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# #DownWithUSA

## IRGC chief to Trump: Never threaten Iran

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## Guardian Council finds faults with CFT

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Abbasali Kadhodaie, spokesman for the Guardian Council, announced on Sunday that the council had found 20 faults with the CFT - a legislation to combat financing of terrorism - and rejected it. **→2**

## Balloons to bring internet access at crisis times

**TECHNOLOGY** **TEHRAN** — A network of giant balloons will soon bring internet access in 31 provinces across Iran in order to manage telecommunication at the times of crisis, Mehr reported. The project aims to take benefit from the space technology during crises, head of the Iranian Space Agency (ISA) Morteza Barari announced. **→10**

## War-torn Yemen 'living hell' for children: UN

Conflict-ravaged Yemen has become a "living hell" for children with thousands dying every year from malnutrition and easily preventable diseases, a top UN official said Sunday.

Geert Cappelaere, regional director for the Middle East and North Africa at UN children's agency UNICEF, called on the warring parties to join proposed peace talks later this month and agree to a ceasefire. **→13**



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

## Clinton and the dream of presidency!

Hillary Clinton is still hopeful about the U.S. presidential elections in 2020, despite her failure in 2008 and 2016. This is while experts mention that one of the main reasons of Democrats' defeat in the previous presidential election was Clinton's presence as the Party's final candidate, and the stealing of Bernie Sanders' vote by Hillary Clinton's supporters.

As reported by the CNN, Former Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton sent mixed messages when she said she did not want to run for president again, but after hesitating she added that she would like to be president someday.

When asked by tech magazine Recode's Kara Swisher at a taping Friday of the Recode Decode podcast whether she wanted to run for president again, Clinton said, "No, no."

But after a pause and some prodding from Swisher, Clinton said, "Well, I'd like to be president."

"I think, hopefully, when we have a Democrat in the Oval Office in January of 2021, there's going to be so much work to be done," she elaborated, later adding, "The work would be work that I feel very well prepared for, having been at the Senate for eight years, having been a diplomat in the State Department, and it's just going to be a lot of heavy lifting."

When Swisher asked whether Clinton would be doing that heavy lifting, Clinton replied, "Oh, I have no idea. ... I'm not even going to even think about it till we get through this November 6 election about what's going to happen after that."

Beyond what CNN reported, it should be noted that after the disclosure of Hillary Clinton's emails and the Democrats' betrayal of Bernie Sanders, many of the U.S. citizens in the 2016 presidential elections voted for Trump. Some political analysts in the United States believe that if Bernie Sanders stood in Clinton's position during the 2016 elections, he would have been able to defeat Trump and enter the White House. The Clintons, however, continue to influence the Democrats and try to get the most out of it. Though former President Bill Clinton is opposed to his wife's decision to run for the upcoming presidential election, Hillary Clinton doesn't appear to be reluctant in this regard! **→7**

## New sanctions on Iran will not fulfill U.S. national interest: Nephew

**EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW**  
**By Javad Heirannia**

**TEHRAN** — Richard Nephew, who served as the lead sanctions expert for the U.S. team negotiating with Iran, is of the opinion that U.S. new sanctions on Iran will not fulfill U.S. national interest in long term.

"The fellow at the Center on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University, says, "I think

that the best long-term interest for the United States was remaining in the JCPOA and using it as a mechanism for pursuing direct diplomacy between the United States and Iran."

Following is the text of the interview:

■ As announced before, U.S. returned all nuclear sanctions against Iran. Do you think that this sanctions is according to U.S. national interest in long term?

A: No, I don't. As I've said repeatedly,

I think that the best long-term interest for the United States was remaining in the JCPOA and using it as a mechanism for pursuing direct diplomacy between the United States and Iran.

The failure of the Trump administration to take advantage of this opportunity is not in the long term interest of the United States, nor is it in the U.S. interest to misuse sanctions in this fashion. **→7**

## Scholar says Khashoggi murder questions Trump's anti-Iran approach

**By Negar Asadi**

**TEHRAN** — Modjtaba Sadria, a prominent scholar, says that murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi questions the Trump administration's tough approach towards Iran.

"The fact that the Saudi Arabian journalist was executed and disappeared in a terrible way brings a big problem about the moral justification of tough position of Trump's administration towards Iran and not Saudi Arabia," Sadria

tells the Tehran Times in an interview.

"Now, the U.S. is in difficulty. It has become clear that the biggest ally of the U.S. in the [Middle East] region has no respect for the human rights and is involved in such crime. How can it be justified to make that one [Saudi Arabia] as a good guy and to present Iran as a bad guy?" he noted.

Khashoggi, a Saudi critic writing in the Washington Post, was killed in the Saudi consulate

in Istanbul on October 2.

Riyadh initially denied knowledge of Khashoggi's fate, claiming that he left the consulate. However, later Saudis admitted that he was killed in the consulate.

The chief prosecutor's office in Istanbul, Irfan Fidan issued, issued a statement on Wednesday announcing that the body of Khashoggi was dismembered after he was strangled as soon as he entered the consulate. **→2**

## Religion is as old as humanity: Bianchi

**EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW**  
**By Javad Heirannia**

**TEHRAN** — Robert R. Bianchi, a Professor at the University of Chicago, believes that "Religion is as old as humanity. It predates the appearance of states and nations and has always influenced their ideals, behaviors, and self-images."

Professor Bianchi, who also teaches at the Shanghai International Studies University (SISU), adds that "In every civilization, people have sought to define proper relations with one

another and the natural environment in terms they saw as universal and eternal."

Following is the complete text of the interview:

■ When have religious issues been important in theorizing about International Relations?

A: Religion is as old as humanity. It predates the appearance of states and nations and has always influenced their ideals, behaviors, and self-images. In every civilization, people have sought to define proper relations with one another and the natural environment in terms

they saw as universal and eternal. These efforts have yielded a rich and constantly evolving global conversation about virtue, justice, fairness, balance, harmony, the worthy life, and the good society. Religion creates an unseen authority above human power that all leaders must respect if they hope to claim legitimacy in the judgement of society and history. Rulers and regimes flourish or perish depending on whether they uphold or violate the principles of the great religions no matter how modern or secular they wish to be. **→7**



© Tehran Times/Maid Asagour

## Dollars set on fire ahead of sanctions reimposition

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — A day before the anti-Iran sanctions come back into force, thousands took to the streets in Tehran on Sunday to condemn the U.S. behavior toward Iran, especially under President Donald Trump's administration. Marking the 1979 U.S. embassy takeover, the rally saw American and Israeli flags burned.

Crowds held anti-American banners, some of which read "Down with U.S." An effigy of Trump, placed on huge prints of 100-dollar banknotes, was burned outside the former U.S. embassy in Tehran, while others were seen burning actual dollars.



**PERSPECTIVE**  
**Roohullah Ghasemian**  
Journalist

## Khashoggi's murder: The beginning of the Greater Middle East project

It's not the first time that the Al-Saud regime brutally treats opponents, but it is the first that Western countries react to its hostility. The West generally hides and rejects anti-humanitarian measures because of their dependence on Saudi's oil, or the sale of billions of weapons or generous suggestions made by the ruling regime.

However, the review of the European approach to prohibiting the sale of weapons to Saudi Arabia, or the ban of the Saudi investment conference by the world's major corporations, and even Trump double standard remarks in this regard, and the stress on the immediate ceasefire in Yemen, all indicate that a new development is in process.

In fact, neither oil nor market of Saudi Arabia seem to attract the Western countries any longer, as Khashoggi's case has provided the necessary pretext for Europe to end alliance with one of the most reactionary and primitive states in the world.

Various analyses have been made on the future of U.S.-Saudi relations.

Some believe that the only reason behind the U.S. backing of the Saudi government is the issue of oil and energy security for the world's largest economy.

Meanwhile, with the U.S. self-sufficiency in oil production, there is virtually no reason for Washington to support Saudi Arabia, and Trump's remarks on the requirement for the Saudi side to pay for their security costs precisely means that they should not exceed the credibility and interests of the United States for such an alliance.

Referring to the Greater Middle East Project and the need to break up the powers of the region into smaller increments, the experts believe that the U.S. should provide the necessary ground for the balkanization of the region immediately by cutting back from Saudi Arabia.

Interestingly, in most scenarios drawn by Western think tanks for the West Asian future, the Mid-East, along with China and Russia, must be submerged in insecurity and civil wars, ultimately from the ashes of warfare to consolidate the global empire and realization. **→7**



## MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



### 'Anti-Iran plots to result in failure'

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — The new conspiracies by the U.S. government will result in nothing except defeat and shame for Washington, Intelligence Minister Mahmoud Alavi said on Sunday.

"Forty years after the Islamic Revolution, the world is confessing that the Revolution has reached a point that has broken the grandeur of the arrogance and is leading the suppressed people in their path toward freedom," Alavi said in a message on the occasion of Students Day, IRNA reported.

He further stressed that the U.S. is trying its best to break the back of the Islamic Republic but all of its efforts will fail miserably.



### Putin's Syria envoy to meet Shamkhani

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Alexander Lavrentiev, the Russian president's special envoy for Syria, is scheduled to visit Tehran on Monday to hold talks with Ali Shamkhani, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council.

Discussing ways to advance joint political, military and security initiatives is among the goals of Lavrentiev's trip, ILNA reported.

The two sides are also expected to review bilateral and multilateral cooperation in fighting terrorism and putting an end to the Syrian crisis, which started in 2011.



### Parliamentary committee says Tehran mayor should go

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Members of the Majlis Social Committee voted on Sunday against a reinterpretation of Article 1 of the law banning employment of the retired officials, and as a result Tehran's mayor must be laid off, committee's vice chairman said.

Mohammad Reza Badamchi said on Sunday that during a session of the committee earlier in the day, three lawmakers voted in favor and 15 against the generalities of the motion, ISNA reported.

The law to ban employment of the retired officials was passed in mid-September by the parliament and it will be implemented by November 15.



### Ahmadinejad aide handed 91 days imprisonment

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Ali Akbar Javanfekr, an aide to former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has been sentenced to 91 days in prison for disobeying the judicial and law enforcement authorities.

Javanfekr said on Sunday that the prison sentence was handed to him by the court of state employees and was later confirmed by the court of appeal, IRNA reported.

Back in September, Gholam Hossein Esmaili, head of Tehran Province's Judiciary, said former presidential chief of staff Esfandiar Rahim Mashaei and Javanfekr were handed down 5 and 4 years in prison respectively on charges of conspiracy to commit crimes against national security.



### Ambassador: China to continue co-op with Iran

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Chinese Ambassador to Tehran Pang Sen on Sunday stressed China's firm decision to confront new U.S. sanctions against Iran, saying his country will continue cooperation with the Islamic Republic despite U.S. pressure, IRNA reported.

