based in Kabul, said long-term international support and a power-sharing agreement between the Taliban and the Afghan government is necessary to end the war.

"The U.S. has tried all its methods, policies and strategies to limit the Afghan war, but instead the war has grown even more. The Taliban has got more land and more control in the country," he said.

The U.S. strategy in 2017 of increasing troops in Afghanistan by raising the number of soldiers from 8,400 to about 14,000, has also "failed," he said.

"The international community's long-term support is the only guarantee for Afghan peace, in addition to a power-sharing agreement with the Taliban."

In May, Farah city, one of the largest cities of Afghanistan, was on the verge of falling to the Taliban, which would have made it the second city, after Kunduz in 2015, to fall under the Taliban since the war began in 2001.

In an attempt to put an end fight, in February, Ghani of-

fered recognition of the Taliban as a legitimate political group and involvement in a constitutional review that he said could bring the group to the negotiating table to end the 17-year war.

But the Taliban continued fighting as their demand to meet directly with U.S. officials was ignored.

Last week, the Taliban issued a warning that its fighters would target government security forces to disrupt the October 20 parliamentary elections.

Zabihullah Mujahid, a spokesperson for the Taliban said, fighters will target "people who are trying to help in holding this process successfully by providing security".

He added that "no stone should be left unturned for the prevention and failure" of the election.

As of January 2018, the Afghan government only controls 56.3 percent of the country, according to a report by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) released in May.

The Taliban, meanwhile, holds 59 districts, while the remaining 119 - about 29.2 percent - are contested, meaning they are controlled by neither the Afghan government nor the armed group.

In a report last week, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) said at least 8,050 Afghan civilians were killed or wounded in the first nine months of 2018.

Half of them were killed in suicide attacks and bombings that might amount to war crimes, UNAMA said.

"Civilian deaths have not been the main concern during these talks, but in reality, civilian casualties is the grimmest part of this war and the credit goes to all sides engaged in this conflict," Zaland, the political analyst told Al Jazeera.

"Trust building measurements should be soon taken in order to build the trust of civilians for them to support the peace process."

(Source: Al Jazeera)

Twenty-two killed as truck carrying migrants crashes in Turkey

Twenty-two people, including children, were killed when a truck carrying migrants crashed in the western Turkish province of Izmir on Sunday, the state-owned Anadolu news agency reported.

The mangled wreckage of the open-topped truck lay toppled over in a canal, some 20 meters below a highway from which it apparently fell after crashing through a barrier, video and photos published by Anadolu showed.

Thirteen people were injured and taken by ambulance to nearby hospitals, it said.

A state prosecutor has launched an investigation into the crash and the truck driver could face arrest after hospital treatment, it added.

According to the private Demiroren news agency (DHA), the truck's passengers were foreign migrants who had reached a deal with traffickers to be transported by boat to the Greek island of Samos

south of Izmir.

Nine of those injured were children, DHA said. It was not clear where the migrants were from.

Turkey became one of the main launch points for more than a million migrants taking the sea route to EU countries in 2015, many fleeing conflict and poverty in the Middle East and Africa.

The influx of migrants was drastically curtailed by a 2016 accord between Ankara

and the EU, after hundreds died crossing to Greek islands a few miles off Turkey.

The truck driver lost control of the vehicle and it crashed at around 8 a.m. (0500 GMT) in the Gaziemir district, near the airport south of Izmir city, DHA said.

A CNN Turk correspondent at the scene said emergency workers had worked to retrieve the dead and wounded trapped beneath the truck.

(Source: Reuters)

Trump: unsure if Mattis will depart

U.S. President Donald Trump said he is unsure whether Defense Secretary James Mattis is planning to step down from his post, but told CBS' "60 Minutes" in a pre-taped interview due to be aired Sunday that the retired general might and that he regards Mattis as "sort of a Democrat."

"It could be that he is" planning to depart, Trump said, according to an excerpt of a transcript released Sunday before the show airs. "I think he's sort of a Democrat, if you want to know the truth. But General Mattis is a good guy. We get along very well. He may leave."

"I have a very good relationship with him," Trump said. "I had lunch with him two days ago. I have a very good relationship with him."

"It could be that he is. I think he's sort of a Democrat, if you want to know the truth. But General Mattis is a good guy. We get along very well. He may leave."

I mean, at some point, everybody leaves. Everybody. People leave. That's Washington."



Mattis was a U.S. Marines commander in the 2003 invasion of Iraq and was elevated under George W. Bush to command the United States Joint Forces Command.

Under Barack Obama, he became commander of U.S. Central Command.

The defense department did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

In its first two years, the Trump administration has witnessed an unprecedented flow of high-profile departures. This week, UN ambassador Nikki Haley announced she was stepping down.

In a book published last month, journalist Bob Woodward depicted Mattis as directly ignoring an expressed desire by Trump to assassinate Syrian president Bashar al-Assad and comparing Trump's understanding of tensions on the Korean peninsula to that of "a fifth- or sixth-grader."

Mattis denied making such statements. The defense secretary is scheduled to embark for Vietnam on Tuesday in a trip that originally included a Beijing agenda, since canceled.

(Source: agencies)

Jordan says border with Syria to reopen Monday

The border crossing between Jordan and Syria will reopen on Monday after being closed for years, a Jordanian government spokeswoman and Syrian state television said Sunday after weeks of talks.

"This was a crucial artery of trade between Jordan and Syria and transit to other countries," said Jordanian government spokeswoman Jumana Ghunaimat.

The Syrian government retook the area around the border crossing at Naseeb in July during a weeks-long Russian-backed offensive to drive rebels from their stronghold in southwest Syria.

Technical teams from the two countries met on the Jordanian side on Sunday and agreed on the final arrangements to open the crossing from Oct. 15, said Ghunaimat.

However, although the crossing will be officially opened on Monday, it will not open to normal traffic just yet, said Nael Husami, head of the Amman chamber of industry.

Syrian state television also cited Interior Minister Mohammed al-Shaar as saying the border crossing and roads leading to it were being renovated.

Syria's only other normally operating border is with Lebanon. Its frontier with Turkey is only open to rebel-held areas, and its crossing with Iraq is only open for government or military uses.

(Source: Reuters)

Britain, France, Germany call for Khashoggi probe

Britain, France and Germany called on the Saudi and Turkish authorities Sunday to mount a "credible investigation" into the disappearance of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, saying they were treating the incident with "the utmost seriousness."

"There needs to be a credible investigation to establish the truth about what happened, and - if relevant - to identify those bearing responsibility for the disappearance of Jamal Khashoggi, and ensure that they are held to account," foreign ministers from the three countries said in a joint statement.

"We encourage joint Saudi-Turkish efforts in that regard, and expect the Saudi Government to provide a complete and detailed response. We have conveyed this message directly to the Saudi authorities," the statement by British foreign minister Jeremy Hunt, France's Jean-Yves Le Drian and Germany's Heiko Maas said.

(Source: Reuters)

UK's ex-Brexit chief urges cabinet to rebel against PM May

Britain's former Brexit secretary urged members of Prime Minister Theresa May's cabinet to rebel against her proposed deal with the European Union over the terms of Britain's departure from the bloc Sunday.

David Davis wrote in the Sunday Times that May's plans for some continued ties with the EU under her Chequers plan is "completely unacceptable" and must be stopped. The fellow Conservative Party member said the time has come for ministers to shoot down May's plan.

"It is time for the cabinet to exert their collective authority," he said. "This week the authority of our constitution is on the line."

May is struggling to build a consensus behind her Brexit plans ahead of a cabinet meeting Tuesday that will be followed by an EU summit Wednesday in Brussels.

If Davis' call for a rebellion is effective, the cabinet meeting Tuesday would be a likely place for opposition to surface.

Davis and former Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson resigned from the cabinet this summer to protest May's Brexit blueprint. Both have become vocal opponents of her plan, calling it a betrayal of the Brexit vote that would leave Britain in a weakened position.

May also faces obstacles from the Democratic Unionist Party in Northern Ireland, which has played a crucial role in propping up her minority government in Parliament.

DUP leader Arlene Foster remains opposed to any Brexit plan that would require checks on goods traveling between Northern Ireland and Britain, as some EU leaders have suggested as part of a "backstop" plan.

The Chequers plan has also been questioned by some opposition Labour Party lawmakers, further complicating the prime minister's hopes of winning parliamentary backing for any Brexit deal she reaches with EU officials.

(Source: AP)

18 Afghan soldiers killed in Taliban attacks: officials

At least 18 soldiers were killed in Taliban raids on two military posts in western Afghanistan, officials said Sunday, as militants step up attacks ahead of parliamentary elections.

Poll-related violence killed or wounded dozens of civilians on Saturday, a week before voters cast their ballots across the war-torn country. Another 15 soldiers were captured and five wounded during the overnight attacks involving "a large number of Taliban" in Pusht-a-Rud district of Farah province, provincial council chief Farid Bakhtawar told AFP.

Defense ministry spokesman Ghafoor Ahmad Jawed said reinforcements had been sent to the area.

"The Taliban have also suffered huge losses," Jawed added. The militants seized weapons and armored vehicles during the assault, provincial council member Dadullah Qaneh said.

Violence has escalated in the months leading up to the October 20 parliamentary election, with hundreds killed or wounded.

On Saturday, a motorcycle carrying explosives detonated among supporters of Nazifa Youssef, a female candidate for the northeastern province of Takhar, killing 22 and wounding 36 - mostly civilians.

And in the western province of Herat, two gunmen attacked the campaign office of a candidate in Injeel district, killing two people, provincial governor spokesman Jailani Farhad said.

(Source: AFP)

Jordan's king vows to fight corruption after protests

Jordan's King Abdullah II Sunday vowed authorities would crack down on corruption in the country, following mass protests against graft and price rises earlier this year.

"All Jordanians have an equal right to justice, and corruption will not be left unaddressed to become a chronic social illness," the king said in a speech to mark the opening of parliament in Amman.

"I hereby affirm that the state's institutions are well capable of uprooting corruption and holding to account those who dare to encroach

on public funds," he added. Thousands of Jordanians hit the streets at the start of June to protest against corruption, price rises and austerity measures.

The week of mass demonstrations forced the prime minister's resignation and the withdrawal of a controversial income tax bill.

With a lack of natural resources to boost state coffers, Jordan relies heavily on foreign aid and faces an unemployment rate of 18.5 percent. In 2016 Amman secured a \$723-million loan from the International

Monetary Fund, but the resultant economic reforms led to price hikes.

The king on Sunday acknowledged "dissatisfaction with the way current challenges are being addressed."

"The process of development in Jordan, as in other countries, has been marred by some mistakes and challenges, which we must learn from, resolve, and prevent from reoccurring, so that we may move forward," he said.

Abdullah put the current situation down to "a weakening (of) public trust in govern-

ment institutions, as well as an atmosphere of scepticism."

Stability in Jordan is seen as fundamental to the region and in the wake of protests Amman was offered a \$2.5 billion aid package from three Gulf backers.

More than \$1 billion has already been deposited in the central bank by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait, a Jordanian government source said earlier this month.

(Source: AFP)

STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	174923.6
IFX	1927.72

Sources: tse.ir, ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	48,600 rials
GBP	55,250 rials
AED	11,430 rials

Source: isna.ir

COMMODITIES

WTI	\$71.34/b
Brent	\$80.43/b
OPEC Basket	\$80.14/b
Gold	\$1,218.50/oz
Silver	\$14.65/oz
Platinum	\$844.00/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

NEWS IN BRIEF



Income tax revenue rises 11.7% in 5 months on year

ECONOMY TEHRAN— Income tax revenue has risen 11.7 percent during the first five months of current Iranian calendar year (March 21-August 22) compared to the same period of time in the previous year, Tasnim news agency reported on Sunday citing the data released by the Central Bank of Iran (CBI).

As reported, 74 trillion rials (about \$1.761 billion) of tax income has been collected throughout the country during the mentioned five-month period.



TEDPIX up 88% since March

ECONOMY TEHRAN— Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE)'s main index (TEDPIX) has increased 88 percent since the beginning of current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2018), Tasnim news agency reported on Sunday.

Some 534 new trading codes have been issued for Iranian investors during the first half of the current calendar year (March 21-September 22), increasing the number of trading codes to 10,483 million in the stock market, Iranian Central Securities Depository and Settlement Funds Company (known as SAMAT) has previously announced.

There are currently over 10,376 individual investors and 106,000 institutional investors in Iran's stock exchange market.

Presence of new shareholders in TSE rose 40 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1396 (ended on March 20), compared to its preceding year, as the former head of TSE, Hassan Qalibaf-Als, has previously announced.

We have new customers for our oil, Iran says

however clearly Saudi Arabia hasn't been quite successful in this regard and now with the prices over \$80 we gain the same revenue even with our exports being cut to half."

The vice president also called on Iran's private sector to increase non-oil exports in order to increase the country's revenues to withstand the sanctions.

"We can still export oil and non-oil commodities and provide people with their necessary goods. We have the opportunity to export, and therefore I ask exporters to be more active and try to create economic stability in the country," he added.

China central bank chief says plenty of room for monetary adjustments amid trade row

China central bank governor Yi Gang said on Sunday he still sees plenty of room for adjustment in interest rates and the reserve requirement ratio (RRR), as downside risks from trade tensions with the United States remain significant.

China faced "tremendous uncertainties" due to the impact of tariffs and trade frictions and was seeking a "constructive solution" to the current trade tensions, Yi said at a seminar on the sidelines of the annual International Monetary Fund and World Bank meetings on the Indonesian island of Bali.

"We still have plenty of monetary policy instruments in terms of interest rate policy, in terms of RRR. We have plenty of room for adjustment, just in case we need it," Yi said.

Beijing and Washington have slapped tit-for-tat tariffs on each other and plans for bilateral trade talks to resolve the dispute have stalled, triggering a market rout and putting pressure on China's already softening economy and weakening currency.

Yi said China's economic growth would still comfortably reach its full-year target of around 6.5 percent in 2018 with the possibility of overshooting, adding that he was comfortable with current inflation levels.

China has implemented four RRR cuts this year, releasing billions in new liquidity to the market, and used other tools to push down corporate lending rates, but Yi said trade tensions with the United States could hit the economy further.

"I think the downside risks from trade tensions are significant," the central bank chief said. "Tremendous uncertainties (are) ahead of us." (Source: Reuters)

Anti-sanctions package preparation process outlined

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Head desk of Iran's Budget and Planning Organization outlined the preparation process of the package to tackle U.S.-led sanctions in a meeting with the chairmen of the parliament committees on Saturday, IRNA reported.

"The Budget and Planning Organization prepared these 12 programs, primarily, after studying the targeted sectors of the U.S. sanctions and estimating the amount of damage they can suffer due to the embargo. The organization, then, specified duties and plans of each Iranian ministry and state-run organization in this regard," Mohammad-Baqer Nobakht said.

"We also investigated the impact of the sanctions on the planned budget of the present and the next year as well as our financial resources, including oil revenues,



to find a better overview of the country's consumption patterns," he added.

"Some predictions are also made about fluctuations of foreign exchange rates under

the sanctions to lessen the influence of the sanctions on the nation's livelihood," Nobakht said. "Required measures to be taken to curb liquidity flow have also been investigated."

In the sanction era, the existing 76,000 semi-finished projects will be completed by the cooperation of the private sector, he informed.

As the official announced in early September, some 300 trillion rials (about \$7.1 billion) of budget has been allocated for implementation of these strategies.

The Trump administration re-imposed sanctions in August after withdrawing from the 2015 international nuclear deal with Iran. Trump has said the United States will issue another round of tougher sanctions in November that will target Iran's oil sales and banking sector.

External debt down 8%

ECONOMY TEHRAN— According to the newest data released by the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), Iran's debts to foreign lenders in the end of the fifth Iranian month of Mordad (August 22, 2018) stood at \$10.405 billion, showing eight percent decrease in comparison with announced figure in the first Iranian calendar month of Farvardin (March 21- April 20, 2018), IRIB reported on Sunday.

In Mordad, from the total of \$10.405 billion of foreign debt, \$6.613 billion was mid-term and long-term debts and \$3.792 billion was short-term debts, the report confirmed.

According to the same report, Iran's external debt in the fourth calendar month of Tir stood at \$10.668 billion which fell to \$10.405 billion in Mordad, while it was \$11.305 billion in Farvardin. The figures are showing the decreasing trend of the country's debts to the foreign lenders.

External debt is the portion of a country's debt that was borrowed from foreign lenders



including commercial banks, governments or international financial institutions. These loans, including interest, must usually be paid in the currency in which the loan was made.

Foreign debt as percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the ratio between the debt a country owes to non-resident creditors and its nominal GDP.

As IRIB reported, Iran's GDP was \$431.92 billion in 2017, thus the ratio between the debt and GDP is around 2.5 percent, which is not big.

Iranian exporters to receive tax exemption from Oman

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iranian traders who export products to Oman receive tax exemption from the Omani government, Shahla Amouri, the vice chairman of Iran-Oman Joint Chamber of Commerce, told IRNA on Saturday referring to the trip of an Iranian trade delegation to Muscat.

She also noted that investment making in Oman and exports to that country has low risks.

An Iranian trade delegation visited the Omani capital city of Muscat to investigate the fields for the re-export of Iranian products from Oman, the portal of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) reported on Saturday.

During their stay in Oman, the delegates, led by Mohsen Zarrabi, the chairman of Iran-Oman Joint Chamber of Commerce, met a number of Omani officials including Hamed Said Al-Oufi,



the undersecretary for Fisheries at Oman's Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, to discuss the condition for the more presence of Iranian traders and investors in Oman for the joint-venture and re-export purposes.

Iran has exported 734,000 tons of products worth \$223 million to Oman during the first quarter of current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21), according to the data released by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

ECB should keep policy options open regardless of Fed

The European Central Bank should keep its policy options open and not let itself be influenced by the Federal Reserve, ECB policymaker Francois Villeroi de Galhau said on Sunday.

Encouraged by a recovery in euro zone inflation, the ECB expects to stop adding to its 2.6 trillion euro (\$3.0 trillion) pile of bonds at the end of this year and has guided the market to expect a rate hike some time in late 2019.

Villeroi said the ECB would soon decide how to reinvest the proceeds of the bonds that expire next year but should not yet commit beyond that point.

"We should keep our options open about the timing of our reinvestment in the following years," he told a conference on the sidelines of the International Monetary Fund's annual meeting in the Indonesian resort town of Nusa Dua.

The French central bank governor added

that rate-setters should wait a little longer to clarify their guidance on interest rates, which currently just says they will stay at their current, rock-bottom level "at least through the summer of 2019".

"As we approach the summer of 2019, the balance will shift in favor of detailing our forward guidance," Villeroi said.

Six rate hikes by the Fed in 1-1/2 years have sent the U.S. dollar rallying against the

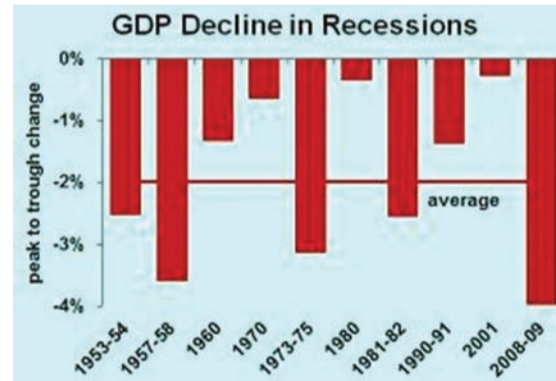
currencies of fragile emerging economies such as Argentina and Turkey, forcing their central banks to also increase borrowing costs to arrest the slide.

The euro zone has been relatively insulated and Villeroi said the ECB should proceed at its own pace.

"I think the euro area can determine its own course," he said.

(Source: Reuters)

Will the economy crash in 2019?



GDP decline in recessions. Dr. Bill Conerly based on data from National Bureau of Economic Research and National Bureau of Economic Analysis

and the Fed doubts it, but we won't be sure for another year or two. Making me nervous is that I expect the Fed to keep pushing interest rates up.

When the economy is soft and the Fed is keeping rates low, there isn't much chance of them triggering a recession. Inflation, yes, but recession, no. Now that the Fed is raising interest rates and running down its securities portfolio, the risk of a recessionary mistake is greater.

Risk is the appropriate concept. The economy is incredibly complex, both domestically and with its international connections. Nobody can nail down a forecast perfectly. Those who think they have done so are usually wrong. Those who claim they have done so in the past were usually wrong year after year until the economy finally turned down. So think in terms of rising risk or falling risk.

Another possible trigger of a recession in 2019 or 2020 is a collapse in international commerce due to President Trump's trade wars. That's possible if negotiations go south,

ruined by competing egos and economic ignorance. So yes, it's possible. Most of the risk is related to China. Cutting our exports to China would be a hit to the economy, but not catastrophic. Reducing our imports from China would raise consumer prices and disrupt supply chains for American manufacturers, so trade conflict is certainly a bad for us.

A severe slowdown in trade with Canada and Mexico would be even more harmful. The good news is that recent revisions to our trade deals with those countries, the USMCA, turn us away from catastrophe, even if not in the direction of the ideal.

Consumer nervousness is my final worry. Right now attitudes are excellent. Despite the exuberance, the growth of spending matches the growth of disposable income. If, however, consumers become wary of the future, then look for a slowdown. I don't expect that, but politics, war or terrorism could trigger a sudden change.

What to do if you share my view of recession risk? Contingency plans are a must for businesses, families, non-profits and state and local government agencies. First, assess your own vulnerability. Some industries are always very cyclical, such as construction and capital goods production, while others are fairly stable, such as health care and many other services. Next, sketch out action steps to take if revenue turns down. (See my article on economic contingency plans.) This can be done on a single sheet of paper, not a three-ring binder. Having this outline in place helps weather a recession in two ways. First, having the plan in place will speed up action, which is critical in a recession. Second, developing the plan in relaxed times avoids the panic that often leads to the worst possible decisions. Consider core values and long-run strategy when developing your recession contingency plan.

The odds are against an economic downturn in 2019, but those are just odds. Sometimes the dice turn up snake eyes even though the odds are slim.

(Source: The Forbes)

BOJ's Kuroda warns of darkening global prospects as trade tensions weigh

Escalating trade tension, emerging market turbulence and huge debt piling up in some countries pose risks to the world economy, Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda said on Sunday, his strongest warning to date over a darkening global outlook.

U.S. President Donald Trump's "America First" policies and escalating Sino-Chinese trade frictions have overshadowed a weekend meeting of G20 finance leaders, many of whom expressed concerns over the harm to global growth from trade conflict.

Kuroda urged global policymakers to

continue their dialogue with a "renewed recognition on the importance of free trade," warning that further escalation of protectionism would harm trade, business confidence and global growth.

"The recent rise of protectionist moves and tightening of financial conditions in some economies remind policymakers of the importance of being vigilant at all times," Kuroda told a seminar on the sidelines of the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank in Indonesia.

"We should pay more attention to pro-

tectionist moves, as global economies have become increasingly interdependent through global value chains," he said.

In Japan, a scheduled domestic consumption tax hike next year is unlikely to inflict major damage to the economy, he added, rebuffing the views of some analysts that the increase ought to be postponed to ensure a sustained recovery.

"At this stage, there would not be any major negative impact on the economy," Kuroda said after the weekend gathering of G20 finance leaders, as the hit to growth

from next year's tax hike would be "much, much smaller" than from an increase in 2014.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has pledged to proceed with a sales tax hike to 10 percent from 8 percent in October next year. The plan was postponed twice after the previous hike to 8 percent from 5 percent pushed the economy into recession.

Kuroda also called for vigilance over market developments, after last week's market rout sent global stocks tanking on fears about prospects of slowing world growth.

(Source: CNBC)

What will OPEC do to calm stormy oil markets?

The oil market is well-balanced and well-supplied. This was one of the key messages in the speech that OPEC's Secretary General Mohammad Barkindo delivered at the Oil & Money Conference in London last week.

The oil market isn't necessarily all in on OPEC's 'well-supplied' narrative—the perception among market participants has been for weeks that the market is short on oil and will continue to tighten even more when U.S. sanctions on Iran snap back in three weeks' time and Venezuela's unstoppable production decline continues.

Despite assurances from oil experts and officials that there isn't any shortage of supply, the 'fear factor'—as Vitol's chairman Ian Taylor put it—has largely, until today, overshadowed fundamentals and is making the oil market more emotional than usual.

OPEC's chief attempted to calm market fears, assuring delegates at the London conference this week that there is plenty of oil to go around, that Russia and Saudi Arabia are adding supply as promised in June "to maintain the supply and demand balance," and that OPEC's largest producer Saudi Arabia "has not turned down a single customer."

Barkindo's speech coincided with the publication of the cartel's Monthly Oil Market Report, which showed that Saudi Arabia added 108,000 bpd of production last month, lifting output to 10.512 million bpd, and that Russia pumped a post-Soviet record high of 11.54 million bpd, up by 150,000 bpd from August. OPEC's increased production and the help from Russia offset a 150,000-bpd



production loss in Iran and another plunge in Venezuela, which is now pumping less than 1.2 million bpd, as per OPEC secondary sources.

At the conference in London, Barkindo also revealed that one of the key oil customers and demand growth drivers—India—had sent a letter to OPEC complaining about the high oil prices it is now paying for oil.

OPEC is scheduled to hold talks with India on October 17, as it wants to ease consumer fears, the cartel's chief said.

India has expressed "discomfort" with the high oil prices, Barkindo said, noting that "As one of our major consuming countries, of which we have an official energy dialogue, it was also a concern for us getting this feedback from India."

And it should be a concern for OPEC, because India—also struggling with a massive local currency depreciation which makes oil even more expensive for it—is a key demand growth driver, and this 'discomfort' may be a sign that demand destruction is coming with Brent Crude prices above \$80 a barrel.

"I'm confident, hearing from our largest producers, that they are ready, willing, and capable to ensure that this market remains well supplied," OPEC's head stressed, as quoted by Platts.

"The market has been reacting to perceptions of a supply shortage, it is not really as such. The balance may be fragile as a result of non-fundamental factors, but I remain confident that we will overcome." Not only is the market currently well-

supplied, projections point to a possible rebuild of stocks in 2019, Barkindo said.

Despite assurances that there isn't any shortage of oil in the world and that Saudi Arabia and Russia would be keeping the supply-demand balance, OPEC's head admitted that current market forces are definitely not the fundamentals, and are out of reach of the cartel's control.

"Nonetheless, we do recognize that there are many non-fundamental factors influencing the market that are beyond the oil industry's control, such as geopolitics, growing trade disputes, natural disasters and other developments. They can have compound effects and are a major source of uncertainties," Barkindo said in his keynote speech.

OPEC's report and the chief's speech at the conference—along with the EIA's report that U.S. crude stocks saw a sizeable increase—did manage to assuage fears and contribute to a price decline in the last couple of days.

Despite these assurances from OPEC, it's likely that the oil market will continue to be ruled by emotions rather than fundamentals for at least another month, until participants see how much Iranian oil will really be choked off by the sanctions, how much the Saudis and Russians are able (and willing) to offset, how low Venezuelan production would drop, or how Libya and/or Nigeria will keep their ever-fragile production recovery.

There may be no shortage of oil whatsoever, but the perception of a supply squeeze may still be the dominant narrative on the market over the next few weeks and months. (Source: oilprice.com)

Japan to add 17 gigawatts of new solar by end of 2020

Growth in Japan's solar power sector is predicted to slow over the coming decade, according to a new analysis from the Fitch Group, but not before the industry adds 17 gigawatts (GW) worth of new solar capacity between the end of 2017 and the end of 2020.

US credit, macro, and industry solutions firm Fitch Solutions Macro Research, part of the Fitch Group, published a new Industry Trend Analysis for Japan's solar sector this week, in which it forecast growth in Japan's solar power sector to slow over the coming decade. The slowdown comes in the wake of the company's transition to competitive auctions for utility-scale solar power capacity procurement in 2017. Another catalyst for this slowdown is the September announcement from the Japanese Government which sees the country's feed-in tariffs (FIT) for solar installations reduced at the household- and company-levels by half by the mid-2020s.

This transition away from feed-in tariffs to competitive auctions, as well as FIT reductions, are intended to address the high costs of subsidizing the country's solar power industry which has nevertheless resulted in explosive growth, with the Japanese solar sector growing from 13.6 GW at the end of 2013 to 48.6 GW by the end of 2017, making it one of the fastest growing solar sectors in the world.

However, while the long-term outlook expects a slowdown, Japan's project backlog stemming from the successful and attractive FIT will continue to support robust growth, and Fitch expects another 17 GW worth of



solar capacity to be brought online between 2018 and the end of 2020.

The transition to competitive auctions for utility-scale procurement comes as the Japanese government begins to prioritize reducing retail electricity prices rather than simply prioritizing solar growth. Unfortunately, the second competitive auction held this year failed to attract any successful bidders, leaving the transition treading water for the time being. According to Fitch, this failure "was a result of a gap in the prices offered by the government under the mechanism, and the prices required to attract project developers to bid in the auction."

Things are expected to go more smoothly for the country's third auction which is scheduled for the second half of this year, but Fitch nevertheless believes "limited investor appetite registered in the second auction" is a tell-tale sign of a slowing solar sector. Specifically, while Fitch expects Japan's solar sector to add 17 GW in the next few years, it conversely expects Japan will only see 14 GW of new solar brought online between 2021 and 2027.

(Source: cleantechica.com)

Australia turns to oil stock ticketing system to meet IEA's SPR requirement

Australia has started an oil stock ticketing system that the government plans to use to return to compliance with the International Energy Agency's 90-day oil stockholding requirement.

In a tender published on its website, the Department of Environment and Energy said it was running a procurement process to consistently hold up to 400,000 mt of oil tickets for the government from October 1, 2018 to June 30, 2020.

The process involves two steps. The first is a registration process, where applicants submit information about their business and have the opportunity to review the department's contracts and general terms and conditions.

Once successfully registered, they can pre-register to participate in the tender process to submit offers to hold stocks of crude oil, condensate or refined products.

The first round of procurement has been completed and the government is calling for the second round now.

"An oil stock ticket is a contractual right to purchase or release oil, where the seller agrees to reserve a predetermined amount of oil for the period of the contract, in return for an agreed fee," the department said.

During an IEA declared global oil emergency, a ticket would give Australia the option to buy the reserved oil outright or release the oil to market by canceling the ticket, helping to ease any disruption.

The IEA currently has 30 members, including Australia, which became a member in 1979 and is a signatory to the IEA agreement



on an international energy program treaty.

Key requirements under the IEP treaty are that member countries hold oil stocks equivalent to at least 90 days of their prior year's daily net oil imports; and in the event of a major oil disruption, contribute to IEA collective actions by way of a stock release, demand constraint, fuel switching, or increased production or fuel sharing.

The country has historically relied on commercial stocks to meet the 90-day requirement. Due to declining domestic production and increased demand for fuels, these stocks were no longer sufficient to meet the 90-day requirement, the department said.

Australia has been non-compliant with the 90-day stockholding obligation since March 2012.

According to information on the department's website, the registration process is open to any entity offering to hold stocks in Australia and to any offering to hold stocks in a country that has a government-to-government arrangement. At present, the US, the UK, Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark have such an arrangement with the Australian government.

(Source: Platts)

Demand-supply balance may keep crude oil range-bound in the short term

Crude oil prices declined sharply last week as the IEA (International Energy Agency) appealed to OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) to boost production as high prices are hurting the global economy.

Earlier, there were fears that Hurricane Michael might lead to a shutdown of nearly 40 percent of Gulf of Mexico crude output. Later on, though, it emerged that the hurricane would not have any impact on crude oil production.

Both the EIA (Energy Information Administration) and API (American Petroleum Institute) reported a huge build-up in crude oil inventories, keeping crude prices under pressure. Losses were extended after OPEC production rose in September.

OPEC's latest monthly report shows production in September rose by 132,000 barrels per day to 32.76 million barrels per day. The rise in production was boosted by huge increases in Libya and Saudi Arabia's output. Saudi Arabia aims to replace Iranian crude, which would be lost once U.S. sanctions take effect from November 4.

U.S. President Donald Trump has very often criticized OPEC and demanded that it increase the production so that prices could come down. Iranian crude output declined to 3.45 million barrels per day in September, from 3.6 million the month prior.

On the other hand, OPEC cut its world demand growth forecast for 2019 due to headwinds to global economic growth, trade



disputes and weakness in emerging-market economies.

For 2019, world oil demand growth is forecast at 1.36 million barrels per day, down by around 50,000 barrels per day from its previous estimate. Much uncertainty prevails regarding the U.S. stance on Iran.

As a result, many countries have cut purchases of Iranian crude. Recent reports, however, suggest that the U.S. may grant waivers on the sanctions.

Base metals were highly volatile this week. Aluminum declined sharply after Norsk Hydro said it obtained a permit in Brazil to use new technology to extend the life of a disposal

area for its troubled alumina refinery. This should lead to restarting 50 percent of aluminum production.

Initially, zinc extended gains due to a consistent decline in LME (London Metal Exchange) inventories. The International Lead and Zinc Study Group demand for refined zinc would exceed supply by 322,000 tons this year and 72,000 tons in 2019.

However, later in the week, zinc weakened sharply due to the sell-off in global equities and on persistent concerns about China's economy.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) cut its global growth forecast for 2018 and

U.S. Gulf of Mexico oil and gas output returning to normal post storm

U.S. Gulf of Mexico oil and gas production is returning to near normal levels three days after Hurricane Michael made landfall on the Florida Panhandle, data from an offshore regulator showed on Saturday, with oil output off 19 percent and natural gas production down less than 10 percent.

The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) also said in a midday update that only one evacuated production platform was still unoccupied, down from 89 platforms on Wednesday. It can take several days after a storm passes to inspect platforms for damages, fully return crews and restore production after wells are shut-in ahead of a storm.

Michael entered the Gulf as a tropical storm and quickly spun into a major hurricane, producing rough seas and winds of up to 155 miles per hour (250 kph) when it made landfall near Panama City, Florida, on Wednesday.

As of midday on Saturday, the storm had left at least 18 dead in four Southeast U.S. states and damages to communities in its path were estimated in the billions of dollars. It was one of the most powerful storms recorded in U.S. history.

The Gulf production still offline on Saturday morning represented 330,394 barrels per day of oil production and 247 million cubic feet per day of natural gas output. BSEE reported from a survey of 17 oil and gas producers. In all, Michael cost Gulf producers about 3.27 million barrels of oil this week.

Offshore production in federal waters of the U.S. Gulf of Mexico accounts for 17 percent of total U.S. crude output and 5 percent of national natural gas production, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

BSEE said its Saturday survey of producers showed that all drilling rigs and vessels that had been evacuated or moved to safer areas of the Gulf ahead of the storm were reoccupied and back at their drilling positions.

(Source: Reuters)

Egypt could generate over 50% of its electricity from renewable energy

According to a new report from the International Renewable Energy Agency, Egypt has the potential to generate 53 percent of its electricity from renewable energy sources by 2030 and could reduce its energy bill by up to \$900 million annually.

The new report by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), Egypt Renewable Energy Outlook, published last week at a high-level conference in Cairo, Egypt, in the presence of Egyptian government officials and regional decision-makers, also shows that renewable energy could supply up to a quarter of Egypt's total final energy supply by 2030 ('energy' here being separate from 'electricity').

"This analysis offers the Egyptian energy sector a roadmap, building on current ambitions and plans, to enhance our position as an energy hub connecting Europe, Asia and Africa," said H.E. Dr. Mohamed Shaker, Egyptian Minister of Electricity and Renewable Energy. "Job creation, economic development and the growth of local manufacturing capabilities are at the heart of our renewables program, and with the support of IRENA we can pursue our plans to grow the country's installed capacity base through smart policies, and the latest renewable technologies."



The report shows how Egypt could generate up to 53 percent of its electricity mix from renewable energy sources by 2030, double that which can be expected from current plans and policies. When incorporating renewable power, heat, and fuels, the analysis shows that Egypt could source 22 percent of its total final energy supply from renewable energy by 2030, up from only 5 percent in 2014.

"Remarkable cost reductions in renewable energy in recent years are encouraging governments all over the world to rethink energy strategies so as to better reflect the new economics of renewables," added Adnan Z. Amin, IRENA Director-General. "Egypt's renewable energy potential is vast and the Government has now moved decisively to accelerate its deployment. The Benban solar complex with its impressive scale reflects this new momentum."

"Building on these achievements, Egypt has the opportunity to further raise its ambition which entails substantially increased investments. Attracting these investments requires stable policy frameworks and a streamlined regulatory environment that provides clarity and certainty for investors. Investments in renewable energy not only help to meet rising energy demand but they can also contribute to fostering economic growth, creating employment and developing local manufacturing."

Specifically, the IRENA analysis shows that to achieve these higher renewable energy targets, Egypt would need to increase its renewable energy investments from \$2.5 billion per year based on current policies to \$6.5 billion per year. However, the resulting impact on the country's energy costs would see a reduction of \$900 million annually by 2030, equivalent to a cost reduction of \$7 per megawatt-hour (MWh). Further, these cost savings do not include external cost benefits such as from air pollution which, according to the IRENA analysis, could yield social and health benefits worth as much as \$4.7 billion annually in 2030.

In order to achieve this increase in ambition, the report highlighted the need for "significant adjustments to Egypt's sustainable energy strategy" considering that the country's current energy strategy, developed in 2014, "does not reflect the rapid economic and technological changes taking place at the national and regional levels." Among the adjustments needed for Egypt to better accomplish its transition to a low-carbon economy is the elimination of burdensome subsidized energy prices. "Eliminating such subsidies," the authors of the report write, "would relieve the government of a heavy financial burden, which has been a strain amid diminishing state revenues."

(Source: cleantechica.com)

2019 due to the trade war between the U.S. and its trading partners. This pressured base metals even more. Copper jumped after a Union official at top copper producer Codelco said smelter operations at its Chile mine would be halted for 60 days starting December 13, 2018 due to upgrade delays.

The outlook for crude oil is mixed. Both the IEA and OPEC have cut demand growth projections for 2018 and 2019, citing the escalating trade war between the U.S. and China. This is a matter of grave concern.

Further, OPEC crude oil production has risen due to the huge increases in Libya and Saudi Arabia outputs. U.S. and Russian crude output would also rise.

According to the IEA, non-OPEC output is forecast to expand by 2.2 million barrels per day and 1.8 million barrels per day in 2018 and 2019, respectively. Despite continuing production declines in Iran and Venezuela, the IEA has forecast that global oil supply and demand would be nearly balanced in 2019.

However, the U.S. sanctions may contain losses in crude.

Disclaimer: The author is Head — Commodity Research & Advisory at Anand Rathi Commodities. The views and investment tips expressed by investment experts on Moneycontrol are their own, and not that of the website or its management. Moneycontrol advises users to check with certified experts before taking any investment decisions.

(Source: moneycontrol.com)

The chaotic autumn of an African patriarch



Cameroon president Paul Biya

Cameroon is the great unspoken African tragedy in-the-making. Its president, Paul Biya, has been in power since 1982. If ever a country needed presidential term limits it is this one. Biya is now the second longest serving non-monarchic head of state in the world. If, as expected, he maneuvers his way through ongoing post-election turmoil to secure another seven-year stint, he will be 92 by the time the next polls fall due, just one year younger than Robert Mugabe when he was overthrown last year. The abuses that Biya has presided over are less publicized than Mugabe's. But he is no less ruthless a despot. When he first became head of state, his country had a highly educated population and diversified economy every bit as promising as Zimbabwe's once was. His rule has been a slow-burning disaster ever since, characterized by grand-scale corruption, political repression and growing division. With every passing year, the likelihood of a tragic denouement to his presidency has risen. Last Sunday's elections took place to a backdrop of simmering conflict in the north of the country, where the army is fighting Islamist militants from the Boko Haram cult. In the north-west and south-west of the country, separatists from the English-speaking minority are waging a guerrilla war.