"Beijing is opposed to the U.S. unilateral policy and continues cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran, considering its responsibility on the international scene," Pang said in a meeting with Hossein Amir Abdollahian, a senior foreign policy advisor to the Iranian parliament speaker.

"Bilateral relations should be pursued; the current cooperation between the two countries is based on international law," Ambassador Pang added.



### EU to launch payment mechanism with Iran: envoy

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — The European Union will launch a payment mechanism for economic cooperation with Iran in the "near future," EU Ambassador to Moscow Markus Ederer has said.

"Discussion of the technical parameters of the creation of this mechanism continues, and I believe that this mechanism will be launched in the near future, including due to the introduction of new U.S. sanctions against Iran, which will occur on November 5," Teller Report on Sunday quoted Ederer as saying.

According to Ederer, the mechanism will have to maintain and develop payment channels for the export of Iranian products, including oil, as well as the import of European products to Iran.

# Nation to thwart Trump's plans: Larijani



**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani said in an open session of the parliament on Sunday that the U.S. has been interfering in Iran's internal affairs for more than 80 years, however the Iranian nation has always defused conspiracies, the Mehr news agency reported.

"Yesterday, the great leader of Islamic Revolution referred to three important events whose anniversary falls on this day [13th of Aban], i.e., the Capitulation treaty and the late Imam [Khomeini]'s brave opposition to it, the revolutionary movement of school students and that of university students, all of which are the embodiments of the Iranian nation's resistance against arrogant deeds of the U.S.," Larijani stated.

On Nov. 4 (13th of Aban), 1964, SAVAK arrested Imam Khomeini and exiled him to Turkey due to his statement against Capitulation; on the same day in 1978, 56 university students were killed protesting against the shah; and on Nov. 4, 1979, university students captured the "den of spies", the name for the U.S. embassy in Tehran.

Elaborating on the examples of U.S. interference in Iran, Larijani pointed to the U.S.-designed 1953 coup (28 Mordad coup d'état) against the government of Mohammad Mosaddeq which guaranteed the dictatorship of the Pahlavi dynasty for a few more decades.

Larijani further referred to the establishment of SAVAK, the shah's repressive security apparatus, with the help of U.S. advisors as well as the CIA and Mossad.

"They plundered Iran's wealth, especially its oil. In addition, they were in command

of Iran's armed forces for decades."

He further noted that the shah, not being able to manage the political affairs independently, was entirely dependent on the U.S. "This heavy dependency on America in the military, economic and political affairs, as well as in suppressing the freedom-seekers and creating a repressive atmosphere, had no outcome other than the humiliation of the Iranian nation before other nations, the enslavement of the Iranian society and the retrogression of the whole country."

Larijani quoted Imam Khomeini as saying, "Now [after the Capitulation treaty] American military and non-military advisors along with their families and servants

are exempt from any crime or offense they commit while the Iranian police cannot arrest them, and Iranian courts cannot convict them."

"But the Islamic Revolution suddenly subverted the situation, ousting America and its servants," the speaker added.

When the U.S. confronted the barrier of the Iranian nation's resistance and got disappointed, it decided to orchestrate its hostility in a novel manner by trying to disintegrate the country by inciting ethnic uprisings, engineering a coup against the Islamic system, and carrying out terror attacks against many officials, he further noted.

"However, all of these conspiracies,

which happened during the early years after the revolution, were of no avail to America. As a result, America inflamed and supported the war of Saddam against Iran. Yet, other Western countries and the Soviet Union were of assistance to Saddam."

Suffering extensive losses and undergoing many difficulties during the war, the Iranian people's resolve remained intact, Larijani remarked.

"Now, like Saddam, Donald Trump intends to fight the Iranian people, in particular Iranian children and women, but the people - with the help of Ayatollah Khamenei's adept and clever leadership - will make Trump succumb just as did Saddam," Larijani predicted.

## Iran sanctions 'big mistake': Nation of Islam leader

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan has said reimposing sanctions against Iran by Washington is a "big mistake", and that the era of U.S. totalitarianism in the world is over.

Farrakhan made the remarks in a meeting with Mohsen Rezaee, secretary of the Expediency Council, in Tehran on Sunday.

"Christians say the devil is a liar and they count Trump's lies every day," he stated, ILNA reported.

"Only the devil has been created with lies," he added. Pointing to the long history of U.S. conspiracies against the Islamic Republic, he said, "I understand what plots the enemies have hatched against the Iranian nation and I am willing to stand by you to thwart their plots."

Rezaee, for his part, called on Islamic countries to unify against the enemies.

"In the war between the West and Islam, no Islamic country can emerge victorious by itself... In this confrontation, the world's Muslims should get united and create a movement to counter the West's hegemony," he remarked.

Rezaee further urged the Iranian nation to be united in the face of U.S. hostilities.



Farrakhan (L) holds talks with Rezaee

Emphasizing the oath-breaking nature of the Trump administration, he said, "Trump violated an international agreement. He continues this illegal and inhumane behavior with cruel sanctions."

"We will defeat him, and by the grace of God, Mr. Trump will come back from these sanctions empty-handed," he added.

## #DownWithUSA

### IRGC chief to Trump: Never threaten Iran

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Iranians on Sunday held a large gathering outside the former U.S. embassy in Tehran to cherish the memory of the capture of the "den of spies" in 1979, as the late Imam Khomeini called it back then.

The rally was held a day ahead of the reimposition of U.S. sanctions on Iran which had been lifted under the 2015 nuclear deal.

#DownWithUSA in Farsi trended on Twitter, as the demonstrators shouted the motto as they have over the past four decades since the revolution.

The key speaker of the gathering was

the commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards. His "never threaten" address to U.S. President Donald Trump quickly made it to local media headlines.

"Never threaten the Iranian people... do not make military threats against us, and do not frighten us from military threats," Mohammad Ali Jafari warned.

Pointing to U.S. soldiers' "whimper of fear" in their encounter with Iran and the high number of American veterans who commit suicide because of depression, the IRGC chief said the U.S. power is on the wane.

The enemy's last option, namely eco-

nomie war on Iran, has been defeated and the U.S. tool of sanctions has become useless, the commander stated.

He also stressed that the Islamic Revolution would have not lasted for 40 years if the den of spies had not been taken over by students back on November 4, 1979.

#### Officials attend rally

Many top officials attended the anti-U.S. rally. Among them was Judiciary Chief Sadeq Amoli Larijani.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the rally, he said the gathering sends a message to the U.S.

The Iranian nation will never give way

to pressure, the top judge asserted.

"These people have been tried before. Over the forty years of the revolution they have withstood all pressures," he added.

Ahmad Khatami, a member of the Assembly of Experts, also spoke on the sidelines of the rally.

"Today America is weaker than the past... witnessed by the fact that they have \$800 billion budget deficit," Khatami remarked.

"America has been committing crimes in our country; since the 1953 coup to date it is doing crimes against this nation," Khatami added.

## Scholar says Khashoggi murder questions Trump's anti-Iran approach

**1 →** "The victim's body was dismembered and destroyed following his death by suffocation," the statement said.

Yasin Aktay, an adviser to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, told the newspaper Hurriyet on Friday that Khashoggi's body was "dissolved" after his murder and dismemberment at the Saudi consulate.

The Turkish president on Friday demanded that Saudi Arabia reveal the location of Khashoggi's body and hand over 18 suspects.

Erdogan wrote in an article published by The Washington Post on Friday, "We know the order to kill Khashoggi came from the highest levels of the Saudi government."

"As responsible members of the international community, we must reveal the identities of the puppetmasters behind Khashoggi's killing and discover those in whom Saudi officials — still trying to cover up the murder — have placed their trust," he wrote.

The Iranian parliament voted in favor



#### 'World cannot accept U.S. policies'

Sadria also said that the world cannot accept the U.S. policies and give in to Washington under the threat of

sanctions.

He said that situation of the oil market and also the international economic situation makes it almost impossible for buyers of Iran's oil to follow the U.S. policy of imposing sanctions on Iran.

It seems that there has been a change in the U.S. policy from "absolute sanctions" to "relative sanctions", he noted.

In May President Trump unilaterally pulled the U.S. out of the historic 2015 nuclear agreement reintroduced sanctions on Iran. The first batch of sanctions were enacted in August. The second wave of sanctions, which targets Iran's oil exports and central bank, is due to start on November 5.

However, Bloomberg reported on Friday that the U.S. has agreed to let eight countries, including Japan, India and South Korea, keep buying Iran's oil after it re-imposes sanctions.

## Guardian Council finds faults with CFT

**1 →** "The faults includes items which were against the constitution and the Islamic law and there were also items which were ambiguous for the council and we sent them back to the Majlis (parliament)," he told the Mehr news agency.

The Iranian parliament voted in favor

of the CFT on October 7. A total of 143 lawmakers, out of 268 ones present in the 290-seat parliament, voted in favor of the bill, 120 voted against and five abstained.

To become a law, however, the oversight Guardian Council should vet the bill for compliance with the Constitution.

Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee Chairman Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh told reporters on Sunday that the committee will study the faults presented by the Guardian Council.

"In addition to the faults, the Guardian

Council has introduced a term which, in our opinion, means rejection of the CFT," he said.

Falahatpisheh added, "It is said in the term that a number of faults are against the national interests and the Islamic law and cannot be corrected."



# Bahrain opposition leaders get life term over Qatar spying case

Bahrain's appeals court has sentenced three senior members of the country's opposition movement to life in prison over charges of spying for neighboring Qatar, according to a statement from the public prosecutor.

The verdict against Sheikh Ali Salman, who headed the now-outlawed al-Wefaq movement, as well as Sheikh Hassan Sultan and Ali al-Aswad came on Sunday, months after their acquittal by the high criminal court in June. The trio was sentenced for "acts of hostility" against Bahrain and "communicating with Qatari officials... to overthrow constitutional order", the public prosecutor's statement said. The latest ruling can be appealed.

Salman is currently serving a four-year sentence in a separate case – "inciting hatred" in the tiny Persian Gulf state, which has seen protests since 2011.

In November, Salman and two other members of al-Wefaq were charged with working for Qatari intelligence with the aim of overthrowing the Bahraini government.

Rights groups, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch (HRW), have declared Salman and other jailed opposition leaders prisoners of conscience.

Sima Watling, Amnesty International's campaigner on Bahrain, told Al Jazeera from Beirut that the verdict was "absurd".

She said that Salman had phone conversations with the foreign minister of Qatar in



2011, urging Doha to mediate in Bahrain's political crisis, and the interaction was used six years later as a proof for spying charges.