These upheavals should be gaining far more attention — both on the continent and further afield. The unravelling of this religiously divided and multi-ethnic country has the potential to destabilize swaths of central and west Africa — it is the bridge between the two. The unleashing of the country's enormous economic potential, would by contrast, provide a boon to the whole region. Yet, there has been a near complete absence of international engagement. Rather than leveraging their influence to nudge Biya to the door, successive French governments have served as his protector. If this was short-sighted a quarter century ago, when the seeds of today's crisis were sown, it is even more so now. Last Sunday's election might have offered that chance for political renewal. Instead the outcome looks likely to further polarize the country. Cameroon has been divided along linguistic lines since 1961 when colonial-era French and British-administered territories were brought together in a federation after a referendum. The unification of the two parts in a hyper-centralized state 11 years later has been a bone of contention for Anglophones, who make up a fifth of the population, ever since. Their frustrations boiled over two years ago due to perceived attempts to impose the French language in courts and schools. Rather than seek to defuse the resulting uprising with dialogue, Biya has chosen to put it down with force. Predictably, the crisis has intensified as a result. Hundreds of villagers have been killed in a scorched-earth campaign by the army, hundreds of thousands have been displaced, and the separatists have become more determined still. Two opposition candidates who challenged Biya at the polls have declared victory before official results have been released. But government skulduggery and the fragmentation of opposition votes, make it likely that Biya will emerge again on top. France should take a lead in galvanizing European and African countries to pressurize his government into initiating dialogue. Cameroon's English-speakers have genuine grievances that need urgently to be addressed — ideally in a wide-ranging national debate. But Cameroonians of all origins have grievances too. The time to forestall a wider revolt is running out. (Source: FT)

How the release of a U.S. pastor improves Turkey's standing with America

A Turkish court ordered the release of a U.S. citizen today, giving President Donald Trump a victory to tout ahead of congressional elections in November. Although the court convicted evangelical pastor Andrew Brunson on charges of aiding multiple terrorist organizations, it sentenced him to time served, paving the way for his return home. "Pastor Brunson just released. Will be home soon!" Trump tweeted in response to the news.

Why it matters

Brunson's release has been a cause célèbre for Trump and Vice President Mike Pence, who have used it to fire up their evangelical base. After Turkey failed to release Brunson in July, Trump sanctioned two Turkish Cabinet members and doubled steel and aluminum tariffs on Ankara, exacerbating the lira's downward slide. Now Trump has another win he can use to help boost Republican voter turnout in an election where embattled Republicans look increasingly likely to lose the House.

The Brunson affair has also contributed to Turkey's bipartisan unpopularity in Congress, which is threatening to remove Ankara from the F-35 fighter jet production program. Lawmakers are also considering legislation to cut Turkey off from certain international lending streams.

What's next

NBC News reported on Thursday that Brunson's release came after the Trump administration reached a deal with Turkey on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly meeting last month. The precise details of the deal remain unknown, but it reportedly involves a U.S. commitment to ease economic pressure on Turkey.

Nevertheless, White House spokeswoman Sarah Sanders said in August that Brunson's release would not result in tariff reductions, which are purportedly tied to unrelated national security concerns. Washington is currently weighing the severity of a fine to impose on Turkey's state-run Halkbank for circumventing U.S. sanctions on Iran.

Other prisoners

While Brunson's return home could improve U.S.-Turkish ties, relations remain chilly. Congress has also harped on Turkey's incarceration of another U.S. citizen, NASA scientist Serkan Golge, as well as Metin Topuz, a Turk locally employed by the Drug Enforcement Agency. Neither Trump nor Pence have publicly referenced either prisoner. The United States also has outstanding concerns regarding Turkey's planned purchase of the S-400 missile defense system from Russia. (Source: Al-Monitor)

Trump and the boy king: MBS's reign is over before it even began

BY John Hannah

The Jamal Khashoggi case begs the question: if the Saudi crown prince acts like this only 16 months into his role, then what will happen when he comes to ascend the throne?

What were Jamal Khashoggi's last thoughts, as he was being dragged out of the Saudi consulate general's office in Istanbul by two men and realized that he had walked straight into a trap?

Khashoggi was no newcomer. He knew how Saudi consuls and embassies worked. He himself had worked in two of them: Washington and London. He knew the beast, the way it thought, the way it acted, the way it smelt. He also thought he knew the rules. He had worked for Turki bin Faisal, a former Saudi intelligence chief. The rules of the game were brutal, but they were rational. There were clear red lines. If you knew about them, you could calculate the risks you were taking.

Final seconds

Khashoggi had just bought a flat in Istanbul. He was going to get married the day after. The couple were still waiting for the furniture to arrive. He might have thought the worst they would do was question him or detain him. But would he have risked kidnap, let alone his life, for a piece of paper that would allow him to remarry in Turkey?

He told his friends that he had left the kingdom because he could not stand the prospect of prison. That was why he felt a moral duty to speak out. If he was free, and thousands like him languished in jail, then it was his duty to speak. In his final seconds of life, Khashoggi must have realized that none of this applied any more. If Khashoggi's death was an act of insanity, a total madman must have ordered it. A man for whom there was no rationality, no rules, no restraint. A man who could act with total impunity, and from whom no one was safe.

A plague in Riyadh?

The great and the good are pulling out of the Future Investment Initiative, an investment conference due to be held in Riyadh later this month, so quickly that you would have thought a plague had broken out in Riyadh. They include Richard Branson, the New York Times, CNN, Uber Technologies chief executive officer Dara Khosrowshahi and Viacom Inc CEO Bob Bakish. God forbid, even the Financial Times has withdrawn.

The winds are blowing, too, on Capitol Hill. A bipartisan move is underway in the Senate to invoke sanctions against bin Salman under the Magnitsky Act.

Leading Republican Senator Paul Rand is pushing to cut funding, training and other co-ordination with the Saudi military "until Khashoggi is returned alive".



The man who created bin Salman, promoted him, and redirected the entire weight of U.S. foreign policy, military and security establishments to place their trust on his shoulders, is Trump. And it is Trump who allowed the crown prince to act with total impunity.

Senator Lindsey Graham, an influential Republican senator, told CNN: "You don't have to be Sherlock Holmes to be concerned here. And if this is done at the hands of the Saudi government, if the crown prince was involved in any way, it will virtually destroy his ability to lead this country on the international stage." The intricate network of Saudi and Emirati lobbyists in DC, a network set up to orchestrate bin Salman's entrance on the world stage, is also beginning to unravel.

The Harbour Group, a Washington firm that has been advising Saudi Arabia since April 2017, ended its \$80,000 contract on Thursday. "We have terminated the relationship," managing director Richard Mintz said. Mintz is closely linked to the Emirati ambassador to Washington, Yousef al Otaiba, who acted as bin Salman's impressario in DC.

A convenient cover story

Back in Turkey, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was preparing to receive a high-level delegation led by Prince Khaled al-Faisal. He is the governor of Mecca and a special

adviser to the king. The fact that he is also the elder brother of Khashoggi's former boss, Prince Turki al-Faisal, former intelligence chief and ambassador to Washington and London, does not go unnoticed.

An operation to isolate King Salman from any connection to these events is under way. The joint investigation between Turkey and the government into who committed this atrocity is a convenient cover story.

With the sharing last night of the audio and video of Khashoggi's last tragic moments with its Western allies, Turkey has ensured the outcome of the investigation before it has even started. The only question in Saudi minds is how they can insulate the boy king from the blowback. The man who created bin Salman, promoted him, and redirected the entire weight of U.S. foreign policy, military and security establishments to place their trust on his shoulders, is Trump. And it is Trump who allowed the crown prince to act with total impunity. He can only have one thought: If bin Salman is capable of ordering

such an atrocious act when he is 33, only 16 months into his role as crown prince, then what insane act of recklessness could he be capable of as king of a country which the U.S. military has made the lynchpin of its power in the Persian Gulf and the region in general?

Three things need to be in place for a Saudi crown prince to become king. First and foremost, the consent of the White House. Second, the support of the royal family. Public opinion is a distant third. White House approval by far outweighs the other two. This is the status quo. Trump would not be interfering in an internal process if he withdrew his consent for the crown prince to become king.

Trump has only one course of action left after the contents of the audio and video tape have been revealed. He can no longer allow bin Salman to ascend to the throne.

It's the very least that Jamal Khashoggi, and the fate of countless others murdered, tortured, imprisoned by this regime, deserve. (Source: Middle East Eye)

Nikki Haley's departure reflects the chaos of U.S.'s foreign policy

Not unlike in an autocracy, U.S. foreign policy is hostage to the erratic whims of the president, directed by Trump tweets and what he sees on Fox News

By Michael H Fuchs

Another one bites the dust. That's the story of Donald Trump's foreign policy team. In his 22nd month in office, the president is on his third national security adviser and second secretary of state. Now, Trump has to fill yet another national security position: a new U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

The resignation of U.S. ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley came as a surprise to everyone, including apparently the secretary of state, Mike Pompeo, and White House staff. While many senior officials leave after two years, the resignation announcement of a cabinet member immediately before midterm elections is rare. The speculation is already rampant: was Haley fed up with the chaos of the Trump administration? Was one of Trump's daily affronts to basic decency and democratic norms finally too much? Is she planning to run against Trump in the 2020 Republican presidential primary, despite claims to the contrary?

As we learn more in the coming days and months, one thing is clear: the Trump administration's foreign policy is in chaos, and there's no one minding the store.

Not unlike in an autocracy, U.S. foreign policy is hostage to the erratic whims of the president, directed by Trump tweets and what he sees on Fox News.

Some argue that Trump has a foreign policy. Perhaps it is driven by classic realpolitik — America doesn't have friends, only interests — which might explain his affection for dictators and disdain for U.S. allies. Perhaps it is isolationism, driving Trump to tear up international agreements and reduce immigration. Or perhaps he just views foreign policy as a mano-a-mano showdown with each and every government — friends, allies, adversaries — over anything that smells of victory, from trade deficits to extorting allies for more money.

Regardless of the impulses driving specific policy decisions, U.S. foreign policy under Trump on any given day appears to be propelled by whether or not the president is on a Twitter rampage.

In this environment, no U.S. official is anything more than a supplicant at the court of Trump. Former secretary of state Rex Tillerson and former national security adviser HR McMaster chafed at this approach and couldn't last. Current secretary of state Pompeo, on the other hand, has nestled himself into a nice perch in the court, and proven himself capable of morphing into whatever role the president desires.

In her time at the UN, Haley mostly played the part of the good soldier: attack the integrity of the UN by taking steps to undermine it, like pulling the U.S. out of the UN human rights council; claim to stand up for Israel by cutting off funding to the Palestinians. But sometimes, Haley's actions



Whatever the reasons for her departure, it is unlikely to have a significant impact on U.S. foreign policy. Donald Trump is the only official who truly speaks for U.S. foreign policy, and everyone else is just playing a part.

at the UN — such as her harsh words for Russia over its role in Syria — made it seem as if Haley was conducting her own, more traditionally conservative, foreign policy at Turtle Bay.

And that's illustrative of the anarchy that is the Trump foreign policy. While the national security adviser, John Bolton, attempts to undermine diplomacy with North Korea, Pompeo plays desk officer for Trump's outreach to North Korea, and the secretary of defense, James Mattis, tries to protect the US-South Korea alliance. It certainly shows that Bolton reportedly doesn't like holding national Security Council meetings of the "principals" (cabinet officials).

The disorganization is exacerbated by the astonishingly high number of unfilled senior positions. While the turnover of cabinet-level officials on the national security team is unheard of at this point in a presidential term, so, too, is the number of empty senior positions throughout the bureaucracy. For instance, according to one analysis, only 45% of the state department's Senate-confirmed positions are in place. The lack of confirmed assistant secretaries of state, deputy assistant secretaries of state and

ambassador spots around the world cripples U.S. foreign policy on a daily basis. Whether the issue is a trade war or nuclear diplomacy with Iran or North Korea, foreign governments are perplexed about U.S. foreign policy and who speaks for the U.S. Almost two years into Trump's term, one recent poll of 25 countries revealed that 70% of people have "no confidence" in Trump, despite Haley's boasts of unprecedented respect for the U.S.

Which brings us back to Nikki Haley's departure. Whatever the reasons for her departure, it is unlikely to have a significant impact on U.S. foreign policy. Donald Trump is the only official who truly speaks for U.S. foreign policy, and everyone else is just playing a part.

To date, the administration's foreign policy chaos has inflicted lasting damage on the U.S. and the world. And the scary part — yes, it could get much scarier — is that the Trump team has not even been tested with a genuine international crisis, such as a terrorist attack in the U.S. Nikki Haley or no Nikki Haley, help us all if Trump is presented with a real national security crisis. (Source: The Guardian)

'Trump will not be president forever'

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
By **Fatemeh Mohammadipour**

TEHRAN — Europeans are annoyed by Trump's hostility to traditional U.S. allies and his attacks on NATO, however, Trump will not be president forever.

A reporter at Tehran Times newspaper recently interviewed Geoffrey Carliner, Professor of the University of Boston to further discuss the issue.

Following is the complete text of the interview with Professor Geoffrey Carliner:

■ How do you evaluate "speeches of Macron, President of France about that Europe should no longer rely on America in terms of security"?

A: Europeans, including Macron and Merkel, are understandably upset by Trump's hostility to traditional U.S. allies and his attacks on NATO. However, Trump will not be president forever, maybe not even in 2021. Even now, his Defense Secretary Mattis has said that the U.S. "is 100 percent committed to NATO." Secretary of State Pompeo has said "NATO is more indispensable than ever." Many Republican and Democratic politicians have also emphasized that the U.S. continues to support NATO. Although Trump is the U.S. president, his comments should not be taken as a fundamental change in U.S. policy. The U.S. would certainly respond with military force if Russia, or another country, attacked a NATO member.

■ With the arrival of the Trump to the White House and his criticism of the European



countries regarding NATO's share, Europe had begun its efforts to form a joint European army. According to Macron's speeches, it seam formation of a joint European army take more seriousness. What is your opinion?

A: Some Europeans have argued for a European army for many years. But there are serious obstacles. The UK and France have the strongest militaries, and now the UK will almost certainly leave the EU. Germany is unlikely to put its military under joint control with France. Opposition to further political and economic integration, much less military integration, of the EU is quite strong in Italy,

Poland, Hungary, and some other countries. Persuading all these countries to join a European military does not seem likely.

■ Is Europe essentially capable of being independent of America in terms of security? If so, what will be the future of NATO?

A: In 2017 the U.S. spent \$610 billion on its military, while France, the UK, Germany, and Italy combined spent \$178 billion. The U.S. has built many more fighter planes, aircraft carriers, tanks, and submarines over many years than European countries have built. European military spending would have to increase dramatically for many years before

it had a military that was anywhere close to the strength of the U.S. military.

■ Some analysts have interpreted Macron's speeches as a new Western order. Will the West enter a new era of order and independence from the United States?

A: In the short run, Europe would probably not be able to defeat a Russian attack on the Baltic countries without U.S. help. Without the U.S., it could not keep its oil supplies flowing from the Persian Gulf if Iran tried to shut the Strait of Hormuz. It would have had difficulty contributing to Qaddafi's overthrow in Libya without the U.S. Europe will be dependent on U.S. help to defend itself for many years. Even in the long term, European countries are not likely to be willing to pay the price for an independent military.

■ Macron also said that Russia should also be involved in European security issues. How do you assess this position?

A: Russia should of course be involved in European security issues. Europe, Russia, and the U.S. should work together to reduce tensions and try to resolve conflicts. Perhaps there can even be negotiations on some issues between Europe and Russia that do not involve the U.S. That does not mean that Russia will replace the U.S. as Europe's close ally. This is true even though there will continue to be disagreements between the U.S. and European countries about issues like the Iran nuclear deal, the invasion of Iraq in 2003, trade, and levels of military spending.

The beginning of Trump's unravelling may be at hand

1 → Trump's first reaction to the story coming out of Istanbul was to downplay Khashoggi and point to the lucrative arms sales to the Saudis. (You can't get more venal than that, but it's entirely within character for Trump, who loves nothing so much as money.) And even his ignorant son, Donald Jr., who likes shooting African wildlife on "safari", has gotten into the act. He's been trying to say Khashoggi supported Islamic terrorism, pointing to a 1988 photo of Khashoggi holding a RPG with some al-Qaeda fighters in Afghanistan. Do you think young Donald realizes that in 1988 the U.S. was in full support of the mujahideen in Afghanistan and at the time al-Qaeda was not deemed a "terrorist" group but rather a group of freedom fighters trying to liberate Afghanistan from the grip of the Soviet Union? One conservative website in the U.S. has even gone so far as to claim that Khashoggi's defenders and supporters are being duped by Iranian "interests" looking to damage relations between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. This, of course, implies that damage to relations with the Saudis does benefit Iran.



In any case, as sad as Khashoggi's disappearance and probable murder is, for he is or was a respected and brave journalist, there are other factors at work that may also mark the beginning of the unraveling of Trump's credibility and his Presidency, as at least with the upcoming midterm elections in early November, a shift to a Democratic Party majority at least in the U.S. House of Representatives. Consider:

The forced installation of Brett Kavanaugh by the GOP and Trump onto the U.S. Supreme Court, according to many leading law experts in the U.S., has virtually destroyed what used to be the most venerable and respected court anywhere, because now it is an unreliable, partisan court.

This month the U.S. markets for both bonds and stocks came tumbling down some. Not much, but enough to scare investors who for almost a decade have seen nothing but rising stock and bond values. Trump of late has been crowing that his economic policies gave rise to the rising market values. But he got a lot of egg on his face this past week, and tried to deflect blame onto the Federal Reserve Bank for raising interest rates. And before he was elected and campaigning in 2016, Trump was claiming the U.S. markets were in a "bubble"!

There are, in fact, a number of other issues coming to the fore suggesting that Trump's glory days may end sooner or later, and that with a current "approval" rating of only about 38 percent of Americans, that number could fall dramatically in the months ahead.

As an observer, I have written time and again of the necessity for patience and forbearance, not merely by Americans disgusted with Trump, but by Iranians disgusted with the U.S., too. No question Iran looks more and more like the state Saudi Arabia may wish it could be, and don't forget Trump himself dissed the Saudis this month saying that they would not last more than two weeks without U.S. support. The Islamic Republic of Iran has lasted for decades with nothing but venom and cruelty from the U.S. That is saying quite much.

S-300 restricts Israel air superiority in Syria: Lefebvre

By **Fatemeh Mohammadipour**

TEHRAN — If the S 300 high-level missile is delivered to Syria, could limit air superiority Israel.

A reporter at Tehran Times newspaper recently interviewed Jeffrey Lefebvre Professor in the Political Science department at University of Connecticut to further discuss the issue.

Following is the complete text of the interview with Jeffrey Lefebvre.

■ Following the crash of the Russian plane in Syria, which took place under the trick of Israel, Russia announced that the S 300 will be delivered to Syria. What are Russia's reasons for this?

A: The Russians seem to be sending a strong message to Israel about abiding by the 'unwritten agreement' the two sides have shared over the situation in Syria. In short, the Russians allowed the Israeli air force to operate

in Syrian air space to target Iranian and Hezbollah forces and arms supply routes in Syria and to keep these forces away from Israel's northern border (in the occupied Golan region). In return Israel did not participate in Western sanctions against Russia over its invasion of Crimea. Thus, a lot is at risk for Israel if the more sophisticated Russian S 300 missiles are delivered to Syria which could seriously jeopardize Israel's ability to launch air strikes—several hundred over the past several years.

■ Israel has said that Russia's action is dangerous and will increase tensions in the region. What is the likely reaction of Israel if this plan is operational?

A: The Israeli reaction is likely to be one of continuing to deny responsibility for the downing of the Russian aircraft, pressing Moscow not to deliver the S 300 missiles that have already been delayed by Moscow for delivery to Syria by five years that would threaten Israeli air superiority over Syria, and to ensure the Russian-Israeli 'agreement' about Israeli air operations in Syria.

■ With delivery of S 300 system to Syria, What changes will be made in the balance of power of the region?

A: The Balance of Power between Syria and Israel will be affected somewhat if the S 300 missiles are delivered as they would threaten Israel's ability to conduct air strikes in Syria largely unopposed. The more important, long-range issue may involve current and future Russian and Iranian influence in Syria. President Assad seems to be on the verge of winning the civil war in Syria, helped by Russia, Iran, and Hezbollah. Interestingly, Russia's 'agreement' not to challenge Israeli air strikes against Iranian and Hezbollah targets in Syria may well continue as it seems to be a tactic to degrade Iranian influence in a post-civil war Syria and clear the way for Russian hegemony in Syria.

How to finance Asia's infrastructure gap

By **Susantono Bambang**

Asia's countries famously need to invest trillions of dollars a year to provide infrastructure required to keep traffic flowing, ports trading, and factories humming. Yet most countries in the region consistently fall short.

The 2017 Asian Development Bank (ADB) report "Meeting Asia's Infrastructure Needs" puts the infrastructure tab for 45 developing Asian countries at more than US\$1.7 trillion per year. Developing Asia now invests only about \$881 billion a year, or slightly more than 50 percent of that. This is the infrastructure gap.

Less well known, however, is that the investment shortfall is frequently not for a lack of funds or technology. The money may be available, particularly in the private sector, but not enough of it is going where Asia needs it. And this is because many developing countries lack the knowledge and capacity to design and implement bankable infrastructure projects that integrate new technologies.

To encourage private sector investment in infrastructure, high-quality bankable projects must adopt current levels of proven technology as well as be "future-proofed" to further advances in technology.

Delegates from across the development spectrum — from government through the private sector — will gather on Oct. 13 in Bali for the Global Infrastructure Forum 2018 to discuss several trillion-dollar questions. How can governments and the private sector help fill the infrastructure gap? How can authorities' better pair the world's big investors with the many inclusive, resilient, sustainable, and technology-driven infrastructure projects this region needs to advance economic progress? And how can multilateral development banks best help?

To be sure, strong infrastructure projects are going up all over Asia. Take Indonesia, the Forum host; the country has made enormous strides under its ongoing and ambitious infrastructure program.

The country has seen progress: from the trans-Papua



road project in one of the country's most remote and underdeveloped regions to better information and communications technology under the Palapa Ring (satellite) Project. Indonesia has also launched innovative and clean energy projects such as the 72-megawatt Tolo wind-farm in South Sulawesi and massive urban infrastructure to boost Jakarta's livability and competitiveness. This latter project includes a new modern airport terminal, rail link, and the first phase of the mass rapid transit expected to open in 2019.

Knowledge is crucial to get such projects off the ground, and this is where the multilateral development banks, including ADB, can assist.

The development banks are providing governments financial and technical support to enhance knowledge in numerous areas.

ADB is also helping strengthen government and private sector project development and governance capacity, for instance, for preparing high-quality projects able to support private finance. It also established the Asia Pacific Project Preparation Facility, a \$73 million multi-donor trust fund to support project preparation, monitoring, and project restructuring, as well as capacity building and policy-reform initiatives linked to specific projects.

In addition, the organization is promoting public-private partnerships, catalyzing regulatory reforms to make infrastructure more attractive to private investors, and encourage more bankable projects. Potential is vast, in that pension funds alone, which hold \$7.8 trillion in assets, are estimated to invest only about 1 percent of funds under management in infrastructure.

A recent ADB report, "Closing the Financing Gap in Asian Infrastructure," notes that the richer Asian economies, such as Japan — where savings rates top 30 percent — can clearly play a stronger role if it only could. Yet, the country still invests almost \$4 trillion in portfolio assets outside Asia.

Likewise, ADB is developing alternative financing structures and is backing green finance to encourage a bankable green finance project pipeline that can access funds from commercial and institutional investors. Many major investors are now strictly subject to environmental, social, and governance requirements in their investment decisions.

Finally, as technology rapidly evolves, particularly digital, it is creating substantial opportunity. Land acquisition, for example, significantly delays infrastructure projects across the region. Digital technologies are therefore being tested in several countries and watched closely for an ability to improve land titling. Likewise, ADB is involved in Spatial Data Analysis Explorer to help in decision-making relevant to climate hazards and resilience across urban systems.

Multilateral development banks can play multiple roles, from assisting and advising on the creation of appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks, developing bankable projects, direct financing or providing credit enhancement tools to finance projects, to structuring innovative "blended finance" solutions in circumstances where the underlying project is incapable of supporting a financing structure priced at commercial funding rates. In all of this, multilateral development banks and other development partners can assist developing countries gain the knowledge to better develop sustainable, accessible, resilient, and quality infrastructure.

(Source: *Modern Diplomacy*)

Time for international businesses, media groups to withdraw from Saudi

TEHRAN (FNA) — This should surprise no one: A high-profile investment summit in Riyadh later this month has become a fiasco as prominent businesses and media groups from across the globe have pulled out over Saudi Arabia's involvement in the disappearance and murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi in Turkey.

Here is the high-profile list: The president of the World Bank, Jim Yong Kim, is not attending. The Financial Times, Bloomberg, CNN and CNBC have all withdrawn as media sponsors. These plus world's business elite were due to attend the Future Investment Initiative (FII), which begins in the Saudi capital on 23 October. But they are withdrawing pending the outcome of investigations into Khashoggi's disappearance in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, while many others have pulled out unconditionally.

Jamal Khashoggi was one of the Arab world's most prominent journalists and commentators. He was an outspoken critic of Saudi Arabia who had dared to defy the regime and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

While living in Saudi Arabia, Khashoggi was told to stop writing or posting on Twitter, where he has more than 1.6 million followers. He moved to the US more than a year ago, where he continued to comment on his country both in print and on television. He wrote columns for the Washington Post and the Guardian. His message struck a nuanced tone in the US too — Riyadh's main ally.

In truth, although the US treasury sec-



retary, Steve Mnuchin, says he is still planning to attend the Saudi summit, it's still welcome news that major companies and mainstream media outlets in the US have decided to withdraw their sponsorship of the event, starting a domino effect of withdrawals around the globe.

In truth, those who have asked Saudi Arabian authorities to provide transparent and detailed answers over Khashoggi are just wasting their time. Riyadh will never provide transparent and detailed answers over this particular murder case. Those who are waiting to abandon the event and show no signs of protest should take note: A joint Turkish-Saudi investigation into the affair won't reach any conclusion before the summit either.

The Saudi assassins' not-so-secret mission was to torture, then execute, Khashoggi, and videotape the ghastly act for whoever had given the order for his merciless dispatch. His body, Turkish officials say, was dismembered and packed into boxes before being whisked away in a black van with darkened windows. The assassins fled the country. According to the New York Times, among the assassination team was the regime's top forensic expert, who brought a bone saw to dismember Khashoggi's body.

Under international law, therefore, all international companies and media outlets are expected to cut ties with the mobster regime, withdraw from any future summit and investment project, and strongly condemn the murder of Khashoggi and Saudi

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Intermittent fasting may help fight type 2 diabetes

Lifestyle changes are key in the management of type 2 diabetes. Scientists believe that intermittent fasting could play an essential role.

Lately, intermittent fasting has become incredibly popular.

Type 2 diabetes is the most common type. The condition affects the body's ability to produce insulin, which regulates blood sugar levels.

Diabetes is widespread in both Canada and the United States, and in the U.S., it is one of the leading causes of death.

The American Diabetes Association report that the total estimated cost of treating diabetes is now over \$200 billion per year.

Lifestyle changes are crucial to managing the disease, and eating habits play a key role. Doctors normally recommend that people with diabetes follow specific diets.

The effects of a specific diet may differ from person to person, but in general, those with diabetes should avoid processed foods, artificial sweeteners, and refined carbohydrates.

Intermittent fasting could be a way to manage diabetes through diet.

What is intermittent fasting?

Intermittent fasting is a type of diet in which people cycle between periods of eating and fasting. It does not specify the foods that are allowed during the eating window.

The most common type of fasting is known as the 16:8 method, which involves fasting for 16 hours and reducing the eating window to just 8 hours. For example, a person can have dinner at approximately 7 p.m., skip breakfast the day after, and eat lunch at around 11 a.m.

Other forms involve fasting for 2 days per week, 24-hour fasting once or twice each week, and fasting every other day.

Could intermittent fasting reduce disease risk and slow aging?

Researchers used intermittent fasting as a method to reduce the symptoms of type 2 diabetes in a new observational study conducted in Canada and published in the journal BMJ Case Reports.

The study included three men, aged 40–67, who were taking both drugs and daily doses of insulin to manage the disease. They all had high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

"The use of a therapeutic fasting regimen for treatment of [type 2 diabetes] is virtually unheard of," the authors of the study write.

Intermittent fasting's effects on diabetes

Before the study, the men attended nutrition seminars, which gave them information regarding the development of the condition, its effects on the body, and how to use



The most common type of fasting is known as the 16:8 method, which involves fasting for 16 hours and reducing the eating window to just 8 hours. For example, a person can have dinner at approximately 7 p.m., skip breakfast the day after, and eat lunch at around 11 a.m.

diet to manage diabetes.

Then, scientists asked two of them to fast for 24 hours every other day, while the third fasted for 3 days each week. During fasting days, the men could drink low-calorie beverages such as water, tea, or coffee. In addition, they could eat a low-calorie meal in the evening.

The trial lasted 10 months in total, and the three men stuck to their schedule without encountering any difficulties. After the fasting period, the team measured their weight and blood glucose.

The results revealed significant improvement: all three lost weight, blood glucose was lower, and they were able

to stop using insulin after a month from the beginning of the trial. In one case, the person stopped after only 5 days.

Two of the men also discontinued all diabetic drugs, while the third participant stopped 3 out of 4 drugs.

The authors concluded that intermittent fasting may help people with diabetes, but the study was limited to three participants. More research is needed to confirm these findings, but they are encouraging.

"This present case series showed that 24-hour fasting regimens can significantly reverse or eliminate the need for diabetic medication," conclude the authors.

(Source: Medical News Today)

Could it be possible to eliminate clogged arteries?

A new clinical trial to study a potential way of reducing the risk of early-onset atherosclerosis may be on the way.

Atherosclerosis can lead to a range of cardiovascular problems.

After evaluating previous research, a report published in the Journal of the American Heart Association concludes that a clinical trial might pave the way for a new treatment to help reduce the early onset of atherosclerosis.

According to lead author Dr. Jennifer G. Robinson, a professor of epidemiology and director of the Prevention Intervention Center at the University of Iowa in Iowa City, the key may be targeting B lipoproteins in young and middle-aged adults.

These blood proteins (also called apolipoprotein B) include low-density lipoprotein (LDL), or the "bad," cholesterol. Scientists think that LDL and other B lipoproteins are among the leading causes of atherosclerosis.

Preventing atherosclerosis

"Lowering them may have a big impact on making atherosclerosis go away," says Dr. Robinson. "If this works, you could completely eliminate heart attacks and strokes within a generation, because you can't have a heart attack or stroke unless you have atherosclerosis."

The potential study aims to determine whether it is possible to reverse atherosclerosis in high-risk adults aged 25–55 using medications known as statins and PCSK9 inhibitors over a 3-year period. Both statins and PCSK9 inhibitors work to lower LDL cholesterol in the blood.

"The idea is to get the cholesterol very low for a short period of time, let all the early cholesterol buildup dissolve, and let the arteries heal," says Dr. Robinson, confirming that this method has been successful in animal studies. "Then patients might need to be re-treated every decade or two if the atherosclerosis begins to develop again."

"Once you know what causes something, you can come up with a hammer for it and eliminate it. We're not the first ones to think of this idea. This would be the culminating study of decades of research by thousands of people."

Dr. Robinson continues, "But I'm excited about this, and I think it's really time to pursue this hypothesis."

Potential study limitations

A new way to combat early-onset atherosclerosis would be welcome, especially as heart disease is so widespread and a leading cause of death for people in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) note that about 1 in 4 deaths are a result of heart disease.

However, Dr. John Wilkins, a cardiologist and assistant professor at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago, IL — who has conducted studies on B lipoproteins but was not involved in this study — thinks that it might be difficult to convince healthy adults to take medications to keep atherosclerosis at bay.

He also notes that this type of clinical trial may be hard to do as it would involve tracking people for 20 or 30 years, which could prove difficult.

(Source: sgtalk.org)

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Air quality app now available on smartphones in Iran

TECHNOLOGY **TEHRAN** — The Department of Environment has developed an application for nationwide air quality system, IRNA reported on Saturday.



The application, which is available on aqms.doe.ir, provides online air quality index in 31 provinces, the head of Environmental Monitoring Office at the Department of Environment Shina Ansari said.

An air quality index (AQI) is a number used by government agencies to communicate to the public how polluted the air currently is or how polluted it is forecast to become.

The system also include expertise reports for Iran Meteorological Organization and the Health Ministry for natural disaster provisions, she said.

The application can be installed on android and iOS smartphones, she explained.

The data for each province is provided by weather station of the region and the users can find about the details by selecting the place, she added.

SOCIALLY SAFE

Safety tips for buying medicines online

The internet offers a vast array of products for sale from websites all over the world. Buying medicines online is becoming increasingly popular, but medicines are not ordinary consumer goods and extreme caution should be exercised if you choose to purchase them in this way.

This page covers some of the issues involved and offers tips on how to protect you and your family against receiving fake and/or dangerous medicines, as well as against fraudulent activity.

Searching the internet

Many websites selling medicines are based abroad (even though they may claim to be UK-based and advertise in Pounds Sterling). Consequently, they are not regulated by UK authorities. Medicines bought from websites outside the UK cannot be guaranteed to meet set standards of quality, safety and effectiveness. Buying medicines from such sites increases the chances of receiving fake, substandard, dangerous or even life-threatening products.

Prescription-only medicines should be taken only in consultation with an appropriate healthcare professional, who will be familiar with your medical history and will not prescribe medicines which could be unsafe or unsuitable for you. When prescribing medicines, healthcare professionals will also avoid combinations of different medicines which are not compatible with each other and may be harmful to your condition.

The specific risks of buying prescription-only medicines over the internet include:

- Taking medicines that have not been prescribed by a healthcare professional.
- Taking medicines that may cause other medicines you are already taking not to work – or to worsen an existing known or unknown medical condition.
- Absence of checks and controls on the quality, safety and effectiveness of medicines supplied.
- Counterfeit medicines that contain harmful ingredients. Actual examples of this have included rat poison, boric acid and lead-based road paint.
- Taking medicines which contain too little or too much active ingredient – or no active ingredient at all.
- Taking medicines that have passed their use-by date, reducing their effectiveness.
- Taking medicines produced in unhygienic surroundings by people with no appropriate qualifications.
- Mistaken self-diagnosis resulting in inappropriate treatment and failure to consult the appropriate healthcare professionals.
- Having no legal options in the event of a problem.

Other risks of buying prescription-only medicines over the internet include:

- Safety tips for buying medicines online
- Payment card cloning.
- Identity theft.
- Products being sold at a considerably higher price than they would cost from a high street pharmacy, despite being advertised as 'cheap'.
- Spyware and other viruses from fraudulent websites, whether you have visited them directly or via a phishing email.

Before entering payment card details on a website, ensure that the link is secure, in two ways:

- There should be a padlock symbol in the browser window frame, which appears when you attempt to log in or register. Be sure that the padlock is not on the page itself ... this will probably indicate a fraudulent site.

The web address should begin with 'https://'. The 's' stands for 'secure'.

The above indicate only that the link between you and the website owner is secure, and not that the site itself is authentic. You need to do this by carefully checking the address for subtle misspellings, additional words and characters and other irregularities.

- Double check all details of your purchase before confirming payment.

Some websites will redirect you to a third-party payment service (such as WorldPay). Ensure that these sites are secure before you make your payment.

Safeguard and remember the password you have chosen for the extra verification services used on some websites, such as Verified by Visa.

(Source: getsafeonline.org)

New products introduced at Iran Nano 2018

TECHNOLOGY **TEHRAN** — New nano products were introduced on the first day of the 11th Nanotechnology Festival and Exhibition of Iran (Iran Nano 2018) on Saturday.

Printed electronics, stove and fume hood oleophobic nanocoating, nanocomposite food packaging for protein-rich foods and nano-structured membranes for water treatment were four nano products unveiled on the first day of the exhibition.

The vice president for science and technology Sourena Sattari attended the opening ceremony of the event.

Representatives from 40 countries including South Korea, Russia, Armenia, Oman, Malaysia and Indonesia attend the expo.

The festival hosts 107 participants active in the field of nanotechnology including knowledge-based companies, university student, organizations and private sector.

Iran has already boasts of 460 nanotechnology products and over 180 knowledge-based companies nationwide, he said.

Organized annually by the Iran Nanotechnology Initiative Council, it is the largest and most credible domestic exhibition in the field of nanotechnology.

The festival runs until October 16 at the Tehran Permanent International Fairground.



A participant woman introduces her nano product to the vice president for science and technology Sourena Sattari during Iran Nano 2018 on Saturday (Mehr/Maryam Kamyab)

Iran plans to establish national network of observatories



TECHNOLOGY **TEHRAN** — Iran plans to set up a national network of observatories, the head of the Iranian Space Agency (ISA) Morteza Barari said on Saturday, Mehr reported.

Today, space technology provides an opportunity for development of countries and to solve environmental problems worldwide, he said during a speech in Qom city.

The ISA plans to boost cooperation between Iran's observatories via estab-

lishing a network, he said.

The observatories can also introduce space technology services among public as well, he added.

Iran is proud of scientists who have key role in space technology from centuries ago, he said.

He named Iranian scholars Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi (780 – c.850), Al-Biruni (973–1050) and Omar Khayyam (1048 – 1131) as influential figures in space knowledge worldwide.

Foreign delegations visit knowledge-based expo



A view of 2nd Exhibition of Knowledge-Based Companies, which was held from October 11 to 14 in Tehran

TECHNOLOGY **TEHRAN** — About 40 foreign delegations paid visit to the 2nd Exhibition of Knowledge-Based Companies, which was held from October 11 to 14 at Gofthou Park in Tehran.

Foreign delegations from different countries including Pakistan, Afghanistan, Qatar and Iraq visited the exhibition, the secretary of the event Mohammad Ebrahim Sadeqi told the Mehr on Saturday.

A total of 120 knowledge-based companies attended the event, he said.

Marketing experts and investors also attended the event to connect with the knowledge-based companies, he said.

The event was held in different sections including electronics, medical equipment, power industry, smart city, telecommunications, and agriculture and laboratory equipment.

The event was cosponsored by the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Health Ministry and the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade.

When will be the right time to start your startup?

We all have amazing ideas but we don't know how we can make them a reality and that's why a very important question rises in our mind: When will be the right time to start our startup? In this article we will take a look at this question from different perspectives and finally will come up with an answer that may be more than helpful for you people put there. So let's strap on and get ready for an important ride.

Today is your best day

Believe it or not, today is all you have control over. If you want to found a startup or make your already existing startup into one of the best startups all around the world then it doesn't matter what did you do yesterday because you live in today and you tomorrow will directly shape based on what you do today as well.

So if you want to know when the best time to start is, it is today but don't be rash and don't miss interpret this part because jumping right into the middle of your work without knowing what you are doing is more or less a suicide act. Be ready to start today but starting may be just framing your mind in the right way and hence there are a lot of other steps involved with the process to start your startup. But nonetheless you have today and you can affect only today and now. If you don't make today happen then it will be in the past before you know it so believe in the moment before anything else and this is exactly the most important fact in the way to start your startup.

Analyze before diving deep in

So what you have to do first is analyzing. Start your startup in a way that you know what is going on in the market. Analysis can be done from different perspectives. One of them is analyzing customers and customer's base. The other one will be analyzing what is going on there with your rivals and how did they do and why they failed or made it in this specific field.

So technically you should be ready for everything and anything before you go there. But this does not mean that you should have immerse knowledge about everything and you just have to get an idea about the situation to begin with and knowledge can be gained in the later stages.

Money will come with idea

You don't have money? Don't worry; you are not alone my friend. Most of the people in the world started their startups with almost no money. If you start with a good idea and a good execution then you will eventually find some capitalist to invest in your idea. There are even other



approaches such as crowd funding but you should learn more about them before trying, otherwise it may lead to your down fall instead of your amazing future. So don't bother yourself with the money more than it needs and focus on work more than this.

Acting is the key to success

If you want to start your startup then this might happened to you at any stage of your life: you have an amazing idea for a couple of years but this idea remains inside your head and won't go anywhere in the physical world so what you will do is as important as what you have in your mind. After some time you will wake up in one morning and start reading the news and boom, someone else have executed the exact same (or similar) project as your idea and you left with regret.

The main difference between you and the other guy is that he acted and you didn't. Your idea might be more polished and better analyzed but unless you act, you won't get to start your startup. So go on and make your idea work in the real world before others get it for themselves. Idea is like a seed, it will fly in the wind and get to someone and if that someone doesn't plant them then they will eventually find their way to the others and by the time you get to notice, all is lost.

Are you ready?

So if you want to know about the right time to start your startup then look at yourself. Are you ready to sacrifice your time, your health and your happy sleeping hours in order to start your startup? If you are not ready for that then forget about it and go find a regular job and work on daily basis for minimum salary but don't pretend that the world is unfair because you had the idea but you did not sacrifice anything even for a short period of time in order

to get it done. But if you are ready now then when will be a better day for you to start more than today is?