"The new charges are absurd," Watling said. "It appears to be linked to the Qatar crisis and the Bahraini authorities are going forward with their crush on dissent. Any op-

position or opposing voice is being crushed."

Bahrain, along with the House of Saud regime and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), severed all ties with Qatar in 2017, banning their citizens from travel to or communication with the fellow Persian Gulf Cooperation Council member.

Sunday's verdict comes days ahead of Bahrain's November 24 parliamentary elections. Members of dissolved opposition parties, including al-Wefaq and the secular al-Waad group, are banned from running.

The tiny Persian Gulf state has been hit by waves of unrest since 2011 when security forces crushed protests demanding a constitutional monarchy and an elected prime minister. Opposition movements have been outlawed and hundreds of dissidents have been imprisoned - with many stripped of their nationality. Bahrain last year ratified a constitutional amendment granting military courts the authority to try civilians charged with "terrorism", a term that is loosely defined by the Bahraini penal code.

In June, the kingdom amended its law on political rights, prohibiting "leaders and members of political associations dissolved for violating the kingdom's constitution or its laws" from running in legislative elections.

Bahrain, a key ally of the United States and home to the U.S. Fifth Fleet, accuses regional power house Iran of provoking unrest in the kingdom. Iran categorically denies the allegations.

The United Nations and rights groups including Amnesty and HRW have criticized the Bahraini monarchy over its treatment of protesters.

(Source: agencies)

## Qatar cabinet reshuffle hands key ministries to top CEOs



Qatar appointed the heads of its biggest bank and state-run oil firm to two key ministerial posts in a cabinet reshuffle on Sunday.

The reshuffle ordered by Qatar's Emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, was the first government reshuffle in Qatar, the world's top liquefied natural gas producer, since early 2016.

The country's ruler also issued decrees restructuring the boards of both the state-run Qatar Petroleum (QP) and Qatar Investment Authority (QIA), the world's ninth largest sovereign wealth fund with about \$300bn in assets.

Qatar National Bank (QNB) CEO (chief executive officer), Ali Ahmed al-Kuwari was appointed to a new portfolio that combined commerce and industry under one ministry in the reshuffle, which also included changes to the justice, labor and social affairs ministries.

It was not clear whether Kuwari would retain his post at QNB, the Middle East's largest lender by assets, which is 50 percent owned by the country's sovereign wealth fund, Qatar Investment Authority (QIA).

Another chief executive, Saad al-Kaabi of QP, joined the cabinet as Minister of State for Energy Affairs, according to the royal court's decree.

Al-Kaabi, a United States-educated engineer, rose through the ranks to become chief executive of QP in 2014 and is also a member of the board of the QIA.

Among the executives of the world's energy giants like Exxon, Shell and Total, he has the reputation of a reliable counterpart in energy projects that have made the tiny nation of 2.6 million people the world's biggest exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG).

Qatar has been facing a diplomatic and economic boycott by the House of Saud regime, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt since June 2017.

The four countries accuse Qatar of backing terrorism and co-zying up to regional power house Iran, charges that Doha denies and instead says the boycott aims to impinge on its sovereignty.

(Source: Reuters)

## Khashoggi's body parts transported in suitcases: report

The Turkish pro-government newspaper Sabah has reported that journalist Jamal Khashoggi's corpse was dismembered and put into five suitcases after he was strangled upon entering the House of Saud regime's consulate in Istanbul.

Citing unnamed officials, Sabah reported on Sunday that the suitcases were then taken to the Saudi regime's residence near the consulate the day the writer was killed on October 2.

The officials said that Maher Mutreb, Salah Tubeigy and Thaar al-Harbi were the three key figures from the 15-member hit squad who were involved in dismembering Khashoggi's body and removing it from the premises.

Mutreb was a direct aide to the Saudi regime Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, also known as MBS, while Tubeigy was the head of the Saudi Scientific Council of Forensics and a colonel in the Saudi regime army.

Al-Harbi was reportedly promoted to lieutenant in the Saudi royal guard last year for bravery in the defense of the crown prince's palace in Jeddah.

The leak of the details coincides with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's statement in which he said he believed the order to kill the journalist came from the "highest levels" of the Saudi state.

In an opinion piece published by the United States newspaper The Washington Post on Friday, Erdogan called on the House of Saud regime to answer outstanding questions concerning the 59-year-old's killing last month.

"We must reveal the identities of the puppet masters behind Khashoggi's killing," Erdogan said.

The body of Khashoggi, a former Washington Post columnist and critic of MBS, remains missing.

On Wednesday, a Turkish prosecutor said Khashoggi was strangled and dismembered soon after entering the building, in the first official comments from the Turks on the fate of the writer. Turkish media outlets have named the 15 Saudi suspects who flew into Istanbul and left on the same day the journalist was last seen.

The joint Turkish and Saudi probe into Khashoggi's fate



has made little progress so far.

On Friday, an adviser to Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said the team that killed Khashoggi cut up his body in order to dissolve for easier disposal.

Yasin Aktay, who was a friend of Khashoggi's, told Hurriyet newspaper that the corpse was disposed of by dismembering and dissolving it. "According to the latest information we have, the reason they dismembered his body is to dissolve it easier," said Aktay. "They aimed to ensure no sign of the body was left."

A senior Turkish official has told Al Jazeera the journalist's body was dismembered and dissolved in acid, without offering evidence. The House of Saud regime initially denied Khashoggi was killed inside its consulate but, following intense international pressure and after changing their narrative numerous times, the Saudi regime prosecutor admitted that Khashoggi was killed in a "premeditated" manner.

The Saudi regime prosecutor flew to Turkey last week and met Istanbul's chief prosecutor but the investigation has made little progress so far as Saudi Arabia and Turkey remain at loggerheads.

Turkey's justice minister accused the Saudis of failing

to answer questions regarding the case.

Two questions that Turkey wants Riyadh to answer relate to the identity of a "local collaborator" to whom Saudi regime officials claimed to have handed over Khashoggi's remains, as well as the identity of the person who ordered the killing.

On Wednesday, a senior Turkish official said that Saudi Arabian officials appeared unwilling to "genuinely cooperate" with Turkey's investigation.

"The Saudi officials seemed primarily interested in finding out what evidence the Turkish authorities had against the perpetrators," the official told AFP news agency on the condition of anonymity. "We did not get the impression that they were keen on genuinely cooperating with the investigation."

The Saudis have also launched their own investigation, vowing to "uncover every stone" and "punish" those who are responsible. A spokesperson for President Erdogan's Justice and Development Party (AKP/Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi) said on Wednesday Khashoggi's killing could not have been made possible without orders from someone in a senior position.

Omar Celik told reporters in Ankara that Turkey would not let anyone cover up Khashoggi's killing, adding that it was not possible for the Saudi regime officials to still not know the body's whereabouts.

The Turkish president stressed in the Washington Post op-ed on Friday that Turkey would keep investigating Khashoggi's case.

"We are shocked and saddened by the efforts of certain Saudi officials to cover up Khashoggi's premeditated murder, rather than serve the cause of justice, as our friendship would require," Erdogan said.

Erdogan added that Khashoggi's murder was a clear violation and a "blatant abuse" of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations.

"Failure to punish the perpetrators could set a very dangerous precedent," Erdogan said.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

## French far-right overtakes Macron in EU parliament election poll

France's far-right Rassemblement National (RN) party jumped ahead of President Emmanuel Macron's LREM for the first time in a poll of voting intentions for May 2019 European Parliament elections.

An Ifop poll published on Sunday showed the centrist Republic on the Move (LREM) with 19 percent of voting intentions compared to 20 percent at the end of August, while far-right leader Marine Le Pen's RN -- formerly the National Front -- rose to 21 percent from 17 percent previously.

Together with the seven percent score of sovereignist Nicolas Dupont-Aignan and one percent each for "Frexit" parties led by former Le Pen associate Florian Philippot and Francois Asselineau, far-right parties won a combined 30 percent of voting intentions, up from 25 percent end August.

The poll asked nearly 1,000 French people on Oct 30-31 who they would vote for if the European Parliament elections were to be held the next Sunday.

The conservative Les Republicains party led by Laurent Wauquiez slipped two percentage



points to 13 percent, while the far-left France Insoumise led by Jean-Luc Melenchon fell from 14 to 11 percent.

Melenchon was widely criticized and mocked after yelling at police officers during a raid of his party offices as part of an anti-corruption inquiry.

In an Odoxa-Dentsu poll released mid-Sep-

tember, Macron and Le Pen's parties were neck-and-neck at around 21 percent, while the conservative Les Republicains came third with 14 percent and Melenchon's France Insoumise fourth with 12.5 percent.

In an Ifop poll in May, the LREM was seen winning 27 percent of the EU parliament vote, well ahead of the far right's 17 percent and more

than Macron's 24 percent in the first round of France's April 2017 presidential elections. The European elections are shaping up to be a major battle between centrist, pro-EU parties like Macron's LREM and far-right formations that want to stop immigration and globalisation.

The European Parliament elections determine who leads the major EU institutions, including the European Commission, the bloc's civil service, and are also important as a bellwether of sentiment among the EU's 500 million people.

In a YouGov poll published last week, Macron's popularity fell to its lowest level since his 2017 election, with only 21 percent of those polled saying they were satisfied with him.

Macron's reputation has been hit by the brusque departure of two high-profile ministers and a summer scandal over his bodyguard, while stubbornly high unemployment, high taxes and rising fuel prices add to a general feeling of discontent.

(Source: Reuters)

## Egypt security forces kill 19 suspects linked to Coptic attack

Egyptian security forces have killed 19 people linked to a deadly attack on Coptic Christians, according to the interior ministry.

The suspects were killed in a gunfight in the desert of Minya province in central Egypt after security forces pursued them, the ministry said in a statement on Sunday.

"The terrorist elements opened fire on the (security) forces who responded," the statement said.

Those killed were part of the group that killed seven Coptic Christian pilgrims in the same province on Friday, the ministry said. The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) Takfiri terrorist group claimed responsibility for the attack, although it provided no evidence of its involvement.

Friday's attack was the latest in a string of assaults against

the minority Coptic community.

Armed men opened fire on buses carrying pilgrims to the Monastery of St. Samuel in Minya province, killing seven people and leaving 18 wounded.

On Saturday, hundreds gathered at the Prince Tadros church in Minya, a city some 260km south of the capital, Cairo, to bury six members of the same family who were shot dead in the attack. Among them were a 15-year-old boy and a 12-year-old girl.

The seventh victim, an Anglican bus driver, was buried on Friday evening in a village outside Minya.

On Sunday, Pope Francis said he was pained over the attack on the pilgrims.

"I express my pain after the terrorist attack which two

days ago hit the Coptic Orthodox church in Egypt," Francis said in Saint Peter's.