Find some partners

Startup life is hard and you definitely can't make it on your own so if you want to start your startup then you should have some candidates in your mind before the start. They can join you in the later stages or right from the start but the most important thing is that you can start if you have support. This support may be technical or in any other way but don't forget that you are not superman and you can't do all by yourself.

Stop day dreaming before you start your startup

This one sounds a little bit weird but it's one of the most important aspects of the process involved in the way to start your startup. If you want to get reach in one night or you dream about owning a multi million dollar company then forget about it (at least for the time you start your startup) because you have to start from nothing and build your startup based on what you have, brick by brick and step by step. There is no magical word that you can say and boom everything changes in the best way. There is no magical lamp or such things in the real life and you have to get yourself down to the ground if you want to start your startup.

Final words

These points were only a couple of examples for you people out there to know that if you are ready to start your startup or not and if you are not ready of any one of them then you are not ready to start your startup. People with great ideas are not coming from mars, they are people like you and best startup CEO and founders have also started from zero and reached the hike of the startup business so if you are scared, it's ok, if you are afraid of unknown, then there is no problem but if you have the will to make your life amazing then you can start your startup?. There are multiple other factors involved in this important matter but we can't take you with us all day, you have a startup to start and we believe that you can make it so in future we will dive deeper in this important problem but meanwhile if you think that there is an extremely important thing that we failed to mention then leave us a comment down below and we will happily share it with the others later on. We will come back with better and more in depth articles soon but meanwhile leave us what kind of content you want in the comment section and we will happily accept it and give you what you want in the later posts.

(Source: startupik.com)

Researchers dig to get to the root of lavender's secrets



A team of researchers, including UBC's Soheil Mahmoud, have recently sequenced the genome of lavender.

Mahmoud, an associate professor of biology at UBC Okanagan, says lavender has many uses, from essential oils, to fragrances, personal hygiene and pharmaceutical industries.

"We have studied lavender for a long time," says Mahmoud. "We have always been curious about this plant. Why is it drought tolerant? Why is it pest tolerant? What makes it smell so sweet?"

The reason why scientists want to get to the root of lavender's secrets is because it's an important crop that significantly contributes to the multi-billion dollar, and continually growing, essential oil industry.

we have built the roadmap for the discovery of the genetic elements that define lavender. Now researchers can follow our map and go into the wilderness and explore even further," says Mahmoud. "It's opening the door for more analysis of the plant for its future potential."

For example, the draft genome helps scientists quickly discover genes that direct essential oil production, to understand regulatory elements that control the expression of these genes, and to learn how the genome works as a whole. Additionally, the genome sequence can help researchers develop genetic markers for 'fingerprinting' and identification of various lavender species and varieties.

Mahmoud also explains that the genome sequence can help researchers improve the plant. For example, many high-yield lavender species actually produce some undesired elements such as camphor.

Researchers want to learn how to produce the desired oils without increasing the amounts of undesired ingredients. They can do that through targeted breeding and plant biotechnology, but the first step is to have a complete understanding of the molecular elements that control production of the lavender's essential oil components.

■ Lavender's essential oils

Thanks to the work of fellow researchers, Professor Ping Liang from Brock University and doctoral student Radesh N Malli, the team has sequenced the lavender genome. Basically, creating new pathways to further development and research.

■ Genetic elements

The "best way to describe our findings is that

"We have studied lavender for a long time," says Mahmoud. "We have always been curious about this plant. Why is it drought tolerant? Why is it pest tolerant? What makes it smell so sweet?"



Soheil Mahmoud

The "quality of lavender's essential oils greatly depends on the characteristic scent of the oil, which is determined by certain phytochemicals called monoterpenes," explains Mahmoud. "Camphor contributes an off-odour, and its presence in the oil lowers quality and market value. On the other hand, high levels of linalool and linalyl acetate are desired in lavender oils."

Liang, who is a Canada Research Chair in Genomics and Bioinformatics, works out of Brock University's bioinformatics and comparative genomics lab. He says the newly-published research provides specific markers other than researchers can follow.

"They now have access to the lavender genome sequence and from here, they can discover more about the plant," he says. "Given the economic status of lavender and its applications of essential oils in many industries, the lavender draft genome sequence serves as a significant genetic resource for continued lavender research."

(Source: eurekalert.org)

Breathtaking new microscope reveals mouse embryos growing in real time, cell by cell

Using a newly developed microscopic technique, scientists have been able to create a detailed, 4D image of early mouse embryo development, down to the single cells involved – a fascinating look into the very first stages of life for mammals.

The imaging process is technically known as adaptive light-sheet microscopy, and it pushes the boundaries of what's possible in imaging.

This unprecedented look at organs and tissues being knitted together is going to help future research into organ regeneration, and health issues that can develop in the womb – any kind of work involving organ development or repair can benefit from this in-depth "cellular-resolution building plan" of mouse growth.

"To do any of that, you first need to understand how organs form," says one of the team, developmental biologist Kate McDole from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute in Maryland. "You need to actually see what happens in a real embryo."

The microscope works by using super-thin laser beams to illuminate cells as they go about their business. Cameras are then used to record the lit cells and track their movements in real time, leading to some of the dramatic videos – like the one above.

We're talking about the very first days of a mouse embryo's life, which we'd previously not been able to study in this detail. Organs are just beginning to form and the scientists have been able to capture the initial beats of the mouse heart too.

The smart software attached to the microscope is continually making new decisions about how best to light up and focus on the embryo as it grows. It's because of these algorithms that such a complex embryo can be plotted like this – previous research had focused on the simpler embryos of zebrafish and fruit flies.

(Source: sciencealert.com)

Why do gnats swarm?

There's almost nothing worse than biking along a canal and pedaling headlong into a swarm of gnats – a loose name for mini mosquito look-alikes called midges – clustered near the water. These nearly invisible gatherings of tiny flies pop up around streams, fields and country roads ... but why do gnats insist on crowding together in the same tiny air space?

The answer is that it makes it easier for males and females to do the hanky-panky, so to speak, said Gregory Courtney, professor of entomology at Iowa State University.

The "bottom line is most male flies swarm," Courtney told Live Science. "It's an important mechanism for the two sexes to find each other." Male gnats always swarm in order to attract females, but the location of that swarm depends on their surroundings.

"Typically, swarms are going to form around particular objects or visual markers – that might be a ripple above a stream or a fence post along the roadside," he said. Swarm markers include various objects that contrast with surrounding landscape, which, according to Courtney, makes it easier for females of the same species to see the swarm. Oftentimes, swarms occur in sunlit areas, he said, so when the sun's rays change position, the swarm will likely move with it.

There is a downside to gnats' midair sexual antics. It makes them visible to predators, Courtney said. Predatory dragonflies, for example, will fly back and forth across swarms, indulging in multiple rounds of in-flight meals.

The definition of a swarm is as fluid as a swarm itself. "It's any aggregation of individuals for the purposes of attracting mates," Courtney said. It could be half a dozen individuals congregating for some afternoon delight, or millions of individuals converging at once. Courtney pointed to Lake Victoria in East Africa as an example: "Sometimes a swarm is so large you can see it as a huge cloud over the water."

(Source: Live Science)

Icy moon of Jupiter, Ganymede, shows evidence of past strike-slip faulting

A recently published study led by researchers at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology reveals Ganymede, an icy moon of Jupiter, appears to have undergone complex periods of geologic activity, specifically strike-slip tectonism, as is seen in Earth's San Andreas fault.

This is the first study to exhaustively consider the role of strike-slip tectonism in Ganymede's geologic history.

Plate tectonics is the process on Earth that has created many familiar large scale features – oceanic and continental crust, mountain ranges, mid-ocean ridges, for example – and phenomena such as earthquakes.

The "heavily fractured surface of Ganymede displays many distinctive regions of inferred strike-slip faulting that may be important to the structural development of its surface," said Marissa E. Cameron, lead author of this study who completed the work as a doctoral candidate in SOEST's Department of Earth Sciences.

Both Ganymede and Europa, another of Jupiter's moons, are believed to be ocean worlds that is they have a liquid water ocean lying beneath an ice shell. Europa is thought to be the most likely place in the Solar System to find life today, presumably in the ocean where it may be protected from extreme radiation by the ice shell.

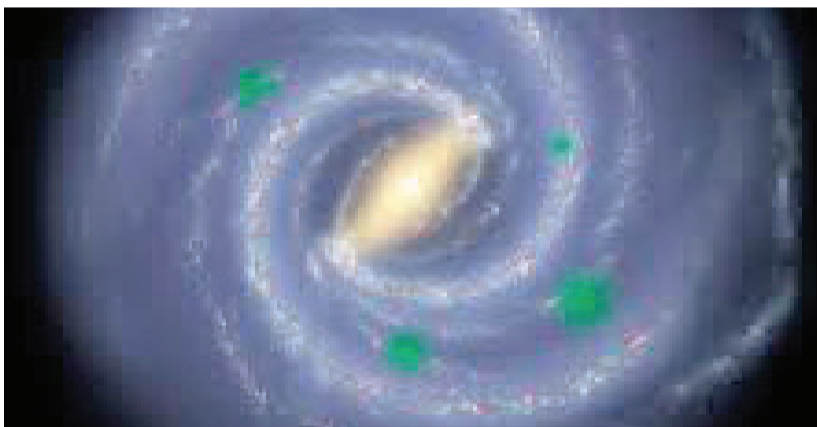
Scientists know that Europa has tectonic processes similar to Earth's. However, while Ganymede was once tectonically active, it is no longer -- which offers researchers a chance to look into Europa's future.

To better understand the role of strike-slip tectonism in shaping the complex icy surface of Ganymede, the research team perform extensive, methodical mapping of nine locations using imagery primarily collected by the Galileo spacecraft that orbited Jupiter between 1995 and 2003.

(Source: Science Daily)



The Milky Way could be spreading life from star to star, researchers say



For almost two centuries, scientists have theorized that life may be distributed throughout the Universe by meteoroids, asteroids, planetoids, and other astronomical objects. This theory, known as Panspermia, is based on the idea that microorganisms and the chemical precursors of life are able to survive being transported from one star system to the next.

Expanding on this theory, a team of researchers from the Harvard Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics (CFA) conducted a study that considered whether panspermia could be possible on a galactic scale. According to the model they created, they determined that the entire Milky Way (and even other galaxies) could be exchanging the components necessary for life.

The study, "Galactic Panspermia", recently appeared online and is being reviewed for publication by the Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society. The study was led by Idan Ginsburg, a visiting scholar at the CFA's Institute for Theory and Computation (ITC), and included Manasvi Lingam and Abraham Loeb – an ITC postdoctoral researcher and the director of the ITC and the Frank B. Baird Jr. Chair of Science at Harvard University, respectively.

■ Solar System

As they indicate their study, most of the past research into panspermia has focused on whether life could have been distributed through the Solar System or neighboring stars. More specifically, these studies addressed the possibility that life could have been transferred between Mars and Earth (or other Solar bodies) via asteroids or meteorites. For the sake of their study, Ginsburg and his colleagues cast a wider net, looking at the Milky Way Galaxy and beyond.

"Following that discovery, Manasvi Lingam and I wrote a paper where we showed that interstellar objects like 'Oumuamua could be captured through their gravitational interaction with Jupiter and the Sun.

The Solar System acts as a gravitational "fishing net" that contains thousands of bound interstellar objects of this size at any given time. These bound interstellar objects could potentially plant life from another planetary system and in the Solar System. The effectiveness of the fishing net is larger for a binary star system, like the nearby Alpha Centauri A and B, which could capture objects as large as the Earth during their lifetime."

(Source: universetoday.com)

Biosphere 2 legacy lives on more than quarter century later, team suggests



The University of Arizona officials say that 25 years after that New Age-style experiment in the Arizona desert, the glass-covered greenhouse thrives as a singular site for researchers from around the world studying everything from the effects of the ocean's acidification on coral to ways of ensuring food security.

They lived for two years and 20 minutes under the glass of a miniature Earth, complete with an ocean, rain forest, desert, grasslands and mangroves. Their air and water were recycled, and they grew the sweet potatoes, rice and other food they needed to survive.

About 1,500 people were invited and some 200 journalists were on hand as the eight original inhabitants of Biosphere 2 left their glass terrarium a quarter-century ago last month in two groups that no longer talked to each other amid the stress of sharing a small space and disputes over how the project should be run.

Detractors called the \$150 million experiment a failure because additional oxygen was pumped into what was supposed to be a self-sustaining system.

■ Power struggle

A power struggle in subsequent months led Texas billionaire backer Edward P. Bass to hire investment banker Stephen

Bannon, who was later President Trump's chief strategist, to bring the project back from financial disarray.

Today, Biosphere 2 is a different kind of place, a University of Arizona site where researchers from around the world can study everything from the effects of the ocean's acidification on coral to ways of ensuring food security.

"It started out as a great, big kind of societal experiment and was transformed by pure ingenuity into something else that has proved useful," said Jeffrey S. Dukes, director of the Perdue Climate Change Research Center. "It's also a really cool facility to tour."

Joaquin Ruiz, a geologist who directs the project in the Sonoran Desert about 30 miles (48 kilometers) northeast of Tucson, said Biosphere 2's controlled environments allow researchers to conduct experiments they won't try outside "because you don't want to have unintended circumstances."

That means researchers from the Global Institute for Water Security at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada don't have to worry about harming the environment while studying how plants in the tiny rainforest adjust their water consumption.

(Source: phys.org)

Ancient Egyptian pigment could boost energy efficiency, study finds

A color pigment developed by the ancient Egyptians thousands of years ago may have an extremely beneficial application today, research has found.

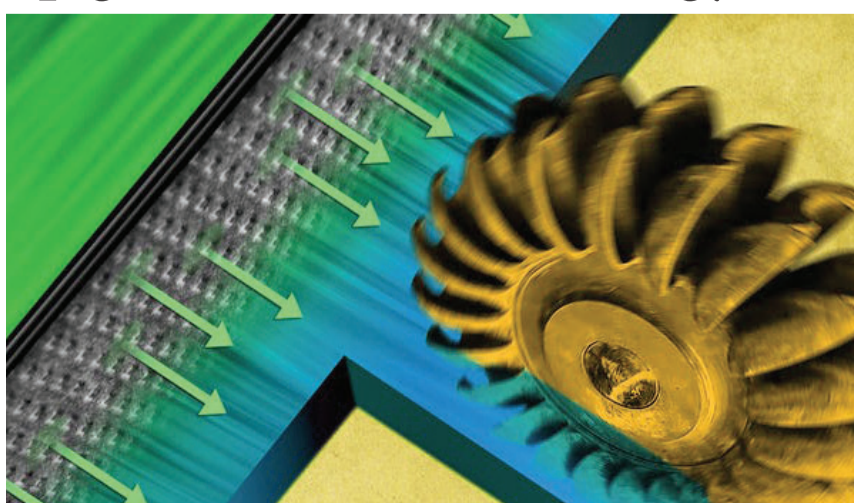
In a paper published by The Journal of Applied Physics, a team led by researchers at the Department of Energy's Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory found that the pigment, known as Egyptian blue, is 10 times more fluorescent than previously thought.

It could thus be used to boost energy efficiency in buildings by cooling rooftops and walls while also enabling the solar generation of electricity via windows, the authors say.

Fluorescence is the emission of light from an object as a result of bombardment by other kinds of light or electromagnetic radiation. Previous research has shown that when Egyptian blue absorbs visible light, it subsequently emits light in the near-infrared range.

■ The synthetic pigment

Egyptian blue is considered to be the



first synthetic pigment. It was derived from calcium copper silicate and was routinely used on ancient depictions of gods and royalty in ancient Egypt, like the ones on

this papyrus from the era.

Considered to be the first synthetic pigment, Egyptian blue – which is derived from calcium copper silicate –

was routinely used on ancient depictions of gods and royalty in ancient Egypt. It was known to the Romans as "caeruleum," but after the Roman era the pigment fell from use and the manner of its creation was forgotten until the 19th century.

For their study, the scientists coated sample surfaces with Egyptian blue and related compounds and exposed them to sunlight, measuring the temperature afterward. They found that fluorescent blues can emit nearly twice as many photons—or particles of light – as they absorb.

The latest findings bolster our understanding of which colors are most effective for cooling rooftops and facades in sunny climates. While white is the most conventional and effective choice for keeping a building cool by reflecting sunlight and reducing energy use for air conditioning, building owners often require nonwhite colors for aesthetic reasons.

(Source: Newsweek)

UK government slashes grants for new hybrid and electric cars angering motoring groups

Grants for new hybrid and electric cars will be slashed in a move which has angered motoring groups.

Fewer models will be eligible for the scheme and the money available to motorists will be reduced from 12 November, the Department for Transport (DfT) announced.

Cash incentives have been offered since 2011 to encourage more people to buy electric and plug-in hybrid cars. Vehicles currently included in the scheme are divided into three categories based on their CO2 emissions and their zero-emission range.

People who buy Category 1 cars - those meeting the toughest CO2 restrictions - can claim up to £4,500 towards the cost of purchase. Grants for Category 2 and 3 models reach £2,500.

The changes announced by the DfT mean the maximum grant for Category 1 cars will be cut by £1,000 to £3,500 and Category 2 and 3 models have been removed from the scheme.

The new rates come into effect on 12 November, although this may be brought forward if sales are higher than expected following the announcement, the DfT warned.

Motoring groups claimed the decision will leave the Government struggling to meet targets to reduce vehicle emissions.

Jack Cousens, head of roads policy for the AA, said: "The Government wants to end the sale of petrol and diesel cars, but scrapping grants for low emission cars may well stall their progress. Seven out of 10 drivers say grants are necessary to buy an ultra-low emission vehicle until such time that the price compared to a conventional petrol or diesel car is the same.

"This announcement will simply put more drivers off from buying greener cars."

RAC head of roads policy Nicholas Lyes said: "The reduction of the plug-in car grant is a major blow to anyone hoping to go green with their next vehicle choice and makes little sense when we need to focus our efforts on lowering emissions from vehicles. Of particular concern, some popular zero emission capable plug-in hybrid models will lose their plug-in car grant altogether.

"With up-front costs still a huge barrier for those hoping to switch to an electric vehicle, this move from the Government is a big step backwards and is in stark contrast to countries like Norway, where generous tax incentives have meant that it has one of the highest ownership levels of ultra-low emission vehicles of anywhere in the world."

(Source: The Independent)

LEARN ENGLISH

Deferring Questions

Mr. Ford: Now, as we have already discussed there is a huge **untapped** market out there both in Asia, in other **developing markets**, and in the more **mature markets** for us to push into. Now of course, this represents an enormous challenge with enormous rewards for the winners, but for any new product we need a great **marketing message** and marketing campaign.

Mr. Ford: It needs to be directed and focused at our target consumer, and needs to be pitched at exactly the right level. The question we must first address is of course, who is our target consumer and secondly what do they expect from the next generation Alpha lap-top?

Mr. Ford: Let's first of all **tackle** the first question. Our target consumer for the x420 is the middle class, **white collar** worker with an above average income. However, as we mentioned before the total number of computer owners is expanding rapidly and we need to broaden our audience for this product.

Mr. Ford: For example, the x420 is also ideally suited to the younger student sector, who might use laptops both for study and gaming. There is no doubt that.

Audience member: Mr. Ford, if I could just interrupt a moment. You say that the computer is suitable for students, but don't you think the price of the x420 is just too much for most students?

Mr. Ford: Well, that's a fair point. If you don't mind, I'd like to tackle your question a little bit later in the **Q and A** section. Is that okay?

Audience member: Yes, sure.

Key vocabulary

untapped: available but not used
developing market: markets that are in growth
mature markets: developed market
marketing message: the information of the sale of a product
tackle: deal with something difficult
white collar: a person that works in an office
Q and A: question and answer

Supplementary vocabulary

consumerism: the increasing consumption of goods; a movement that emphasizes quality and consumer awareness
bottom of pyramid: those people who earn around \$1 USD/day, the majority of the world's people belong to this consumer segment
out of reach: something that cannot be obtained
wallet friendly: an inexpensive product; anything that saves you money

(Source: irlanguage.com)



Health Ministry cuts carbonated soft drinks sugar content by 10%

SOCIETY TEHRAN — Iran's Ministry of Health **d e s k** has slashed carbonated soft drinks sugar content by 10 percent, an official with Food and Drug Administration has said.

The sugar content of such drinks are planned to decrease even more, IRNA news agency quoted Vahid Mofid as saying on Sunday.

The Food and Drug Administration has implemented programs to decrease fat, salt and sugar content in various food products, Mofid said, adding that for instance salt content in bread has diminished by 30 percent so far.

He also commented on trans fatty acid isomers saying that Food and Drug Administration is aiming to decrease trans isomers in cooking oils to zero and that at the moment trans isomers have been reduced to 2 percent in food stuff.

According to the U.S. National Library of Medicine the trans fatty acids are unsaturated fatty acids with at least one double bond in the trans configuration. These fatty acids occur naturally in dairy and other natural fats and in some plants. However, industrial hydrogenation of vegetable or marine oils is largely the main source of trans fatty acids in our diet. The metabolic effect of trans isomers are today a matter of controversy generating diverse extreme positions in light of biochemical, nutritional, and epidemiological studies.

Trans fatty acids also have been implicated in the etiology of various metabolic and functional disorders, but the main concern about its health effects arose because the structural similarity of these isomers to saturated fatty acids, the lack of specific metabolic functions, and its competition with essential fatty acids.

Mofid went on to say that all manufacturers are required to include 'traffic light' labels on food packaging to signify the fat, saturated fat, sugar, and salt content of the food stuff and now almost all food packaging are labeled with the traffic lights.

The new color-coded food labels are intended to help shoppers know at a glance whether a product contains a low, medium or high amount of fat, saturated fat, salt, sugar and calories and make choices for a more healthier and balanced diet, he explained.

According to World Health organization a healthy diet helps to protect against malnutrition in all its forms, as well as developing noncommunicable diseases (NCDs),



such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke and cancer as unhealthy diet and lack of physical activity are leading global risks to health.

Healthy dietary practices start early in life – breastfeeding fosters healthy growth and improves cognitive development, and may have longer term health benefits such as limiting the risk of becoming overweight or obese and developing NCDs later in life.

Energy intake (calories) should be in balance with energy expenditure. To avoid unhealthy weight gain, total fat should not exceed 30% of total energy intake. Intake of saturated fats should be less than 10% of total energy intake, and intake of trans-fats less than 1% of total energy intake, with a shift in fat consumption away from saturated fats and trans-fats to unsaturated fats,

and towards the goal of eliminating industrially-produced trans-fats.

Limiting intake of free sugars to less than 10% of total energy intake is also a part of a healthy diet. A further reduction to less than 5% of total energy intake is suggested for additional health benefits.

Keeping salt intake to less than 5 grams per day (equivalent to sodium intake of less than 2 g per day) helps to prevent hypertension, and reduces the risk of heart disease and stroke in the adult population.

WHO Member States have agreed to reduce the global population's intake of salt by 30% by 2025; they have also agreed to halt the rise in diabetes and obesity in adults and adolescents as well as in childhood overweight by 2025.

Charity organization to raise breast cancer awareness

SOCIETY TEHRAN — An **d e s k** Iranian charity organization is planning on setting up booths to raise awareness about breast cancer concurrent with Breast Cancer Awareness Month campaign aimed to offer information and support to those affected by breast cancer.

Behnam Daheshpour Charity Organization is going start a campaign under the theme "everybody together to prevent breast cancer" which will run to the end of the current [Iranian calendar] year (ending on March 20, 2019), according to Fars news agency.

The campaign will officially kick off on October 18.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month is an annual international health campaign organized by major breast cancer charities every October to increase awareness of the disease and to raise funds for research into its cause, prevention, diagnosis, treatment and cure.

It is a yearly campaign that intend educate people about the importance of early screening, test and more. This campaign starts on October 1 and ends on October 31 every year.

Special booths have been established in various cities of Tehran, Kashan, Karaj, Urmia, Shahr-e Kord, Mashhad, Dezful, Zanjan, Semnan, Qom, Kerman, Amol, Sari, Nour, Saveh, Meybod, Sonqor, and Borujerd.

Individuals can receive information



about breast cancer testing, prevention, and treatment as well as learning lifestyle tips to avoid the condition.

As World Health Organization explains breast cancer is the top cancer among women, impacting 2.1 million women each year, and also causes the greatest number of cancer-related deaths among women. In 2018, it is estimated that 627,000 women died from breast cancer – that is approximately 15% of all cancer deaths among women. While breast cancer rates are higher among women in more developed regions, rates are increasing in nearly every region globally.

In order to improve breast cancer outcomes and survival, early detection is critical. There are two early detection strategies for breast cancer: early diagnosis and screening. Limited resource settings with weak health systems where the majority of women are diagnosed in late stages should prioritize early diagnosis programmes based on awareness of early signs and symptoms and prompt referral to diagnosis and treatment.

World Food Day: Iran to highlight 'changing dietary habits to live healthier life'

SOCIETY TEHRAN — Iran's **d e s k** Food and Drug Administration will turn the spotlight on 'changing dietary habits to live healthier life' on World Food Day 2018, ISNA news agency reported on Sunday.

World Food Day is celebrated every year around the world on October 16 to mark the date of the founding of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in 1945. The day is celebrated widely by many other organizations concerned with food security, including the World Food Programme and the International Fund for Agricultural Development.

The World Food Day theme for 2018 is "a zero hunger world by 2030 is possible".

In Iran programs with the objectives of cutting back on sugar, salt and fat, labeling food and drink products with 'traffic light', taking measure against food smuggling and promoting food standards in order to protect public health in relation to food will launch to mark the event, Iran's Food and Drug Administration director Gholamreza Asghari has said.

A zero hunger world

FAO states that zero hunger means working together to ensure everyone, everywhere, has access to the safe, healthy and nutritious food they need. To achieve it, we must adopt a more sustainable lifestyle, work with others, share our knowledge and be willing to help change the world – for the better.

As per the latest FAO 2018 State of



Food Security and Nutrition in the World report after a period of decline, world hunger is on the rise again. Today, over 820 million people are suffering chronic undernourishment.

The world can achieve Zero Hunger if we join forces across nations, continents, sectors and professions, and act on evidence.

70% of the world's poor live in rural areas where people's lives depend on agriculture, fisheries or forestry. That's why Zero hunger calls for a transformation of rural economy.

Governments must create opportunities for greater private sector investments in agriculture, while boosting social protection programmes for the vulnerable and linking food producers with urban areas.

Zero Hunger moves beyond conflict-resolution and economic growth, taking the long-term approach to build peaceful, inclusive societies.

While millions go hungry, 672 million people suffer from obesity, and a further 1.3 billion are overweight. And this can change.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

'There is a need to reform water policies'

There is a need to make changes to general water policies so that they are run in a more effective way, an environmental official has said.

"The Ministry of Energy has prepared a draft of the amended policies," ISNA quoted Mohammad Mojabi as saying on Friday.

"Sadly, we are yet to believe in water shortage in Iran, neither the government nor the executive bodies or even the public have accepted that we are facing water shortage," Mojabi lamented, adding, "that's why despite low precipitation levels urban management is still insisting on increasing green spaces."

PREFIX/SUFFIX

"milli-"

■ **Meaning:** thousandth
 ■ **For example:** In general, a **milliliter** of oxygen releases 5 calories of energy to an animal.

PHRASAL VERB

Luck out

■ **Meaning:** to be extremely lucky
 ■ **For example:** Yeah, we really lucked out and got a parking space right in front.

IDIOM

Curiosity killed the cat

■ **Explanation:** used to tell someone not to ask too many questions about something
 ■ **For example:** Jill: Where did you get all that money? Jane: Curiosity killed the cat.

ضرورت اصلاح سیاست‌های کلی آب

رئیس کمیته محیط زیست مجمع تشخیص مصلحت نظام آب گفت: سیاست‌های کلی حوزه آب به اصلاح و بازنگری نیاز دارد تا بتوانیم آنها را به صورت موثرتری اجرا کنیم. محمد مجابی روز جمعه در گفت‌وگو با ایسنا گفت: وزارت نیرو هم پیش‌نویس سیاست‌های جدید را به مجمع تحویل داده است.

وی با بیان اینکه متاسفانه هنوز به بحران آب ایران باور نداریم، گفت: نپذیرفتن بحران آب هم در بین بخش‌های اجرایی و حاکمیتی و هم در بین عموم مردم وجود دارد. به همین علت با وجود کمبود بارش در بسیاری از شهرها، هنوز مدیریت شهری، کاشت چمن و ایجاد فضای سبز گسترده را مورد توجه قرار می‌دهد.

Saudi dismisses threat of sanctions over Khashoggi's disappearance

Trump: U.S. would be 'punishing itself' if it halts military sales to Saudi Arabia

➔ On Friday, several key attendees of the investment conference, including the heads of Uber, CNN and FT, said they will not be part of the event.

However, Christine Lagarde, managing director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has said she will attend a high profile economic conference in the Saudi regime capital Riyadh, despite criticizing the Saudi regime for their alleged involvement in the disappearance of Khashoggi.

Saudi stocks tumble as pressure mounts

However the developments caused Saudi Arabia's Tadawul All-Shares Index (TASI) to lose more than 500 points on the first trading day of the week on Sunday, wiping out all the gains it had made since the start of the year.

TASI is the largest Arab bourse and has shed almost \$50bn of its capital value, dropping to \$450bn.

Both economic and political factors caused the drop. The U.S. has raised interest rates and Trump's attacks on the Federal Reserve, fueling market concerns.

U.S. would be 'punishing itself' if it halts military sales to Saudi Arabia

Meantime, the U.S. President Donald Trump says he will probably call the Saudi regime King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud tonight or tomorrow about Khashoggi, adding that the case is "not looking too good".

Trump also said the U.S. would be "punishing itself" if it halts military sales to Saudi Arabia, even if it is proven that Khashoggi was killed inside the country's consulate in Istanbul.

However, to ease pressure on the United States, Trump said in a CBS interview that there would be "severe punishment" for Saudi Arabia if it turns out that Khashoggi was killed in the Saudi regime consulate in Istanbul.

Trump said in an interview for 60 Minutes that there was much at stake with Khashoggi case, "maybe especially so" because he was a reporter.

'Trump's rhetoric encourages attacks on press': IPI

After Trump's comments, Daoud Kuttab, a board member at the International Press Institute, an organization promoting press freedom globally, said Trump's tirades against journalists and claims of "fake news" encourage leaders elsewhere to clampdown on press freedom.

"The rhetoric coming out of the White House, coming out of the president, attacks daily on news as being fake news gives the permission to autocratic leaders to take out their own opposition and independent journalists," he told Al Jazeera.

"Leaders around the world and especially autocratic leaders watch the White House and the president carefully. When the president of the U.S. says that journalists are the enemies of the people, that's music to their ears and the feel like they can get a green light or a yellow light from America to do what they want [to] their own journalists," he said.

Khashoggi's fiancée calls for 'accountability'

Elsewhere, Hatice Cengiz, Khashoggi's fiancée, has called for accountability if reports of his murder are true.

In an op-ed written for The New York Times, Cengiz said if allegations are proven true, the Khashoggi loss impacts "every person with a conscience and moral compass."

"If we have already lost Jamal, then condemnation is not enough. The people who took him from us, irrespective of their political positions, must be held accountable and punished to the full extent of the law," she wrote.

Cengiz, who was invited to the White House by Trump, said she would "consider accepting" such an invitation if the U.S. president helped reveal the truth of what happened to Khashoggi.



Members of British Parliament call for 'thorough investigation'

Several members of the British Houses of Parliament have written a letter to Foreign Affairs Minister Jeremy Hunt, calling for a "thorough investigation" into the Khashoggi case.

The letter was signed by 13 MPs.

UN chief concerned over attacks on journalists

The United Nations Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, expressed fears that enforced disappearances are set to become the "new normal".

Speaking to the BBC at the International Monetary Fund meeting in Bali, Guterres said governments must respond appropriately once a "clear answer" on what happened to Khashoggi emerges.

France's Macron: Khashoggi's disappearance 'extremely worrying'

French President Emmanuel Macron said he was "extremely worried" about the Saudi journalist's disappearance.

"I am waiting for the truth and complete clarity to be established," Macron said in an interview with France 24. "What's being mentioned is serious, very serious [...] France wants everything to be done so that we have all the truth on this case of which the first elements are extremely worrying."

Macron said he will take a final stance once facts are established and would discuss the matter with leaders from Turkey and Saudi Arabia.

France's foreign ministry said on Friday that it had asked the Saudi regime authorities to provide detailed answers over the question of what happened to Khashoggi.

Amnesty International calls for transparency from Saudi Arabia

Rights group Amnesty International has also called for Saudi Arabia to reveal Khashoggi's "fate and whereabouts at this time".

Turkey urges Saudis to allow consulate search

Turkey's top diplomat has reiterated a call to the House of Saud regime to allow Turkish authorities to enter the kingdom's consulate in Istanbul.

Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said that Saudi regime had not yet cooperated with Turkey on the search for Khashoggi. He said that Turkish "prosecutors and technical friends must enter" the consulate "and Saudi Arabia must cooperate with us on this".

Smartwatch recorded Khashoggi's last moments: report

According to Turkish authorities, Jamal Khashoggi's smartwatch could potentially play an important factor into solving the disappearance and alleged murder of the Saudi journalist.

The authorities have said Khashoggi's smartwatch recorded audio of his meeting inside the Saudi regime consulate in Istanbul, which was then sent to a phone he gave his fiancée ahead of his meeting.

Turkish newspaper Daily Sabah reported on Saturday that Khashoggi's alleged interrogation, torture and murder were recorded

in the watch's memory.

Sabah, which cited "reliable sources in a special intelligence department" for its report, said Khashoggi was believed to have turned on the recording feature on the phone before entering the consulate.

The paper said Saudi regime intelligence agents had realized after he died that the phone was recording and they used his finger print to unlock it, deleting some files, but not all of them. The recordings were subsequently found on his phone, it said.

Audio, video recordings prove Khashoggi killed inside consulate: report

The U.S. and Turkish officials told The Washington Post there are audio and video recordings proving Khashoggi was tortured and murdered inside the Saudi regime consulate in Istanbul.

Video recordings show a Saudi regime assassination team seizing the journalist after he walked in on October 2. He was then killed and his body dismembered, the officials told The Post - the newspaper that Khashoggi wrote for as a columnist.

The audio was particularly gruesome, the sources said.

"The voice recording from inside the embassy lays out what happened to Jamal after he entered," said one official speaking anonymously because the intelligence is classified.

"You can hear his voice and the voices of men speaking Arabic. You can hear how he was interrogated, tortured, and then murdered."

Another unnamed official confirmed men could be heard beating Khashoggi on the recording.

It was unclear how the Turkish and American officials obtained the recordings.

Several reports have indicated that the 15-strong group -- among them bin Salman's elite close protection unit -- who had arrived in Istanbul only to leave the Turkish soil hours later, either killed or kidnapped Khashoggi at the consulate.

Consular source heard screams and sounds of struggle

Turkish investigators have heard testimony from a source who was inside the Saudi consulate at the time of Khashoggi's disappearance who claims to have heard sounds of a struggle, according to Al Jazeera's Jamal Elshayyal, reporting from Istanbul.

Saudi regime vows retaliation against possible sanctions

Riyadh dismissed threats of sanctions over the disappearance of Khashoggi and vowed Saudi Arabia would retaliate against such action.

"The kingdom affirms its total rejection of any threats or attempts to undermine it whether through threats to impose economic sanctions or the use of political pressure," an official source said, quoted by state news agency SPA.

"The kingdom also affirms that it will respond to any action with a bigger one," the source said.

Saudi regime Interior Minister denies all allegations

The House of Saud regime's Interior Minister Abdulaziz bin Saud bin Naif bin Abdulaziz has denied allegations regarding the disappearance and alleged murder of Khashoggi.

He said that allegations about orders to murder Khashoggi were "lies" targeting the government, according to the official Saudi Press Agency.

Saudi media calls Khashoggi disappearance 'conspiracy'

Government-backed Saudi Arabian media outlets are trying to portray the disappearance of prominent journalist Jamal Khashoggi as a "conspiracy" targeting the kingdom.

Commenting on Khashoggi's vanishing after entering the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on October 2, the Al Arabiya news channel said claims of his detention inside the facility had been pushed by "media outlets affiliated with the outlawed [pan-Arab opposition party] Muslim Brotherhood and Qatar."

Another story on Al Arabiya cast doubt on the identity of Khashoggi's fiancée, who was waiting outside the consulate at the time. It asked whether Hatice Cengiz was truly the person she said she was, claiming that her Twitter profile showed she had followed "critics of Saudi Arabia."

A column in the Saudi daily Okaz argued that Khashoggi had been advancing the interests of Qatar. The column went on to claim that Qatar had a "50 percent ownership of The [Washington] Post and has influence over its editorial direction."

The Post, where the Saudi journalist would maintain a column, is privately owned by American billionaire Jeff Bezos.

Another Okaz piece claimed in an item titled, "Who Liberated Khashoggi?" that the critic was a "terrorist sympathizer," whose sectarian goals were designed to destabilize the Saudi government.

The feature suggested that Khashoggi's disappearance equaled "liberation," since he had been "kidnapped" by "extremist groups" while living abroad in self-imposed exile.

The Saudi Gazette wrote that any fears about Khashoggi's disappearance had to be blamed on Qatar, not Saudi Arabia.

Trump's son retweets posts linking Khashoggi to al-Qaeda

The eldest son of Trump has retweeted posts portraying Jamal Khashoggi as a terrorism sympathizer amid mounting criticism of Washington's inaction on the fate of the missing Saudi dissident.

Donald Trump Jr. retweeted an exchange between conservative journalists Patrick Poole and Sean Davis on Khashoggi, who vanished at Riyadh's consulate in the Turkish city of Istanbul on October 2.

Poole shared images from a 1988 Arab News article Khashoggi wrote showing him holding a rocket-propelled grenade with Afghan Mujahideen fighters opposing the Soviet Union.

Khashoggi had also interviewed Osama bin Laden, the co-founder of al-Qaeda terrorist group, during the 1980s and '90s.

The article and pictures were proof that Khashoggi was "tooling around Afghanistan with Osama bin Laden," Poole said, adding, "He's just a democrat reformer journalist holding a RPG with jihadists."

Trump Jr. retweeted Davis' comment.

Critical Saudi royal says he was targeted with plan to 'disappear' him

Khaled bin Farhan al-Saud, a Saudi prince living in exile in Germany, told The Independent that luring dissidents to meetings to "disappear" them is a common strategy used by Saudi leaders.

Saudi alleged Saudi regime officials plotted to abduct him days before Khashoggi vanished, adding it's part of plan by the House of Saud regime Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) to keep adversaries quiet.

He said at least five Saudi royals last week approached the leadership in Riyadh about Khashoggi's disappearance, and they were detained.

73 militants, 4 policemen killed in Paktika battle

➔ A resident of the area, wishing anonymity, confirmed the firefight. However, he was unaware of casualties.

Meanwhile, the Afghan Military in the Southeast claims that more than 50 Taliban militants have been killed or wounded after launching a coordinated attack on Khoshmand district.

The 203rd Thunder Corps of the Afghan Military in the Southeast in a statement said the armed forces of 203rd Thunder Corps responded jointly with the other security personnel to a coordinated Taliban attack, leaving more than 50 militants dead or wounded.

The statement further added that the Afghan forces also confiscated 15 landmines and vehicle were also seized following the attack.

According to 203rd Thunder Corps, the dead bodies of at least 18 militants are still left in the area where the clash took place.

No further details have been regarding the possible casualties of the Afghan armed forces during the clashes.

(Source: Khamma Press)

Syrian forces find U.S.-made guns in terrorist arms cache

Syrian security forces have discovered considerable amounts of Western and U.S.-made munitions, including submachine guns, Kalashnikov rifles, rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) and sniper rifles, used by foreign-sponsored Takfiri militants in the country's southwestern province of Rif Dimashq.



Syria's official news agency SANA reported that government troops launched a clean-up operation in the town of Yalda, located on the southern outskirts of Damascus, and uncovered a huge cache of ammunition and explosives carefully hidden inside a plastic water tank at a local farm.

The discovery included NATO-standard sniper rifles, a LAW portable anti-tank weapon, thermal and night vision equipment, grenades, improvised explosive devices, multiple RPG launchers, Kalashnikov rifles and Dragunov sniper rifles.