The Copts are an Orthodox denomination who make up an estimated 10 to 15 percent of Egypt's more than 90 million people, although there is no formal religious census to determine an exact number.

They are the Middle East's largest Christian community and have long complained of persecution and insufficient protection.

In December 2017, a gunman killed 11 people at a church and a Christian-owned shop near Cairo.

More than 100 Copts have been killed in such attacks since 2011, according to The Associated Press news agency.

(Source: agencies)

## Jordan's King Abdullah II accepts resignations over deadly floods

Jordan's King Abdullah II has accepted the resignations of two ministers in the aftermath of the deadly floods that struck the country's Dead Sea region last month.

In a decree, the king accepted the resignations of Tourism Minister Lena Annab and Education Minister Azmi Mahafzeh, according to a statement issued by the Jordanian Royal Court on Sunday. On Thursday, Annab announced that she would leave her post via Twitter.

"In light of the current political and general climate, and the painful time our beloved country is going through, I have handed in my resignation today as Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, and I will be leaving it to the Prime Minister to do what he deems fit. May God bless Jordan and its great people under the honorable Hashemite leadership," the minister said.

In another decree, the Jordanian monarch appointed Justice Minister Bassam Samir Talhouni as acting education minister and Minister of State Majd Shwekeh as acting tourism minister.

The resignation of the two ministers came as a result of popular and parliamentary pressure on the government after the floods disaster, which killed at least 21 people and injured dozens.

Most of those killed were students and teachers whose bus was swept away by the floodwaters during a school trip.

Late last month, the Jordanian government admitted responsibility for failure to deal with the flash floods.

(Source: agencies)

## Saudi Prince Khaled bin Talal freed from detention

Saudi Prince Khaled bin Talal, a nephew of King Salman, has been released after almost a year in detention, according to his relatives. Princess Reem bint Alwaleed, Prince Khaled's niece, and two other relatives shared photos on Twitter on Friday showing the prince embracing his son, who has been in a coma for several years, and other family members.

"Thank god for your safety," the princess wrote on Twitter.

The House of Saud regime has not offered an official explanation for Prince Khaled's arrest nor the conditions of his release.

Prince Khaled's brother, Prince Alwaleed bin Talal, was among more than 200 princes and other senior figures detained at Riyadh's Ritz-Carlton hotel over corruption allegations in November last year. Prince Khaled's release comes as the Saudi regime faces international pressure over the killing of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi inside its consulate in Istanbul on October 2.

According to the Wall Street Journal, Prince Khaled, Prince Alwaleed's brother, was detained for 11 months for criticizing the November crackdown. Prince Alwaleed was released in early January after an undisclosed financial agreement with the government. It appeared similar to deals that authorities struck with most other detainees in exchange for their freedom.

The government critics said the crackdown was an attempt by the crown prince to sideline his potential rivals and consolidate power.

(Source: agencies)



STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	182918.6
IFX	1984.61

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	48,494 rials
GBP	55,053 rials
AED	11,430 rials

Source: iribnews.ir

COMMODITIES

WTI	\$63.14/b
Brent	\$72.83b
OPEC Basket	\$72.64/b
Gold	\$1,233.90/oz
Silver	\$14.78/oz
Platinum	\$874.05/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

NEWS IN BRIEF



Joblessness at 12.2% in summer

ECONOMY

**TEHRAN** — According to the latest report of the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI), un-employment rate in summer which corresponds to the second quarter of current Iranian calendar year (June 22-September 21, 2018) stood at 12.2 percent, increasing 0.7 percent in comparison with the same period in the preceding year.

The center put the number of the unemployed people at 3.326 million in summer, ILNA reported on Sunday.

As SCI announced earlier, unemployment rate in spring (March 21-June 21, 2018) stood at 12.1 percent, increasing 0.5 percent in comparison with the spring of last year.



‘Sanctions to have no impact on sea transportation’

ECONOMY

**TEHRAN** — Iran’s Ports and Maritime Or-ganization (PMO) Head Mohammad Rastad announced that the unilateral and cruel sanctions posed by the U.S. against Iran will have no impact on the country’s sea transportation, IRIB quoted him as saying on Sunday.

Making the remarks during a conference on passive de-fense, the official explained that PMO would improve various scenarios to tackle the sanctions and meet domestic demands.

White House has restored all the sanctions against Iran, which were lifted under the 2015 nuclear deal.



Annual electricity exports anticipated to reach \$33b by 2025

ENERGY

**TEHRAN** — Iran’s value of annual electricity exports is expected to reach \$33 billion by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 2025-March 2026), deputy finance minister for planning and economic affairs announced.

Mohsen Bakhtiar said reaching this figure requires the gov-ernment to applying all available potentials and approving new laws, IRIB reported on Sunday.

On October 24, Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian announced that the country’s daily electricity exports to the neighboring countries has reached 2,000 megawatts (MW).

The country’s exports of electricity to its neighbors increased by 25 percent in the first six months of the current Iranian cal-endar year (March 21-September 22) compared to the same period last year.

According to Hooshang Falahatian, the deputy energy minister, Iran exported 5.162 million kilowatt hours (mkwh) of electric-ity during the first half of the current year compared to the last year’s 4.146 mkwh.

“Iran exchanges electricity with its neighbors namely Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Iraq, as well as the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic among which Turkey, Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan are only importers of Iran’s electricity,” Falahatian said on October 16.

Taiwan hopes for Iran oil sanction waiver

Taiwan was waiting to see whether it was one of the ‘eight juris-dictions’ expected to receive waivers to continue buy oil from Iran despite sanctions from the United States.

Donald Trump is scheduled to reimpose measures against Iran’s energy, shipping, shipbuilding and financial sectors on November 5, but eight countries were expected to be left out, reports said Saturday.

No names had been mentioned, but Japan, South Korea, India and maybe China were expected to be included.

Taiwan’s state oil company, CPC Corporation, Taiwan, said it had not received any information about the island country’s fate, but a waiver would be positive, especially since it would help with the diversification of oil sources. Taiwan needs to import virtually all of its gas and oil from overseas.

(Source: taiwannews.com.tw)

Iran, Poland take strides towards better economic co-op

By Ebrahim Fallahi

**TEHRAN** — As two countries with huge potential for economic growth, Iran and Poland are taking new measures for developing non-oil economic cooperation with small and medium enterprises (SMEs) on focus.

As part of the efforts regarding the mentioned economic goals, the two sides are focusing on aspects like facilitation of collaboration between the two countries’ companies and traders and also exchanging trade delegations in order for their businessmen to get familiar with the potentials of the target markets.

In doing so, recently a high-ranking trade delegation comprising businessmen, officials and representatives from the Polish Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology have visited Tehran in association with Polish Investment & Trade Agency, Foreign Trade Office in Tehran to both attend the 14th International Exhibition for Mines, Construction Machinery and Related Industry and Equipment (Iran ConMin 2018) and also assess Iran’s market for further potential cooperation.

Attended by officials and journalists from different agencies, a press conference was held on November 3 in Tehran in order to introduce the country’s capabilities and potentials for future cooperation with Iran.

What comes below is a summary of the information shared at the above mentioned events.

■ **The Polish industry & foreign trade**

Poland is the eighth largest economy in the European Union and the largest among the former Eastern Bloc members of the European Union. The largest component of its economy is the service sector (62.3 percent) followed by industry (34.2 percent) and agriculture (3.5 percent).

Experiencing a steady economic growth for the past 26 years, the country is significantly focusing on development of foreign trade in various fields including the industry sector in

order for the expansion of economic growth both in EU and other regions including the Middle East.

One of the Polish government’s main steps for achieving this goal has been the establishment of Investment and Trade Agency offices in the countries which are going to be the target markets for future cooperation - which includes Agency’s Foreign Trade Office in Tehran.

The Polish Investment and Trade Agency (Polish: Polska Agencja Inwestycji i Handlu, abbreviated to PAIH) is a Polish government agency which promotes Poland’s trade sector, along with investment opportunities.

Aside from the promotion of Poland for economic investment, PAIH also assists investors to overcome the administrative and legal hurdles of investing in Poland or in destination markets. The agency conducts investor surveys to determine the outlook of the investment climate in Poland and over 52 target markets among which Iran stands as one with great potential.

■ **Iran and Poland trade**

Despite the quite unsatisfactory levels of trade, Iran and Poland have a long history in economic cooperation.

The trade turnover between the two countries has increased from \$80 million in 2015 to about \$230 million in 2017 of which the share of Iranian exports to Poland was about \$90 and the Polish exports to Iran stood at about \$140 million.

Crude oil and oil products, petrochemicals as well as food products have been among the top Iranian commodities being exported to the European country while agricultural machinery, food products, medical equipment and instruments, glass and home appliances are some of the main imported products from Poland in 2018.

According to Szumon Klus, the representative of the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology of Poland, the trade turnover between the two countries



Iran Air in negotiations with non-European airplane manufacturers

By Mahnaz Abdi

**TEHRAN** — Iran Air, Iran’s national flag carrier, has started negotiations with the non-European manufacturers of air-planes in line with renovation of its fleet, Farzaneh Sharafbafi, the managing director of the airline, announced on Sunday.

“We will negotiate with any manufacturer which can supply airplanes for us without requiring permits from the U.S. Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC)”, she noted.

OFAC has cancelled licenses for Boeing and Airbus to sell airplanes to Iran after Trump pulled the United States out of the 2015 Iran nuclear agreement in May and reimposed sanctions on the country.

“We welcome any company which is able to provide the airplanes needed by Iran Air. We have even gone after planes such as Russia’s Sukhoi Superjet 100 or planes made by non-European manufacturers”, Sharafbafi stated referring to his company’s plan for renovating its fleet.

Facing lack of modern aircrafts due to decades-long sanc-tions imposed by the West, Iran took the post-sanction op-portunity to make deals with some European manufacturers for the purchase of new airplanes to renew its aging fleet.

On January 28, 2016, Iran Air signed a deal with the

French giant plane maker Airbus for the purchase of 118 Airbus jets worth \$27 billion and it also inked a deal with Boeing on December 11, 2016 to buy 80 aircrafts valued at \$16.6 billion. It was Iran’s biggest deal with an American company since the 1979 revolution and the U.S. embassy takeover.

And in April 2017, Iran Air signed a contract to buy 20 planes from Franco-Italian turboprop maker ATR.

Although, just a few number of the ordered planes (three Airbus and 13 ATRs) were delivered before Donald Trump pulled the U.S. out of the nuclear deal and imposed new sanctions on Iran which makes new deliveries out of the question.

Now under the new U.S. sanctions, international plane manufacturers that use at least 10 percent U.S. made parts in their products have decided to avoid the Iranian market.

Most modern commercial planes have more than 10 percent in U.S. parts, the threshold for needing U.S. Treas-ury approval. But Russian officials have been reported as saying Sukhoi is working on reducing the number of U.S. parts in the hopes of winning an Iranian order for up to 100 aircraft. Reuters reported on Saturday.

on April 25, two Iranian airliners, Iran Airtour and Ase-man Airlines, signed memorandums of understandings with



Sukhoi on the purchase of 40 aircrafts from the Russian company.

Based on the MOUs signed on the sidelines of the Eurasia Airshow in Turkey, each airliner will receive 20 Sukhoi Su-perjet-100 (SSJ-100) passenger planes, Tass quoted Sukhoi Civil Aircraft President Aleksandr Rubtsov as saying.

Rubtsov said that the contracts will be signed by the end of 2018. The catalog price for a SSJ100R aircraft is about \$52 million.

Europe focuses on growth, Fed to follow mid-terms

New economic forecasts from the European Commission and services PMIs will help clarify the outlook for the euro zone economy after third-quarter growth disappointed, while mid-term elections and a Federal Reserve meeting top the U.S. agenda.

The European Union’s executive will publish its quarterly economic forecasts on Thursday for the 28 EU member countries - including Britain, which is due to leave the bloc in March - and for the euro zone as a whole.

Its projections come after Oct. 30 data showed the euro zone economy grew only half as much expected in the third quarter. The preliminary flash estimate of 0.2 percent was also half the 0.4 percent seen in Q2 and was the slowest pace of growth in more than four years.

The Commission’s economic sentiment in-dex for the euro zone meanwhile dropped in October for the 10th consecutive month, and a weak flash Purchasing Managers’ Index (PMI) survey suggested there will be little pick up in the final three months of 2018.

“If you look at the state of the euro zone economy, it is slowing. Last year growth was above trend and now there are lots of concerns about trade,” said Brian Giuliano, vice president of portfolio management for fixed income at Brandywine Global in Philadelphia.

In its last forecasts in July, the Commission said it expected the 19-country euro zone to grow by 2.1 percent this year, slower than the 2.4 percent recorded in 2017, and by 2.0 percent in 2019. tmsnrt.rs/2JRXh7h

The Commission predicted then that Italy, whose government is now engaged in a war of words with Brussels over a 2019 budget draft that breaks EU rules, would record the lowest growth rate in Europe, matched only by Britain.

With Brexit less than six months away, Britain will release its own third-quarter growth esti-mate on Friday, with a 0.4 percent expansion the consensus in a Reuters poll.

Services PMIs for Britain and other major economies early in the week will give further clues to the growth outlook. Similar surveys

in recent days have revealed slowing factory activity around the world.

In the United States, the main event is Nov. 6’s mid-term elections, in which polls suggest the Democratic Party will win control of the House of Representatives after two years of wielding no practical political power in Washington.

President Donald Trump’s Republicans are likely to keep the Senate, but a hung Congress could hamper his ability to push through his tax and spending plans.

“The loss of Congressional control would make life increasingly difficult for President Trump and have major implications for policy,” ING economists said in a note.

If a deadlocked Congress makes it impos-ible for him to pass legislation, “Trump will likely focus on areas where executive powers give him more leeway to set the agenda, such as trade policy”, they added. “With China ramping up its fiscal stimulus, this hints that both sides will be ‘digging in’, with little prospect of any meaningful easing of tensions.”

The outcome of the trade dispute with China is the main uncertainty hanging over the U.S. economy. The two countries have imposed tariffs on hundreds of billions of dollars of each other’s goods and Trump has threatened to put tariffs on the remainder of China’s \$500 billion-plus exports to the United States if their disagree-ments cannot be resolved.

“Here the outcome of the U.S. midterm elec-tions two days ahead of the Fed announcement may also be scrutinised for implications for trade talks and any consequences of the outcome of the vote for the U.S. fiscal backdrop,” Investec economist Victoria Clarke wrote in a research note.

“From a markets perspective, the Fed will also be eyeing the wave of volatility that has set in and what this means, if anything, for Fed tightening plans going forward.”

Indications that trade tensions may be easing pushed riskier assets sharply higher in financial markets on Friday.

(Source: Reuters)



# Oil rally faces tidal wave of supply

The oil market's two-year bull run is running into one of its biggest tests in months, facing a tidal wave of supply and growing worries about economic weakness sapping demand worldwide.

After topping out at more than \$75 and \$85 a barrel just a month ago, both U.S. crude and Brent benchmark futures have grappled with near-relentless selling. For a time, prices had some support on hopes that renewed U.S. sanctions on Iran would force barrels off the market.

That changed in the last week. The world's three largest producers - Russia, Saudi Arabia and the United States - all indicated they were pumping at record or near-record levels, while the United States said it would allow waivers that could allow buyers to keep importing Iranian oil, lessening the threat of a supply crunch.

Those factors, along with a spate of recent weak economic reports out of China and other emerging markets, have shifted the conversation back toward worries about oversupply, and pushed U.S. futures to lows not seen since April, interrupting an upward move that had consistently found support during the rally's modest pullbacks.

The structure of the U.S. crude futures curve had for several months indicated expectations for tighter supply, but future-dated contracts now suggest investors think markets could be awash in oil over the coming



months.

"The magnitude of recent selling is strongly suggesting that global oil demand is weaker than expected as a result of tariff issues, especially between the U.S. and China," said Jim Ritterbusch, president of Ritterbusch & Associates.

There has been an exodus among speculators as well. In the last two weeks, net bullish bets on oil have declined to the lowest level in over a year. Selling notably accelerated on Thursday after U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures

fell below \$65 a barrel, a level that had stood firm in previous selloffs during the summer and fall.

The oil market ran higher in anticipation of this week's formal re-imposition of sanctions against Iran by the United States, and on concerns that supply from producers like Saudi Arabia would not be able to make up the difference.

However, the U.S. government said on Friday it will temporarily allow several countries including South Korea and Turkey to keep importing Iranian oil when U.S.

sanctions come back into force on Monday, sparing them for now from the threat of U.S. economic penalties.

Still, some analysts believe the current selloff has come too far, too quickly. Major OPEC producers won't be able to add more supply should it become necessary, particularly with production in Iran, Venezuela and Libya still at risk.

"A loss of 1 million bpd from Iran, further declines in Venezuela, coupled together with geopolitical disruption in Libya and Nigeria could easily wipe out what little spare capacity we have left," Bernstein analysts said this week.

Output from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, led by Saudi Arabia, rose to levels not seen in two years. U.S. production hit a record 11.3 million barrels a day in August, and Russia's output rose to 11.4 million bpd, a post-Soviet era peak.

For U.S. crude, the key area to watch is between \$64.45 and \$64.80, where prices had found support in the past, said Fawad Razaqzada, analyst at futures brokerage Forex.com. If oil dips below this point, "the path of least resistance would be to the downside," he said.

For Brent, Razaqzada is watching the range between \$69.50 and \$69.60 a barrel, and if it were to slip below that, we could see a much larger correction, he said.

(Source: Reuters)

## Oil majors churn out cash and (mostly) hand it back to investors

Oil companies saw soaring profits during the third quarter as they emerge worst-in-a-generation crude slump. The main takeaway is that while results are mostly above or in line with expectations, it's getting harder to impress investors, even with large buybacks.

Here are five key themes from third quarter earnings season:

### 1. It's all about the cash

There may be no number more important to Big Oil bosses right now than cash flow. Royal Dutch Shell Plc in particular has made it a priority to turn itself into a well-oiled cash machine. It's focused on getting the highest-margin barrels out of the ground, and churning money out of its liquefied natural gas trading business.

In the third quarter, the Anglo-Dutch oil major brought in its biggest cash haul in a decade, excluding working capital movements. That obliterated analyst estimates

for what the company could produce. "We like the direction of travel," said Alasdair McKinnon, lead fund manager at Shell investor Scottish Investment Trust.

### 2. Show me the money

The big question from shareholders: are companies going to use all that money to pay us? The answer is yes. Most companies accelerated or continued share repurchase programs, signaling confidence the dark days of the crude slump are gone. There were contrasts, though -- Shell is going faster than anyone, while Exxon Mobil Corp. has yet to discuss resuming buybacks.

### 3. Saving for a rainy day

While oil companies may be enjoying surging cash -- and handing some of it back to investors -- almost no one has any interest in boosting capital spending, at least for now. Every major company except for Exxon

pledged to keep capital expenditure at a near-decade low for the foreseeable future.

They see this as important to winning back the confidence of shareholders. The value of the companies eroded from 2014, after they found themselves locked into expensive mega-projects during a major crude price collapse.

### 4. Debt dilemma

The other big question from shareholders: what about debt? Having low debt means having more firepower and flexibility to do deals as well as ride out the next market downturn. Yet debt hasn't really declined that much from a year ago, reflecting the fact that these companies have only recently started generating enough cash to cover shareholder distributions and their capital budgets again.

### 5. Crisis of confidence

Even after all their hard work, investors

are still uncertain of the industry's commitment to financial discipline. Shares of oil companies in both Europe and the U.S. have lagged the gains in the crude price throughout 2018. Shell's monster cash numbers posted Thursday didn't prevent a sell-off. Investors were more enthusiastic about Exxon and Chevron -- both rose in New York after reporting earnings.

Even for Shell, most analysts think the discipline is real, and it will just take more quarters of consistently good delivery to see the stock price catch up.

"While quarterly volatility may be off-putting for some, even when to the upside, we think Q3 provides good evidence that Shell's financial framework can work," said Biraj Borkhataria, at RBC Capital Markets, in a note. "In our view the shares are materially undervalued at these levels."

(Source: Bloomberg)

## Could U.S.-funded deal help launch West Coast LNG export project in Mexico?

A West Coast LNG export facility south of California could get a boost if discussions underway result in partial U.S. government funding using new legal authorities.

The Department of Energy is working with the Mexican government and is in discussions with the Overseas Private Investment Corporation about the possibility of funding such a facility for exports of gas, and possibly coal, a top DOE official said Tuesday. The project would connect to U.S. gas supplies by pipeline.

The effort comes as the Trump administration has steadily promoted U.S. LNG exports as part of a broader energy, security

and trade policy. LNG exports are seen as a key source of demand growth for the U.S. natural gas sector.

Enactment in early October of the BUILD Act will allow a revamped version of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation to support projects with equity as well as debt and to double its total output. U.S. officials have described the law as helping spur private-sector development with the benefit of encouraging facilities to receive U.S. LNG.