Takfiri militants are thought to have hidden the weapons at the farm earlier this year before leaving the area to the troubled northwestern city of Idlib.

On May 4, Syrian army soldiers discovered Israeli-made weapons, including chemical warfare, digital equipment and drugs, destined for foreign-sponsored Takfiri militants and Daesh terrorists in the country's central province of Homs as well as Rif Dimashq province.

The Arabic service of Russia's Sputnik news agency reported that the ammunition and explosives were found in the southern part of Homs, located 162 kilometers (101 miles) north of the capital Damascus. They were meant to be distributed among anti-government extremists groups.

(Source: Press TV)

Merkel's Bavarian allies suffer historic election setback

Chancellor Angela Merkel's Bavarian allies suffered their worst election result since 1950 Sunday, bleeding votes to the far-right in a setback that risks widening divisions within Germany's crisis-prone national government.

The Christian Social Union (CSU) won 35.5 percent of the vote, an exit poll for broadcaster ARD showed, losing its absolute majority for only the second time since 1962 - an outcome sure to stoke infighting in the party, already a difficult partner for Merkel in Berlin.

The result, which saw the pro-immigration Greens come second and the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) enter the state assembly for the first time, means the CSU will need to form a coalition - a humiliation for a party used to ruling alone.

CSU leader Horst Seehofer has been a thorn in Merkel's side since her 2015 decision to open Germany's borders to more than 1 million migrants, gradually shifting his party to the right in an ultimately futile effort to counter the rise of the AfD.

Divisions between Merkel's Christian Democratic Union and the CSU - conservative sister parties - have widened further since an inconclusive national election forced them into a coalition in March with the left-leaning Social Democrats (SPD).

The Bavarian election is followed in two weeks by another test for Merkel's conservative alliance: her CDU is likely to remain the largest party but lose votes in a regional vote in the western state of Hesse, home to the financial center of Frankfurt.

The CDU then holds its annual congress in December, when Merkel will seek re-election as party chairwoman - a bid senior conservatives have backed despite the parliamentary party ousting her ally, Volker Kauder, as leader last month.

(Source: Reuters)

Khashoggi case may awaken world to dangers of MBS

➔ The butchery of children in Yemen with fighter jets is a concrete example of Saudi disregard for human life. The siege of the tiny state of Qatar shows that MBS is also a bully. If until now he has not ordered attacks against any other country it is because he is not sure of the consequences.

The world has been paying dearly for its negligence of Saudi Arabia's ill behavior, just eyeing the country's petrodollars. Now, hardly a part of the world is immune from the evil ideology of extremism and terrorism promoted by the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam. From the September 11 attacks to the recurrent terrorist attacks in Syria and Afghanistan are mostly the result of the Wahhabi ideology originating from Saudi Arabia.

It is hoped the Khashoggi case will awaken the world to the dangers of Saudi Arabia, especially under MBS.

Defying international outcry on Gaza massacre, Israel threatens Hamas

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has threatened to land "very strong blows" on the Palestinian resistance movement, Hamas, which controls the besieged Gaza Strip, as he remains defiant to the international outcry against the massacre of Gazans by Israeli soldiers.

"Hamas has apparently not understood the message - if these attacks do not stop, they will be stopped in another way, in the form of very, very strong blows," the Israeli premier said during the weekly cabinet meeting on Sunday.

The coastal sliver has been under a crippling Israeli siege since 2007, which has prevented some two million Palestinians from having free access to the remainder of Palestine and the outside world.

The tight blockade has also undermined living conditions in the enclave and fragmented its economic and social fabric,

causing unprecedented unemployment and poverty.

Israel carries out regular air raids on inhabitants of Gaza under the pretext of hitting alleged positions of Hamas, which governs the enclave and has defended it against three Israeli wars.

"We are very close to another type of action which would include very strong blows. If Hamas is intelligent, it will cease fire and violence now," Netanyahu added.

On Friday, Israel's Minister for Military Affairs Avigdor Lieberman ordered to halt fuel deliveries to the strip, after fresh anti-occupation protest rallies along the border separating the sliver from the occupied territories saw seven Gazan protesters killed by Israeli fire.

Since Tuesday, October 9, Qatari-bought fuel had been delivered to Gaza in an at-

tempt to alleviate the humanitarian situation in the blockaded enclave and prevent any further escalation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

According to a deal brokered by the United Nations, Doha pledged to pay \$60 million for desperately-needed fuel to be brought into the Gaza Strip over the span of six months in an attempt to supply the strip's sole power plant, which provides the impoverished enclave with some of its electricity needs, particularly for its hospitals and medical centers. Gazans currently receive only three or four hours of electricity a day.

Tensions have been running high near the fence, separating Gaza from the occupied territories, since March 30, which marked the start of a series of protests dubbed "The Great March of Return." Palestinian protesters demand the right

to return for those driven out of their homeland.

The clashes in Gaza reached their peak on May 14, the eve of the 70th anniversary of Nakba Day, or the Day of Catastrophe, which coincided this year with Washington's relocation of the US embassy from Tel Aviv to occupied Jerusalem al-Quds.

At least 205 Palestinians have so far been killed and over 20,000 others wounded in the renewed Gaza clashes, according to the latest figures released by the Gaza Health Ministry. The anti-Israeli rallies along the fence are organized by Hamas.

The United Nations has already warned that Israel's 11-year tight siege of Gaza has resulted in a "catastrophic" humanitarian situation.

(Source: Press TV)

Djokovic cruises past Coric to win fourth Shanghai title

Novak Djokovic continued his scintillating run of form as he breezed past Croatian Borna Coric 6-3 6-4 to win the Shanghai Masters title for the fourth time on Sunday.

With a clever mix of groundstrokes, the 31-year-old Serb broke Coric's serve in the sixth game and made a series of forays to the net as he consolidated his lead. The Serb grabbed the opening set with a hold to love, having dropped just four points on his serve overall. Coric, who collected one of the biggest wins of his career by defeating Roger Federer in the semi-finals, looked far from his best in his first ATP Masters final as he dropped his serve in the opening game of the second set.

The 21-year-old saved three match points to hold serve in the ninth game before Djokovic served out to clinch his fourth title of the season. Djokovic, who has returned to his brutal best this season with Grand Slam wins at Wimbledon and the U.S. Open, will surpass Federer as world number two when the next edition of the ATP rankings are released on Monday.

The 14-times Grand Slam champion extended his winning streak to 18 matches as he continues to chase Rafa Nadal's world number one crown, with the Spaniard skipping the Asian swing to recover from a knee injury.

(Source: Reuters)

Salah withdraws from Egypt squad amid injury concern

Mohamed Salah is returning to Liverpool after suffering a muscle injury while on international duty with Egypt.

Salah was taken off in stoppage time of Egypt's 4-1 win over Swaziland on Friday night.

The Egyptian Football Association (EFA) released a statement on Saturday and said the forward would play no part in Tuesday's return fixture in Swaziland. "[Head coach] Javier Aguirre decided to allow Salah to return back to Liverpool to give him extra rest, as medical scans revealed that getting him ready for Tuesday's match would be difficult," the EFA said.

Egypt's assistant coach Hany Ramzy did not believe the issue to be serious when he spoke after the game.

Aguirre criticised the state of the pitch at the Al-Salam Stadium in Cairo at a news conference following the Africa Nations Cup qualifier. "The pitch of Al-Salam stadium is very poor. It does not help the players to perform normally," the Mexican said.

(Source: Soccer.net)

Gibraltar enjoy historic first win after anthem blunder

Gibraltar won a competitive international for the first time with a 1-0 Nations League victory over Armenia in Yerevan on Saturday — after being mistaken for Liechtenstein.

The tiny British overseas territory beat an Armenia team including Arsenal's Henrikh Mkhitaryan thanks to Joseph Chipolina's 50th-minute penalty. It was the first time they had won a match other than a friendly since joining UEFA in 2013 and their players danced with joy at the final whistle. Yet the night had begun badly for the visitors when the national anthem of Liechtenstein was played before kickoff, prompting a disgruntled tweet from Gibraltar's FA. "The Gibraltar FA is very disappointed to note that, prior to tonight's UEFA Nations League match versus Armenia, the national anthem of Liechtenstein was played," it said.

"The Armenian FA has apologised to the Head of Delegation representing the Gibraltar FA in Yerevan for this oversight and an announcement has been made at the national stadium apologising for the error."

The blunder appeared to motivate the Gibraltar players as they held out against the hosts — whose best achievement was just missing out on qualification for Euro 2012 — for the last 40 minutes having had only 28 percent possession and mustering two attempts on target. Armenia, captained by Mkhitaryan, had 35 shots — 10 of them on target. Gibraltar's shock win took them level with Armenia on three points in League D Group 4, six behind leaders Macedonia.

(Source: Goal)

'Let's go, Floyd' - Nurmagomedov calls out Mayweather

UFC fighter Khabib Nurmagomedov wants to go one better than Conor McGregor after calling out boxer Floyd Mayweather, saying: "in the jungle there is only one king".

Russian Nurmagomedov, 30, beat McGregor on 6 October to extend his unbeaten mixed martial arts record to 27-0.

It was McGregor's first UFC fight since the Irishman lost a boxing bout to American Mayweather in August 2017.

Former five-weight world champion Mayweather is unbeaten in 50 fights. "Let's go, Floyd, we have to fight now," said Nurmagomedov, in an Instagram video filmed with Leonard Ellerbe, the chief executive of Mayweather Promotions.

"50-0 v 27-0, two guys who never lose, why not? Because in the jungle there is only one king."

Nurmagomedov, renowned for his wrestling skills, caught McGregor with a punch before winning the contest with a choke as he forced McGregor to tap out.

Mayweather, 41, stopped McGregor in the 10th round in their fight, one of the richest bouts in boxing history.

"Of course I am the king because he could not drop McGregor and I dropped him easily," added Nurmagomedov, who defended his UFC lightweight title against McGregor.

Mayweather, who has not fought since the McGregor bout, has said he will come out of retirement to fight Manny Pacquiao in a rematch later this year.

Nurmagomedov and McGregor have both been temporarily suspended by the Nevada State Athletic Commission pending a full investigation into the scenes that marred the end of their fight in Las Vegas.

Following his victory, Nurmagomedov jumped the octagon fence and started fighting his rival's team. McGregor then fought with the Russian's camp as numerous brawls broke out.

(Source: BBC)

Germany coach Joachim Low admits pressure is growing after Netherlands defeat

Germany coach Joachim Low has said he is braced for renewed debate over his future after his side crashed to a 3-0 loss to Netherlands on Saturday.

The Nations League defeat — Netherlands' first win over Germany in 16 years — followed a World Cup campaign that saw Low's side eliminated in the group stage.

And speaking after goals from Virgil van Dijk, Memphis Depay and Georginio Wijnaldum had seen off the 2014 World Cup winners, Low said he knew the pressure on him would increase.

"Of course I have to expect that," he told reporters. "It is something I have to live with. We must all take responsibility for this result."

"Debate is normal, but it is my job to prepare the team properly for the match against France [on Tuesday]."

Low, under contract until 2022, has taken charge of 169 Germany matches — more than any of his predecessors — and has been at the helm for 12 years.

He said his team had paid the price for failing to take their chances and accused them of falling apart as Depay and Wijnaldum struck in the closing minutes.

"We played quite well until the opener. We had our chances, which we didn't put away, and had control of the game," the German FA website reported him as saying.

"After we conceded, you could see that we were lacking confidence because the results haven't been so great in recent months. Then we just fell apart in certain areas and lost our defensive line."

"It's difficult to answer why we are struggling for goals. We're creating chances, but simply aren't putting them away, which would have been very important for our confidence."



The fact is, we had so many chances in the last two games but couldn't score. That's really bad. "You can lose, and 1-0 would have been acceptable. It's bad that we fell apart like that in the last 10 minutes. The players have to take responsibility for that and not just run around like headless chickens in

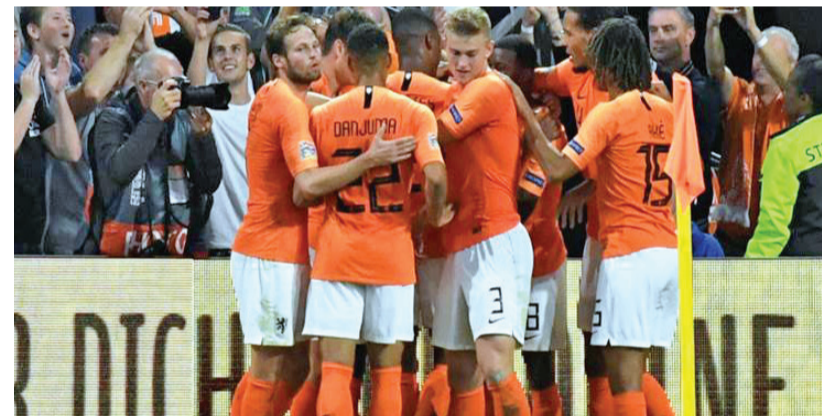
the final 10 minutes."

Germany captain Manuel Neuer said the players had told Low they were ready to meet the challenge of ending the poor run of form. "I don't know if every single player is feeling insecure. That's something every player needs to ask himself," the goalkeeper said.

"We all made it clear to the head coach that we are ready for the challenge. When you lose that game, you obviously face a lot of criticism and people speak very negatively. But today could have gone very differently, as you could see."

(Source: Soccer.net)

Dutch hope win over Germany steers them back on course



Netherlands captain Virgil van Dijk hopes their 3-0 win over Germany in Saturday's Nations League game marks a turning point for the team after barren years.

"Let's hope that is the case. We haven't been on this path long but it feels like we are on the right road," he told reporters after the victory at the Amsterdam Arena, which marked a first success in 16 years over their neighbors.

The Dutch failed to qualify for both the last World Cup and European Championship in a dramatic decline after finishing third in Brazil in 2014.

"No one would have believed you if you had said before the game that we would win by a 3-0 scoreline. We must enjoy the feeling but we are not there yet," added Van Dijk after the match in which he, Memphis Depay and Georginio Wijnaldum scored.

Coach Ronald Koeman took over in February in a bid to get the team back on track after the recent failures and said

the victory was a much-needed boost for Dutch football.

"I think everyone needed this win; the players, the staff and all of the Netherlands. You can see it from the reaction of the people. I'm really proud," he told Dutch television.

"Let's be clear - we had perilous moments in the game but overall we were really good. It gives so much confidence for the coming months."

"There was a great fighting spirit and we proved we can play good football. We had three debutants and give them three, four years of international football, they will be so much better. That's when we will have a real future for Dutch football."

Verification of potential progress can come quickly as the Netherlands play two more Nations League clashes next month when they host world champions France in Rotterdam on Nov. 16 and are away to the Germans in Gelsenkirchen on Nov. 19.

(Source: Reuters)

Schumacher's son Mick wins European F3 title



Mick Schumacher, the 19-year-old son of seven-times Formula One world champion Michael, won the European Formula Three title at Hockenheim on Saturday with a race to spare. Second place in the day's second race was enough to secure the German's first junior championship with an unbeatable 347 points.

It also qualifies him to race in Formula One next season, although there are few vacant seats available and the next obvious step would be Formula Two. Previous winners of the series, which has evolved over the years, include four-times F1 world champion Lewis Hamilton, who drives for Mercedes. Schumacher's father won the German F3 title in 1990, a year before his Formula One debut with the Jordan team and subsequent switch to Benetton. Mick Schumacher has secured eight wins in 12 races including five in a row with the Mercedes-powered Prema team. He was 12th overall in his debut season last year.

"It's a slightly unreal feeling. I'm absolutely delighted," said Schumacher, whose

first win came relatively late in the campaign and at his father's favourite Spa-Francorchamps circuit in Belgium.

"I still can't quite believe it." Mercedes motorsport head Toto Wolff, who runs the F1 team that Schumacher drove for at the end of his career, said the teenager had great potential.

"Attention was focussed on the youngster right from the start, and he was under a lot of pressure. It's not easy coping with all that, especially if the season does not get off to the best of starts, as in this case," said the Austrian. "His performance in the second half of the season was therefore all the more impressive. He has shown that he has what it takes and that he can become one of the greats in our sport."

Michael Schumacher, the most successful driver in Formula One history, has not been seen in public since he suffered severe head injuries in a skiing accident in France in December 2013.

(Source: Eurosport)

Griezmann: It would be a dream to go down in Atletico history by winning the Ballon d'Or

Antoine Griezmann revealed that it would be a dream for him to win the Ballon d'Or and become an Atletico Madrid legend in the process.

The Frenchman has had an outstanding year that saw him play a key part in Atletico winning the Europa League and then he helped his country to lift the World Cup in Russia.

"It would be dream to go down in Atletico history by winning the Ballon d'Or," said Griezmann. "At last it looks as though football is smiling at me. I am very happy on a personal level and also as a group with my teammates and coaches. We have enjoyed ourselves a lot and won tournaments."

"We will see (over the Ballon d'Or) it has been mentioned but I am always thinking of the team although it would be a dream. I am not the one that votes, then it would be easy. I have always wanted to be an important player in knockout games and finals. The last two ultimate we had lost and I don't know whether it was my fault but that is what I felt and then in the last two I was decisive and that is what I want."

Griezmann believes that he can still improve and that his best moment hasn't arrived. "Hopefully this is the case. I am enjoying myself and winning with my club and the national team," he explained. "With my teammates and coaches I am sure that I can improve. Since I was a boy I have wanted to win trophies and make money. I want to improve each



year as a player and at home as a husband and a father." "If it is a Frenchman that wins (the Ballon d'Or) that would be great and if it's me then more so. We had a good World Cup and to win it is very difficult. I am very happy to play for the national team and for my club to win the award

would mean I would go down in history." Consistency is the most important for this award and I think that I have been consistent this season winning three tournaments with my club and country."

(Source: Marca)

Female judoka to carry Iran's flag at Youth Olympic Games

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Female judo practitioner Maral Mardani will carry Iran's flag at the closing ceremony of the 2018 Youth Olympic Games.

Mardani was left tearful and upset after the officials of the Youth Olympic Games didn't allow her to participate at the Games wearing the headscarf.

Judo applies strict safety rules and any covering on the head is deemed to present a risk to the fighter's health.

Mardani was scheduled to meet Omaira Ramirez from Dominican Republic at the 78kg weight category but was forced to leave the mat.

Iranian athletes have won five gold medals and one bronze so far in the Games.

Taekwondo practitioners Yalda Valinejad and Ali Eshkevarian, weightlifter Alireza Yousefi and wrestlers Amir Reza Dehbozorgi and Mohammad Nosrati have won gold medals and gymnast Reza Bohloulzadeh claimed a bronze.

The closing ceremony of the 2018 Youth Olympic Games will be held on Oct. 18.

Mohammad Nosrati carried Iran's flag in the competitions' opening ceremony.

A total of the 3,997 athletes from 206 countries are taking part in the Games.



Weightlifter Yousefi wins gold at Youth Olympic Games



S P O R T S TEHRAN — Iranian superheavyweight Alireza Yousefi became champion of the Youth Olympic Games in presence of IOC President Thomas Bach.

Competition was intense between the Asian Youth champion and Silver medalist at the European Youth Championships both in 2017 and in 2018 Kuworge Enzo Kofi from the Netherlands.

Both were willing to achieve the best possible result to get the medal they came for and both of them ended the Snatch with 162kg. iwf.net reported.

However, it was impossible for them to catch Bulgarian Hristo Dimitrov going for 165kg, 170kg and 173kg.

The Clean and Jerk competition between the three athletes started at 195kg with a first good lift for KUWORGE. Youth World Champion in 2017 as well as European Youth

Champion in 2017 and in 2018, Hristo followed with 196kg while Yousefi came out at 202kg.

Hristo and Kuworge needed considerable jumps to stay in the game. Hristo equaled the 202kg while Kuworge made an even higher jump to 203kg. Both of them good lifts. They each had only one attempt left – 206kg for the first and a missed attempt at 210kg for the second getting a Silver for Hristo and a Bronze for Kuworge.

Yousefi came out for his second lift at 211kg. Ranking third, this lift and his Total of 373kg was enough for the second place.

His last attempt at 218kg was decisive and Yousefi gave it all! His technique, strength and passion. He ruled the Men's +85kg and is the last Youth Olympic Champion in Weightlifting in Buenos Aires!

Socceroos keen to make a statement

The Socceros are raring to go ahead of Monday's friendly against Kuwait, with assistant coach Rene Meulensteen opening up on the mindset in camp.