"We're going to be putting together a list of potential projects that we would like to see OPIC consider," said DOE Deputy Secretary Dan Brouillette, in an interview with several

reporters. "The notion of allowing this new organization to take an equity position as well as a debt position I think fundamentally changes the types of projects that we might be able to encourage. Together [with OPIC] we're going to work on a list."

DOE did not specify which projects it is considering in Mexico.

One project in the Mexican state of Baja California is Energia Costa Azul, where Semptra Energy subsidiary IEnova has been exploring options for multi-phase development of an export terminal. The existing ECA LNG import terminal can receive up to 1 Bcf/d and the company has said the transformed

project could have an export capacity of up to 2 Bcf/d. IEnova, during its Q3 earnings call, said it has enough cash flow to finance reconfiguration of the terminal at a smaller scale. To develop the facility to its maximum capacity, IEnova has said it will need a partner.

Brouillette highlighted other efforts to support West Coast exports of U.S. LNG, such as encouraging the U.S. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to continue its review of pending projects. "We'd like to like to see them complete those and move forward one way or the other so that we can get a decision."

(Source: Platts)

## Why are Middle Eastern LNG imports soaring?

The Arab world is blessed with some of the most impressive hydrocarbon reserves in the world, but despite impressive domestic reserves, production has failed to keep pace with rising consumption. Because of this, the Middle East and North Africa region or MENA will become the world's second largest importer of LNG in the coming years according to the International Energy Agency, with consumption rising from 480 bcm in 2015 to 738 bcm in 2040.

Algeria was a pioneer in using LNG technology with the world's first liquefaction plant in 1964. The MENA has come a long way since the early days of the industry. Until 2015 almost 50 percent of the worldwide nominal LNG production came from the region. Resources, however, are unevenly distributed. While some countries possess significant reserves, such as Qatar, others rely on imports to meet demand.

Egypt went from the world's eighth largest exporter of LNG in 2009 to the world's eighth largest importer in 2016. However, Cairo's fortunes have changed again due to the discovery of a massive gas field off its coast in the Eastern Mediterranean. Others, such as the UAE, possess significant reserves, but rely on LNG to meet peak demand during the summer. Qatar, on the other hand, is slated to remain the largest LNG producer for the foreseeable future. Doha recently lifted its self-imposed moratorium on production regarding its North Dome gas field, the single largest field in the world.

### ■ Growing demand for LNG

MENA's growing energy demand is caused by natural reasons and changes in government policies. The population is slated to double until 2050. Logically, more people require more energy to power homes and factories. Lagging domestic production needs to be supplemented by LNG imports in order to keep the economy going.

Government policies have created incentives to increase natural gas consumption due to its advantages compared to other fossil fuels. The price of LNG fluctuates on basis of the same economic fundamentals of supply and demand as



with other products. Costs decreased significantly in 2013-2014 amid a sharp rise in upstream liquefaction capacity and weak demand in some parts of the world.

According to some analysts, a 'supply glut' was to persist until mid-2020. Beijing's coal-to-gas policy, however, mitigated some of the gloom thinking with an increase in demand by 25% in 2018. China is now the second largest natural gas importer in the world after Japan and is slated to claim the title of largest LNG importer in 2019.

LNG's appeal increased after prices dropped significantly in 2013-2014. In the MENA region, heavy fuel oils and diesel are important sources of energy for power production. Besides the heavy pollutant nature, financial arguments have strengthened the need for more LNG. It makes economic sense to switch to less pollutant fossil fuels when the price divergence compared to other sources of energy is significant enough.

Furthermore, the usage of LNG for the purpose of power production offers another financial advantage to the oil-rich MENA countries. Using LNG to substitute domestically sourced fuels means that more oil is available for buyers

on the international market. Buying cheap natural gas and selling more expensive oil creates a financial advantage.

Lastly, MENA's wealth in abundant sunshine offers another financial benefit. The region suffers from extremely high temperatures during the summer and more mild weather in the winter meaning energy consumption peaks in the warmer months. Globally, LNG demand is at its highest when winter hits the densely populated northern hemisphere including Europe, China, and North America. Therefore, the MENA region is able to take advantage of a relative drop in prices when demand weakens globally during the summer.

### ■ Confrontation and changing policies

While the region is awash with natural gas resources, LNG has become a staple fuel. The relatively small distances between resource rich and resource poor nations are ideal for pipelines. Transportation of natural gas using LNG technology becomes economically favorable when the distance is more than 1900 miles or 3000 km. However, political disagreements and government policies have prevented the construction of infrastructure.

The blockade of Qatar by Saudi-Arabia and the UAE is a major impediment of getting energy from the richest Arab country in terms of natural gas resources to its neighbors. Egypt, on the other hand, has chosen to focus on the international LNG market instead of tying itself to a single or limited number of customers regarding pipelines.

Despite impressive growth, LNG imports to the MENA region could decrease on the medium-term. The wealthy Persian Gulf countries have plans to construct nuclear power plants. Besides higher energy demand, Iran's nuclear program has increased the need with Arab states to keep up. Also, the region is rich with sunshine which has put renewable energy on the agenda of most countries. Finally, the reinvigorated Egyptian LNG industry will change the situation for the most populous Arab country. The discovery of major gas fields has made LNG imports superfluous.

(Source: oilprice.com)

## Phase 2 development of Libya's Bahr Essalam gas field to finish by end 2018

Seven remaining wells are expected to be online at Libya's Bahr Essalam offshore gas field by the end of the year, the Libyan National Oil Corporation (NOC) said in a statement on Sunday.

The statement came after a meeting between NOC Chairman Mustafa Sanalla and Eni CEO Claudio Descalzi. The field is operated by Mellitah Oil and Gas, a joint venture between the NOC and Eni.

The first wells in phase two of the development of Bahr Essalam came online in July.

At a meeting in the Libyan capital, Tripoli, Sanalla and Descalzi discussed plans for seven remaining wells, which the statement said were "expected to complete by the end of 2018".

"The parties discussed opportunities to increase production, investment and exploration, and the importance of sustainability in all activities," the statement added.

"The compression capacity upgrade project at the Wafa plant was also reviewed, with the first gas expected to come on stream in the next few days; a successful joint project in challenging conditions in Libya's remote interior."

(Source: Reuters)

## Dubai's DEWA raises solar power purchase deal with Saudi Arabia's ACWA

Dubai's water and power utility DEWA said on Saturday it had agreed to increase the amount of electricity it would purchase from a solar park being built by a consortium led by Saudi Arabia's ACWA Power.

As a result of the increased purchases by DEWA, the park's capacity would increase to 950 megawatts (MW) from 700 MW, the Dubai government said in a statement.

"Following the amendment, the total investment for the ambitious project has reached 16 billion dirhams (\$4.4 billion)," it said. The project's cost before the capacity increase was estimated at \$3.9 billion.

The project would feature a 260-metre (850-foot) tower receiving focused sunlight, the world's tallest such tower, the Dubai government said.

The first stage of the project is due to be commissioned in late 2020. It is part of the Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum Solar Park, a vast complex which that aims to generate 1,000 MW by 2020 and 5,000 MW by 2030.

The government aims to use the solar park and other energy sources to increase the share of clean energy in Dubai's power output to 7 percent by 2020, 25 percent by 2030 and 75 percent by 2050.

(Source: Reuters)

## Oil, gas drilling in Canada set for a decline

Drilling for oil and gas in Canada will likely decline by 5 percent in 2019, the Petroleum Services Association of Canada has forecast, blaming pipeline capacity shortages and the resultant discount in Canadian heavy to the West Texas Intermediate benchmark for the outlook.

The PSAC said it expected oil and gas companies to drill 6,600 new wells next year, which would be down from 6,980 this year and the lowest number of new wells in three years. Yet over the year, drilling will increase, the PSAC forecast, as the volume of oil transported by rail, for lack of enough pipelines, continues to grow.

On the good news front, the discount at which Western Canadian Select trades to West Texas Intermediate is seen to narrow from the current over \$50 a barrel to about \$24.50 a barrel, with the average WTI price for 2019 projected at \$69 a barrel.

The National Energy Board of Canada recently released a report forecasting that oil and gas production will continue to increase while domestic consumption declines thanks to energy efficiency. Natural gas, along with hydropower and other renewable sources, will come to account for a bigger share of the country's energy mix while oil production grows for exports.

In the next 20 years, NEB expects crude oil production to grow by as much as 58 percent while natural gas production expands by 33 percent, both helped by improving extraction technology that will maintain the industry's competitiveness.

Not all believe, however, in this competitiveness. In fact, industry executives are quite disgruntled about the discount at which WCS is trading to WTI as well as by the high carbon taxes they are obliged to pay. The combination of factors has eaten into their bottom lines and will likely continue doing it as no new pipeline projects are coming on line any time soon and producers are forced to resort to costlier oil-by-rail options.

(Source: oilprice.com)

## Exxon Mobil quarterly profits beat Wall Street's expectations

Exxon Mobil reported quarterly profit and revenue that beat Wall Street's expectations, even as the oil major saw another drop in total oil and gas production.

The latest report reversed a series of earnings disappointments for Exxon. Prior to this quarter, profits fell short of Wall Street's expectations in four of the last five quarters. Shares of the Irving, Texas-based company are down about 2 percent this year.

Exxon's stock price initially popped 3 percent after the company released earnings, but shares later turned negative before bouncing to end Friday's trading session up 1.6 percent. Quarterly profits for the world's largest publicly traded oil and gas company surged 57 percent to \$6.24 billion. The earnings came in at \$1.46 per share, compared with \$1.23 forecast by analysts in a Refinitiv survey.

Revenue also beat expectations, coming in at \$76.61 billion, versus the Street's estimate for \$73.55 billion.

Exxon's global crude oil production roughly matched its output in the year ago period. However, the company's natural gas output slipped 6.1 percent from a year ago to 9 billion cubic feet per day.

Despite churning out fewer hydrocarbons, earnings in the upstream exploration and production segment more than doubled to \$4.23 billion from a year ago. Growing output from U.S. oil fields, higher crude prices and one-time tax impacts offset the slump in natural gas output.

(Source: CNBC)



## Trump owns the bloody crossroads of U.S. politics



By Fareed Zakaria  
political scientist



For those who believe that President Donald Trump is a clownish know-nothing who somehow tapped into the mood of the electorate or just got lucky in 2016, the last month has been instructive. Trump has demonstrated uncanny political instincts. When combined with his ruthless “amorality” a term used by one of his own senior officials in an anonymous New York Times op-ed he presents a formidable challenge to his opponents. Trump faces a familiar landscape. The party that holds the White House traditionally has low turnout and does badly in the midterm elections. But rather than accept this as inevitable, Trump has been aggressively trying to beat the odds. He’s turned what are usually disparate races in the House and Senate into a single national election, fought on an agenda that he has defined.

Item one on his agenda is immigration. The reason is obvious. The issue rouses his voters like no other. Trump campaigns relentlessly on it, making the false accusation that if the Democrats win, they will open up the borders and let everyone in.

He has used the current caravan of Central American migrants to highlight his case against the Democrats.

Since Republicans are also still highly motivated by fears of terrorism, Trump threw in the accusation that there are “Middle Easterners” in the caravan.

(First, there is no evidence for that claim, which Trump himself even admits; and second, if there were, it is an ugly slur to imply that any Middle Easterner is a terrorist.) As the media eagerly fact-checks his rhetoric, Trump seems well-aware that they are incidentally repeating his claims and reinforcing the suspicion and fear in the public’s mind.

The second way Trump has turned the midterms into a national vote is by raising the specter of impeachment. Nothing would anger his base more than the notion of an elitist conspiracy (of lawyers, journalists and judges) determined to undo the results of the 2016 election.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders declared that impeachment is “the only message [the Democrats] seem to have going into the midterms.”

Trump’s midterm strategy was foreshadowed by Steve Bannon several months ago, when he explained, in an interview with me on CNN, that the Republicans needed to turn the midterms into a referendum on Trump.

“Trump’s second presidential race will be on Nov. 6 of this year,” Bannon said.

“He’s on the ballot, and we’re going to have an up-or-down vote.”

How does one counter this campaign?

Many Democrats angrily maintain that they do not, in fact, favor open borders and impeachment, that their positions are more nuanced. But when you are explaining nuance in politics, you are losing. The Democratic Party has not found a way to go on the offensive and get Trump to explain that he has, in fact, a more complicated position on any given topic.

But there is a substantive problem in addition to one of style and tactics. The Democratic Party is insisting that recent election results are an unmistakable sign that it needs to change course and become far more populist on economics.

But the data clearly show that the American public is very comfortable with where the party is on issues like health care and inequality.

The challenge for the Democrats is on a set of cultural issues chiefly immigration but also things like respecting the flag where a key group of Americans thinks they are out of touch with the country.

An excellent study by the Democracy Fund found that people who had previously supported Barack Obama and then voted for Trump in 2016 (a crucial segment that Democrats could win back) agreed with the Democrats on almost all economic issues but disagreed with the party on immigration and other cultural matters.

Put simply, the study makes clear that the challenge for the Democratic Party politically is not whether it can move left economically but whether it can move right on culture.

I say this as someone who agrees with the Democrats on almost every one of these core cultural issues. But a large national party must demonstrate that it can accommodate some people who disagree with it on some issues.

Doing this without abandoning one’s principles is a challenge, but it is a challenge Democrats will have to embrace if they seek a durable governing majority.

Eventually the electorate will be more young and diverse, but in the meantime the Republican Party is utterly dominant in American politics because it owns the bloody crossroads where culture and politics meet.

(Source: The Daily Star)

# Top - level changes could be coming in the Saudi ruling family

By Abdel Bari Atwan

Many questions were raised about the prolonged stay in London of Prince Ahmad Bin-Abdelaziz, youngest of the seven Sudairi sons of Saudi Arabia’s founding monarch – especially after he told a group of protestors outside his residence that they should not blame the ruling family as a whole for the war in Yemen. Even bigger questions are now raised by his return to Riyadh and the fact that he was greeted by Crown Prince Muhammad Bin-Salman.

Speculation is rife about the ‘surprises’ that the Saudi royals may have in store.

Prince Ahmad left Saudi Arabia before the criminal murder of Jamal Khashoggi. But it is unlikely he would have returned, or been accorded such a warm welcome, were it not for that crime, and the current Saudi leadership’s admission that it was carried out by an 18-member ‘death squad’ whose members were sent to Istanbul for the purpose.

Muhammad Bin-Salman, who due to his father’s illness is the kingdom’s de facto ruler, has never shown the least tolerance towards his opponents or those who failed to support his elevation to the post of crown prince, be they members of the royal family or commoners. Some 1,500 of them remain behind bars, by his own admission, including princes. So it was striking that he should accord a respectful welcome home to the most prominent of those opponents. His uncle Ahmad never pledged allegiance to him, and refused to hang his portrait alongside those of his father and grandfather in the reception hall of his palace in Riyadh.

According to reliable Saudi sources in London, Ahmad – who is married to the sister of the Saudi ambassador to the UK, Prince Muhammad Bin-Nawwaf – had been planning on an extended stay in the British capital. His unexpected return four weeks after the murder of Khashoggi could not have happened without some arrangement having been made, in conjunction with U.S. and British authorities, for reordering the royal house in Riyadh via a bloodless coup.

It is hard to speculate about the formula that could transpire as a result of Prince Ahmad’s contacts with American and British officials in London and the meetings he will have in Riyadh. Key interlocutors there



**Unexpected return of Prince Ahmad Bin-Abdelaziz four weeks after the murder of Khashoggi could not have happened without some arrangement having been made, in conjunction with U.S. and British authorities, for reordering the royal house in Riyadh via a bloodless coup.**

include Prince Talal Bin-Abdelaziz, deputy chairman of the royal family’s allegiance council, and Prince Muqrin Bin-Abdelaziz, the former crown prince who was replaced by King Salman as soon as he assumed the throne, despite his predecessor King Abdallah’s insistence that he should remain next in line to the throne.

Changing the crown prince has ceased to be a difficult undertaking since King Salman assumed the throne in 2015. He replaced two crown princes within a matter of months – first his brother Muqrin, and then Muhammad Bin-Nayef, who he shunted aside in favor of his own son Muhammad. It is not unlikely that we may see another move of this kind in the weeks ahead, as numerous leaks and news reports suggest.

A number of questions need answering in this regard.

First, if there is an intention to give a top post to Prince Ahmad, what will it be: king, or crown prince? And if he becomes king, who will become his heir apparent?

Second, has he met with King Salman

since he returned or not? There are conflicting stories affirming and denying that such a meeting took place.

Third, what is the Trump Administration’s attitude to Prince Ahmad? Does it acquiesce to him becoming king or crown prince?

Fourth, what role is to be given to Prince Khaled Bin-Salman, the current Saudi ambassador in Washington?

Until recently, he had been tipped to take over from Adel al-Jubeir as foreign minister. Might he be named crown prince if, in a ‘pre-emptive strike’, the king abdicates and Muhammad Bin-Salman formally officially the throne?

It is perhaps significant, though not widely known, that throughout his time as a government official – whether as deputy interior minister under his brother Prince Nayef, or after he took over from him as minister – Prince Ahmad never visited the U.S. Nor, according to a Saudi friend who often visited him at his office in the interior ministry, did he receive any U.S. officials. Contacts with the U.S. were handled by Prince Muhammad

Bin-Nayef, who was in charge of security. The two men were at odds because the latter would often bypass him and deal directly with King Abdallah and the royal court on certain issues.

The Saudi royal family has always been secretive about its internal affairs, so everything that can be said about this sensitive matter must remain in the realm of speculation, hearsay and analysis. That secretiveness also means that its decisions are for the most part announced suddenly, with no prior stage-setting.

As for the U.S., and especially the Trump Administration, all it cares about in its strategic alliance with Saudi Arabia is for the arms deals to keep coming. We doubt any of the ruling family’s princes, whether in or out of power, dispute that.

The fallout from Khashoggi’s assassination is set to continue producing surprises and changes, including at the very top. We have only just begun to see them. More are sure to follow.

(Source: Yemen Press)

## Auf wiedersehen, and good riddance

By Philippe Legrain

Although German Chancellor Angela Merkel’s decision not to seek reelection in the next federal election has come as a surprise, it was long overdue. Merkel’s “steady hand on the tiller” has guided the German and European ship of state directly into the populists’ line of fire.

She has been dubbed the Queen of Europe and, since U.S. President Donald Trump’s election, the leader of the free world. As the European Union has lurched from crisis to crisis over the past decade, German Chancellor Angela Merkel’s steady hand has helped hold the bloc together. According to the conventional wisdom, when she hands over the chancellorship after Germany’s next federal election in 2021 – and perhaps much sooner if her grand coalition collapses – she will be sorely missed.

However, this will hardly be the case. Merkel’s 13 years in office have involved domestic drift and European decay. She has complacently coasted along, failing to address Germany’s mounting economic and security challenges, and allowing Europe’s many crises to fester. Her lethargic managerialism would be tolerable for a small country in quiet times; it is catastrophic for Europe’s dominant power in an era of upheaval.

Unlike many European countries, Germany has enjoyed solid economic growth over the past decade. But Merkel can scarcely take credit for that. Her four governments have enacted no significant growth-enhancing reforms. And in their obsession with running a budget surplus, they have failed to invest in the country’s crumbling infrastructure and education system. Merkel has done nothing to prepare Germany for the digital disruption that threatens to do to its manufacturing heartland – notably its car industry – what Apple’s iPhone did to Nokia. Germany will regret not fixing its roof while the sun was still shining.

The eurozone crisis greatly enhanced Germany’s financial clout within the currency union. That gave Merkel massive political power, which she could have put to good use. Instead she put Germany’s narrow near-term interests as a creditor first, leading her to make decisions that exacerbated the eurozone crisis, shifted its costs to others, and prevented any long-term resolution.

Merkel is ultimately responsible for the EU’s refusal to restructure Greece’s debts in 2010. She was behind the lending of European taxpayers’ money to stricken governments to bail out German banks. And her governments responded to financial panic by demanding extreme austerity and painful adjustments in debtor countries, even as Germany’s current-account surplus swelled. By eventually green-lighting European Central Bank President Mario Draghi’s pledge to do “whatever it takes” to hold the euro together, Merkel did just enough to save the single currency, while leaving in place all of the flaws of a dysfunctional, incomplete monetary union.

To be sure, with Trump demolishing the liberal international order and swivel-eyed nationalists running amok in Britain, Hungary, Poland, Italy, and elsewhere, Merkel deserves credit for offering a calm, reassuring voice of moderation. Her decision to welcome more than one million refugees was an uncharacteristically bold humanitarian



**Merkel has been dubbed the Queen of Europe and, since U.S. President Donald Trump’s election, the leader of the free world.**

gesture. And whereas British Prime Minister Theresa May has humiliated herself by kowtowing to Trump, Merkel has spoken up for liberal, internationalist values.

Still, Merkel’s tepid leadership has left Germany exceptionally vulnerable to today’s nationalist backlash. The country’s economic, political, and geopolitical security rest on precisely the three things that nationalists want to destroy: dynamic open markets for German exports; an integrated EU that anchors Germany’s position in Europe and the world; and the U.S. nuclear umbrella that ensures its defense.