The clash at the Al Kuwait Sports Club signals the start of a new era in Australian football, with Graham Arnold less than 48 hours away from the first match of his second stint in charge of the men's national team.

And Meulensteen said fans should expect to see plenty of attacking intent from Australia in the first of three important friendlies before the AFC Asian Cup 2019 UAE.

"We all are very keen to make a statement. I'm sure the players are," he said. Australia have not played since bowing



out of the 2018 FIFA World Cup, a decision designed to give Arnold time to implement his new ideas and philosophies.

A September training camp in Turkey was followed by another set of sessions in the United Arab Emirates over the past week and Meulensteen has been impressed with what he has seen.

"We have had some really good training camps, obviously before in Turkey (in September) and now here again," he said.

"We have chosen to work a little bit more with the players than normal.

"I think we needed that time to work with them and now I think the players have got a really good idea of what we expect from them.

"I think they are very keen to get going on Monday night (local time)."

The Socceros squad travelled from

the United Arab Emirates to Kuwait on Saturday, before taking part in a light training session at the Al Nasr Stadium.

Meulensteen said there were subtle differences in conditions between the two nations, meaning the hit-out was very beneficial.

"After travel you always have to be a little bit careful that you don't go over the top (in training), because travel, no matter how short or how long, always takes a little bit out of the players," he said.

"The grass is slightly different, the pitch is a bit heavier, a bit spongier, so it is good for the players to experience that (in Kuwait) and to get the legs going and get the blood pumping."

(Source: the-afc)

Patrick Baumann, rising star in Olympic circles, dies at 51

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — Patrick Baumann, the secretary general of basketball's world governing body who was seen as a potential IOC president, has died at the Youth Olympics. He was 51.

Baumann "unexpectedly succumbed to a heart attack" in Buenos Aires despite getting immediate medical help, the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) said Sunday in a statement.

"Basketball has lost a leader, an advocate and a friend and our thoughts are with Patrick's wife and two children at this tragic time," the Switzerland-based FIBA said.

Baumann was FIBA's top administrator for 15 years, and an International Olympic Committee member since 2007.

"We can hardly believe this terrible news," IOC President Thomas Bach said in a statement. "We lose a young and sympathetic leader full of hope who was standing for the future of sport. Our thoughts are with his wife, his children and his family."



Flags will be flown at half-staff at IOC offices in Buenos Aires and its home city of Lausanne, Switzerland. The IOC said a memorial will be held in the athlete village in Buenos Aires.

A lawyer from Switzerland, Baumann had taken an increasingly important role in Olympic circles.

He led an IOC panel evaluating the Paris and Los Angeles bids for the 2024 Olympics, and then took charge of overseeing preparations for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. The IOC appointed Baumann to the World Anti-Doping Agency executive board, and he was elected president of the global group of sports federations, known as GAISF.

At meetings last week on the sidelines of the Youth Olympics, Baumann updated IOC members on the Los Angeles Games and the 2020 Lausanne Youth Olympics. He was president of its organizing committee.

Baumann was key to developing the 3-on-3 urban version of basketball and pushing for its inclusion as an Olympic medal event.

He earned masters degrees from the Business School of the University of Chicago, and in sports administration from the University of Lyon in France.

Japan match was the hardest in Asian Para Games, Iran wheelchair basketball coach says

Iran wheelchair basketball coach Mohammadreza Dastyar said that their final match against Japan at the 2018 Asian Para Games was the hardest match.

Iran have won a thrilling wheelchair basketball men's final, beating Japan 68-66 to end the sport program of the Indonesia 2018 Asian Para Games.

After a see-sawing final term, Japan captain Akira Toyoshima had a shot from underneath the hoop with less than a second remaining, but as he toppled over, the ball bounced off the rim and Iran's bench stormed the court to celebrate.

"It was the hardest match that we had in the past few days," Iran coach Dastyar told Paralympic.org.

"The Japan team is preparing itself for the 2020 Tokyo Paralympic Games and are a very, very professional team with a very professional coach as well."

Fast start

It brought an end to an absorbing en-

counter at the Gelora Bung Karno Basketball Hall in Jakarta, with Toyoshima's sweet touch around the basket helping Japan to a 21-12 quarter-time lead.

Japan were more than happy to muscle up inside against a taller Iranian side and several subsequent fast-break opportunities allowed them to stretch their advantage.

Iran's Omid Hadianzhar and Morteza Ebrahimi were in the thick of much of Japan's stern presence in the paint and Renishi Chokai was a menace in defence both in transition and at stoppages.

But Iran persisted and were able to be within six points at half time, with the score at 38-32.

Levelling it up

Morteza Abedi and Ebrahimi imposed themselves on the contest through the start of the third quarter and when Morteza stepped up and drained a three midway through the third term, scores were level at 45-45.

Iran found the lead soon after but some

late composure from Japan's Chokai and Reo Fujimoto prevented Iran from pulling away, and the two teams went into the final break locked at 53-53.

Chokai and Fujimoto combined for the first points of the fourth quarter, with Fujimoto firing up the packed-out stadium after a breakaway layup.

The see-sawing battle continued, but Iran's height came up big down the stretch and with scores tied at 66-66, Hadianzhar scored two points from the paint, giving Iran their 68-66 lead and eventual win.

Mohammadreza praised his side's ability to overcome the early deficit and said he was keen to inspire his players with his animated presence on the sideline.

"When we got equal we just had a feeling that we can win and we can win go forwards compared with the Japan team," he said.

"I just decided to deliver my energy and positive energy to our team members - to



the players on the court.

"When they saw me in this situation, they just received most of the motivation and I transferred this motivation to the players in the field of play."

Earlier on Saturday (13 October), South Korea were too composed and slick for China, winning the bronze medal match 79-54. (Source: Paralympic.org)

Rouhani congratulates Iranian athletes for stellar Asian Para Games outing

MNA — Iranian President Rouhani has congratulated the national para athletic contingent on winning 51 gold medals and ranking third at the 2018 Asian Para Games in Jakarta.



Iranian athletes made history by gaining a total of 51 gold medals and finishing third at 2018 Asian Para Games in Indonesia, which wrapped up on October 13.

In a message on Sunday, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani commended the efforts of the Iranian para athletic contingent at the international tournament, and gave them a pat on the back for winning third place and breaking the record in raking in gold medals.

He further praised the medalists for their tremendous efforts that hoisted the Iranian flag on Asia's victory stand.

Gymnast Bohloulzadeh grabs bronze at Youth Olympics

TASNIM — Reza Bohloulzadeh from Iran claimed a bronze medal at the Artistic gymnastics of the 2018 Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

The Iranian gymnast finished in third place, collecting 13.241 points at the pommel horse.

This is Iran's first ever medal in the Olympics.

Chinese gymnast Yin Dehang won the gold medal and the silver medal went to Russian Sergei Naidin.

Gymnastics at the 2018 Summer Youth Olympics is being held from 7 to 16 October.

The events take place at the Parque Polideportivo Roca in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Five Iran taekwondokas due to attend Manchester Grand Prix

IRNA — Iran's national taekwondo team have introduced five members to participate in Manchester Grand Prix 2018.

The Iranian national team will leave Tehran for Manchester early on Tuesday.

The competitions will be held for three days as of October 19.

Armin Hadipour and Farzan Ashourzadeh in -58 kg weight class, Abolfazl Yaghoobi and Mir-Hashem Hosseini in -68 kg weight categories, as well as Sajjad Mardani in +80 kg weight class will compose the members of the Iranian national team.

Mehdi Khodabakhshi, another member of the Iranian national team, failed to attend in the tournament because of knee injury.

Those who rank first, second and third in the competitions will gain 40, 24 and 14.4 points to increase their ranking for the Olympic Games and will also receive 5,000, 3,000 and 1,000 dollars, respectively as their prize.

Female blind footballers invited to Japan

The International Blind Sports Federation (IBSA) is inviting female football players from all around the world to take part in an international training camp and game from 21-24 February 2019 in Tokyo and Saitama, Japan.

The camp will be the second of its kind organized by the sport. It follows the first in Vienna, Austria, in 2017 which attracted 60 female players, coaches, referees and support staff from all around the world.

The 2019 IBSA Women's Blind Football Camp and Games will feature two days of training and then a match between the Japanese national team and a 'World Select' team made-up of players from other countries.

It is supported by local organizers the International Blind Football Foundation (IBF Foundation) and the Japan Blind Football Association (JBFA).

Ulrich Pfisterer, IBSA Blind Football Committee Chairperson, said: "As men's blind football continues to grow at an incredible rate we want to ensure that the women's game is developing too."

"I cannot think of a better place to host the next women's camp than Japan, where the thirst for Para sports increases with each day that passes as the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics edge closer."

"We are working with the local organizers to ensure that the event is of the highest quality. We are expecting there to be around 1,000 spectators for the match at the end of the camp, so this is a unique opportunity for players and teams to not only gain valuable skills and knowledge, but experience the buzz of a major event as well."

"My thanks go to the IBF Foundation and the JBFA for their generous support and efforts in helping us to take the next step in building women's football."

Players will arrive in Japan on 20 February and take part in a team-building session. The two-day training camp follows, featuring a session on the rules of blind football before practical training.

The Japan vs. World Select friendly will then take place on 23 February on the indoor pitch at the Saiten Chemical Arena in Saitama City. The camp will conclude with a cultural program on 24 February.

Teams are invited to enter their athletes until 15 October. A total of 12 spaces (10 players and two goalkeepers) are available to athletes aged over 15. Players can be blind or partially sighted. (Source: Paralympic.org)

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www.tehrantimes.com
 ■ Managing Director: Ali Asgari
 ■ Editor-in-Chief: Mohammad Ghaderi

» Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895
 editor@tehrantimes.com
 » Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000
 » Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051450
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“Pig” actor Hassan Majuni named best at Spain’s Sitges

A R T TEHRAN — Hassan Majuni won the award for best actor for his role in director Mani Haqiqi’s “Pig” at the 51st Sitges International Fantastic Film Festival of Catalonia, the organizers announced on Sunday.



Hassan Majuni acts in a scene from “Pig”.

The film is about Hassan, a filmmaker who has not been able to make any films recently, but his popular starlet can’t wait any longer and wants to leave and work with another director. His wife no longer loves him. His daughter has grown up and feels independent. His elderly mother is suffering from Alzheimer’s disease. A disturbingly beautiful woman tracks him everywhere he goes and wants him to give her a role in his films.

Worse yet, a murderer is killing directors of Iranian cinema in the city, but he has ignored Hassan. Now he is despondent: isn’t he the most important filmmaker of the city? Why then doesn’t the murderer care about him? The situation becomes more intolerable when Hassan is accused as the prime suspect for the murder cases on the social networks. Now he is forced to concoct a clever plan to rebuild his destroyed reputation.

Andrea Riseborough won the award for best actress for her role in “Nancy” by American director Christina Choe, whose fellow filmmaker, Gaspar Noé, won the award for best feature-length movie for his “Climax”.

The Special Jury Award went to “Happy as Lazzaro” by Alice Rohrwacher from Italy, and Panos Cosmatos from the U.S. was named best director for “Mandy”.

Farnush Samadi on jury of Austrian festival

CULTURE TEHRAN — Farnush Samadi, director of the acclaimed Iranian short “Gaze”, has been selected as a member of the jury at the Linz International Short Film Festival, which is currently underway in the Austrian city.



Romanian director Sorin Dorian Dragoi and Italian animator Lucia Bulgheroni are the other members of the jury.

Samadi’s fellow film editor, Hayedeh Safiyari, who is also a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, is scheduled to hold a master class at the festival today.

A number of Iranian movies such as “Animal” by Bahram and Bahman Ark, “Are You Volleyball?” by Mohammad Bakhshi and “Birthday Night” by Omid Shams are also competing in the festival, which will come to an end today.

Iranian artists to attend French fine craft biennial

A R T TEHRAN — Iran will be attending the 4th Revelations, an international fine craft and creation biennial, which will take place in Paris in May 2019, the director of the Iranian Ceramic Artists Association has said.

A selection of 15 artworks that represent Persian handicrafts is scheduled to be sent to the biennial, Farzad Faraji said.

Three out of the entire collection will be selected through an exhibition, which will be held at Tehran’s Abad Gallery ahead of the biennial.

Initiated by Ateliers d’Art de France, the Revelations biennial aims to reunite the general public, amateurs and collectors, architects, decorators and gallery owners.

The 4th edition of the biennial will take place from May 23 to 26 at the Grand Palais in Paris.

Over 400 crafts workers, craft workshops, galleries, fine craft centers, foundations and institutions from about 20 countries will take part in the biennial.

Iranian-Filipino calligraphy exhibit opens at UP Manila

A R T TEHRAN — The University of the Philippines Manila (UP Manila) is playing host to an exhibition displaying calligraphy works by Tandis Taqavi from Iran and Taipan Lucero from the Philippines.

The showcase that opened on Saturday has been organized to celebrate Iranian Calligraphy Week.

The artists have created five joint works on the theme of peace for the exhibit named “Harbinger of Peace among Nations”. The exhibition also is hanging other works by the artists.

Lucero is famous for his self-developed style of calligraphy of Baybayin, the ancient Filipino writing system.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Iran’s cultural attaché, Mohammad Jafari-Malek, said that the exhibit has presented the ancient civilization of Iran, and that the Iranian nation has given the world nothing but peace and friendship.

Maria Bernadette, the dean of the Social Sciences and Philosophy Department at UP Manila, and Taqavi and Lucero were honored next at the opening ceremony of the exhibition.

The Filipino branch of the Iranian Calligraphers Society was launched in Manila in February 2018.

The week-long exhibit has been organized in collaboration with Iran’s Cultural Office in Manila, the Filipino branch of the Iranian Calligraphers Society and the Philippine-Iran Women’s Friendship Society.



Calligraphers Taipan Lucero from the Philippines and Tandis Taqavi from Iran pose in an undated photo.

Absence from copyright pacts blocks Iran from special guest status at Frankfurt fair



CULTURE TEHRAN — Iran’s absence from international conventions on copyrights has prevented the organizers of the Frankfurt Book Fair from hosting the country as a special guest so far, Iranian Cultural Attaché Ali Mujani said on Sunday quoting the director of the fair, Juergen Boos.

Boos made the remarks in a meeting with Iranian Ambassador Ali Majedi at his office in the book fair, as he stated in a press release.

“Boos said that Iran’s absence from international conventions is the single biggest obstacle for the book fair to host

the country as a special guest, but he added that Iranian culture and literature have always been appealing to the organizer and makes them to do something special to play their part in the introduction of the culture and literature,” said Mujani who accompanied Majedi at the meeting.

“Boos also said that if Iranian officials announce their readiness he would travel to Iran to discuss the schedule for the special program,” he added.

Iran does not hold a membership in any international copyright convention.

This year, Georgia is the guest of honor at the Frankfurt Book Fair that comes to an end today.

Calligraphic paintings to go under hammer at Tehran gallery



A poster for Negar Gallery’s auction for calligraphic paintings.

A R T TEHRAN — A collection of calligraphic paintings by Iranian artists will be offered during an auction at Tehran’s Negar Gallery on Thursday.

Over 40 works selected for the sale are currently on display in an exhibition that opened on Friday, curator Shadi Talai told the Persian service of MNA on Saturday.

The auction has been organized to commemorate Iranian Calligraphy Week, which started on Friday.

The auction also aims to promote the younger generation of Iranian calligraphers whose works have rarely been showcased

at art events, Talai said.

Among the artists are Ali Shoja, Reza Emadi, Nasrin Hadian, Hossein Kamyabi, Jamshid Hakimi, Amir Yeganeh, Kazem KHorasani, Saeid Naqqashian, Azim Fallah and Ardeshtir Qiasi.

A calligraphic painting estimated at 100,000,000 rials (over \$2,200) is the most expensive artwork offered at the sale.

Talai said that calligraphic paintings by Iranian artists appeal to art lovers in Arab nations and Eastern Asia.

“However, we need people or companies to sponsor and organize similar sales in these countries,” she noted.

Lindsey Buckingham sues Fleetwood Mac after being axed from tour

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) — Guitarist Lindsey Buckingham has sued his former Fleetwood Mac bandmates, accusing them of breach of contract for cutting him out of their North American tour and the millions of dollars he would have earned from it.

Buckingham, 69, one of the most influential members of the British-American band behind hits like “Don’t Stop” and “Rhiannon”, was dropped earlier this year from the tour lineup.

In a lawsuit filed on Tuesday in Los Angeles Superior Court, Buckingham said the dispute stemmed from a clash between the planned 2018/19 Fleetwood Mac tour and Buckingham’s wishes to play some solo dates.

The lawsuit claimed that each member of the group would have earned about \$12 million to \$14 million for the 50-city tour, which kicked off last week.

The other band members “intentionally acted to interfere with Buckingham’s relationship with (concert promoters) Live Nation and the prospective economic benefit he was to receive as a result of his participation in the tour,” the lawsuit said.

Buckingham said he learned he had been dropped two days after a Grammy MusiCares celebration in New York in January 2018 honoring the main members of the band - Stevie Nicks, Christine McVie, Mick Fleetwood, John McVie, and Buckingham.

“Less than a week after having shared a stage at MusiCares, the other members of Fleetwood Mac had suddenly cut Buckingham off entirely,” the lawsuit said.

Representatives of the band had no immediate comment on the lawsuit.



Musician Lindsey Buckingham of Fleetwood Mac arrives to attend the 2018 MusiCares Person of the Year show honoring Fleetwood Mac at Radio City Music Hall in Manhattan, New York, U.S., January 26, 2018. (Reuters/Andrew Kelly)

1967, has been plagued by behind-the-scenes romantic and creative tensions among its members and a shifting lineup over the years.

Buckingham included in the lawsuit a copy of an email he sent to Fleetwood in February, begging the band to overcome its differences.

“After 43 years and the finish line clearly in sight, it is hard to escape the conclusion that for the five of us to splinter apart now would be the wrong thing,” he wrote.

“If there is a way to work this through, I believe we must try. I love you no matter what,” he wrote.

In an interview earlier this week with Rolling Stone magazine, Buckingham blamed Nicks, his former friend, for the rift, saying he was told by the band’s manager that Nicks was angry when Buckingham smirked while she was giving a speech at the January Grammy event.

Kanye West defends support for Trump, in front of Trump

WASHINGTON (Reuters) — Rapper Kanye West, with a stream of consciousness speech in the Oval Office and a burst of profanity, defended his support for President Donald Trump on Thursday, to the great delight of Trump himself.

The event was billed as a lunch at the White House to discuss prison reform, jobs for African-Americans and Chicago violence. Those items were addressed in a pre-lunch meeting, but Kanye launched into a speech and Trump let him go on as the cameras recorded it all.

But in between, Kanye spoke of alternative universes, a new plane that Trump should consider as his next Air Force One, his diagnosis of bipolar disorder that he said was actually sleep deprivation, and living in a household dominated by females given his marriage to reality TV star Kim Kardashian West.

Kanye later said his 10-minute speech was “from the soul, I just channeled it.” Trump lapped it all up.

“That was quite something,” said Trump, who was joined in the Oval Office by Hall of Fame NFL running back Jim Brown, who smiled and sat quietly through most of event.

Kanye came to the White House clearly with a lot on his mind, chiefly his support for the president.

“I had the balls to put on this hat,” the 41-year-old artist said in defending the red “Make America Great Again” hat that he wore for his meeting.

The award-winning musician has taken fire from other celebrities for his support for Trump, particularly after his recent



Rapper Kanye West shows President Donald Trump his mobile phone during a meeting in the Oval Office at the White House in Washington, U.S., October 11, 2018. (Reuters/Kevin Lamarque)

appearance on NBC’s “Saturday Night Live” show.

“People expect that if you’re black you have to be Democrat,” he said. “What I need Saturday Night Live to improve on, what I need the liberals to improve on: if he don’t look good, we don’t look good,” Kanye said, gesturing at Trump.

Kanye also said he would like Trump to ditch talk about persuading police in Chicago to institute “stop and frisk” policies to crack down on crime and violence.

“I didn’t mean to put you on the (spot), bro,” Kanye told Trump, who said “I’m open to everything” about the subject.

Before they adjourned for a roasted chicken lunch, Kanye stood up, walked over to Trump and gave him a bear hug.

“I love this guy right here. Let me give this guy a hug,” he said.

Trump said: “That’s really nice. That’s from the heart.”