Germany is not a trade cheat, as the Trump administration has claimed. And yet, under Merkel, it certainly has pursued a beggar-thy-neighbor mercantilist growth strategy that suppresses wages and boosts exports at all costs. Yes, protectionism is misguided; but mercantilism encourages it. German, European, and global interests would all be served if Germany were to do more to stimulate domestic demand.

Similarly, Merkel cannot be blamed for Brexit or for many of Italy’s travails, which are of its own making. And yet her eurozone policies are a big reason why Italy now has a populist government vowing to block future EU trade deals, inflaming the refugee crisis, and threatening another eurozone panic.

The eurozone will not be secure until Germany and Italy can both happily share a monetary union. This may ultimately prove to be impossible. But if there is a workable

arrangement, it will require significant reforms, as French President Emmanuel Macron proposed last year. Merkel’s spurning of Macron’s reform effort thus represents a tragic missed opportunity.

With respect to security, even as Merkel has acknowledged that Germany can no longer rely wholly on the U.S. for its defense, she has done little to bolster German or European military capabilities. German defense spending remains inadequate, giving Trump a pretext to undermine NATO. The country’s ramshackle military has tanks that don’t drive, submarines that don’t dive, and planes that don’t fly. And there has scarcely been any debate about the need for a nuclear deterrent, whether German or European.

Far from a tragedy, then, Merkel’s departure represents an opportunity for European reformers. Macron and his European allies are right to focus their campaign for the European Parliament election next May on the threat posed by far-right populism. But in his desire not to upset a powerful partner, Macron has so far failed to challenge Merkel’s flawed European leadership. With Merkel on the way out, he and other reformers have a fresh chance to campaign for a different Europe that works for everyone. If they don’t take advantage of her exit, the charlatans of the far right certainly will.

(Source: The Project Syndicate)



# Religion is as old as humanity: Bianchi

➔ ■ Some argue that if a theory of International Relations means a constitutive and critical theory, then bringing religion into International Relations is possible. But if a theory of International Relations is an explanatory and empirical theory, then injecting religion into International Relations is not possible and, in fact, there is no theory of theological positivism in International Relations. What is your opinion?

A: These limits on human authority are as important in today's world of nation-states as they were in previous eras dominated by tribes and cities or empires and confederations. The norms we now regard as international law and global ethics are the living legacy of religious traditions that are older than recorded history. Human rights, environmental preservation, social justice, peaceful development—all of the key forces propelling current global political movements and treaty agreements derive from and express the higher authority of sacred values.

■ Some scholars such as "Michael Allen Gillespie" in the book "The Theological Origins of Modernity" believe that modernity was not initially against religion, and in later years, as a result of social, cultural and political conditions, it led to secularism. Based on this conception, religion is not conflict with modernity, so can it be said that religion does not conflict with the International Relations theory stemming from modernity?

A: Threats to religious principles arise



not only from people who willfully violate them or dismiss them as superstition, but from pious pretenders who try to manipulate them for selfish purposes. Leaders who rely on religion are constantly tempted to overplay their hand. Those who claim to rule in the name of religion lose legitimacy when they use power to suppress their opponents, to

take advantage of the weak or to benefit the privileged. The political abuse of religion inspires a revival of popular determination to pursue the universal ideals of protecting all segments of society, including future generations. When a ruling elite or religious caste tries to monopolize religious authority, they destroy their own legitimacy and empower the

defenders of tolerance who want to restore freedom of debate over the proper meaning and practice of religion. Using religion to bolster human authority is self-defeating precisely because sacred values stem from a higher power that demands everyone's respect no matter how strong or wealthy they are. If rulers place themselves too far above other men and women, they risk acting like gods and inviting rebellion instead of obedience.

■ Some argue that current International Relations theory cannot explain some of the current phenomena of international relations and we need a religious theory of International Relations, especially with regard to religious issues. What is your opinion? In general, is theorizing about religion in International Relations feasible? If theorizing about religion in International Relations is possible, can a religious theory of International Relations explain all the unresolved issues and problems?

A: There is no correct religious perspective on world politics: all religions can claim a rightful role in shaping global ethics and international relations. Members of a particular faith or faction must avoid trying to impose their views on others. No Islamic, Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, Confucian, Jewish, African or aboriginal theory can be taken seriously in a pluralistic and interconnected global community. Everyone can try to articulate universal principles, but no one has the right to declare the conversation closed.

## New sanctions on Iran will not fulfill U.S. national interest: Nephew

➔ ■ U.S. exempt 8 countries temporary from importing of Iran's oil. Do you think these countries can replace another recourses instead of oil of Iran?

A: Sure, I think they must have, if they've been able to make the cuts. But, these initial cuts have required pretty high oil production out of OPEC and other countries. It is not clear to me at all -- and I am deeply skeptical that -- further reductions can be achieved without directly contributing to oil price increases or shortfalls.

■ The Head of the US Treasury Steven Mnuchin has announced that Washington wants the world-wide payment network to cut off its services to the entities that were affected by Iran sanctions and warned that otherwise SWIFT might be sanctioned as well. Can U.S. do it?

A: Yes, the United States could do it. But, I think the United States will avoid doing so for the simple reason that it gets much out of the existence of the SWIFT network and would not wish it to be undermined unduly.

■ If Iran cannot export oil and cannot work by SWIFT, what means JCPOA for it? I mean if U.S. can impose their will on these two key issues for Iran, is it rational for Iran stay in JCPOA? What is the EU and Russia and China in this regard?

A: I hope that Iran will stay within the JCPOA because I think adding to the sense of crisis in the Middle East is contrary to its long-term interests. I also think that Iran



would gain nothing economically from restarting its uranium centrifuge R&D program, adding thousands of new centrifuges to operations, and similar post-JCPOA steps.

I think that Iran will find it hard due to domestic politics, however, to manage the tensions that continued nuclear abstinence will bring.

The EU has been clear that it will try to salvage the JCPOA so long as Iran is operating within its strictures. If not, then they too may join the U.S. sanctions campaign. Russia and China will continue to resist the U.S. decision here, but do not have the sort of economic weight that -- at least in the near-term -- will satisfy Iran.

## Washington's long-held illusions will create more mess in Afghanistan

**TEHRAN (FNA)** — Despite 17 years of war and occupation, the United States and its allies have been unable to defeat the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Quite the opposite, the Taliban is getting stronger all the time, and now controls more of Afghanistan than at any time since the 2001 US invasion. That control is extending in all regions of the country, with them contesting substantial portions of vital provinces, or controlling them outright. According to the most recent SIGAR estimate, 12% of Kabul is now under direct Taliban control, with another 32% of the city considered at the very least contested!

In other words, the Taliban can now contest virtually any part of Afghanistan they choose, able to make a serious run at seizing almost any city, at least temporarily, and can carry out so many simultaneous offensives that the US military cannot react to them all. This was all predictable:

- The 17th commander in Afghanistan, Austin "Scott" Miller, like so many of the generals who preceded him, claims he sees evidence of "progress" in the Afghan war. But he refuses to "guarantee you a timeline or an end date." In a conflict with no end in sight, that is now the longest in American history, the US has not been able to score a hint of victory anywhere. That could be said as well of the rest of its so-called war on terror across the Middle East.

- War and occupation is the American bloodstream. The US didn't invade Afghanistan to promote freedom and democracy. Profits and power are the reasons why despite 17 years of failure the War Party insists on continuing its war and occupation. Many Afghan men, women and children have lost their lives, but who cares since business is booming? Add in, as well, the issue of political credibility. No president wants to appear weak, as pulling back from a war has been the definition of weakness. Donald Trump is not an exception. He has no intention to be known as the president who lost Afghanistan, Iraq or Syria.

- Washington's deeply embedded illusions and deceptions serve to generate and perpetuate its ill-begotten wars. In Syria, the US claims its occupying troops are freedom fighters for peace and prosperity, and have waged a brutal war to spread democracy and a better way of life. The trouble is, this particular war has only supported and spread terror groups like ISIL and Al-Qaeda. The same has happened in Afghanistan, where the presence of ISIL militants has only increased the widespread killing of innocents and massive displacement of the people across the war-torn country, while there has been an increasing body of evidence piled up by the regional states on the United States' outstanding role in transferring commanders and groups of ISIL from Syria to Afghanistan after the terrorist group lost the war in the Levant.

- Washington knows it has lost the war. That's why its command-



ers play so much with weapons and training and technology and tactics and surge. These are the things they can control. But they cannot control Afghanistan and its people. These people don't like occupiers and they won't do America's bidding. That is precisely why the US failed -- despite having a massive embassy, regional command centers, election advisors, private security guards, military trainers and advisors, diplomats and civilian enablers.

As it happens, the 2001 US-led invasion of Afghanistan, far from bringing freedom to that country, sowed chaos. The invaders inadvertently lit the fire that burned down a national order. Now there is no easy American solution when it comes to Afghanistan, and unfortunately, few in Washington are willing to accept such realities. Their unwarranted optimism about the efficacy of US power will only fuel more chaos next year.

Tragic enough, Washington's officialdom regularly and repeatedly draws erroneous lessons from the recent past surges and ignores a hard truth staring them in the face: US military action in Afghanistan -- and in the Middle East - has solved nothing at all. The isolationists are unwilling to accept this. They struggle to admit failure and withdraw, staying busy with claims about being "successful" and overestimating the efficacy of American power.

A policy as such will only contribute to and create more of today's mess in Afghanistan. It is long past time for Washington's officialdom to reassess their militarized version of foreign policy, challenge their long-held assumptions and patriotic fables, withdraw their troops, and allow the people of Afghanistan to shape their country to their desires.

## Clinton and the dream of Presidency!



➔ ■ It should be noted that Joe Biden (former vice president of the United States), Bernie Sanders and John Kerry are now considered as the prominent Democrat figures who are likely to become the Party's nominee in the 2020 presidential elections. However, Democrats now have their main focus on the United States midterm elections, and regarding the raising dissatisfaction of Trump's government, their success is quite probable.


## Khashoggi's murder: the beginning of the Greater Middle East Project



➔ ■ Providing a new order for the country as well as ensuring Israel's security. Interestingly, the emergence of ISIS, whether willingly or unwillingly, served the greatest part in the realization of the U.S. scenario.

According to the plan, all countries in the region should be split into smaller states based on languages, ethnic, religious, and racial divisions, and without any exception.


Therefore, although the use of Saudi leverage to curb Iran's power in the region is necessary, eventually this regime, like Iraq, Syria, Libya, Yemen, Sudan, Afghanistan and other countries in the region, must be broken up subtly, with the formation of small, bankrupt and weak states, Israel will become the most powerful actor in the West Asian region.



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(PARTS FOR MARTIN DECKER TOTCO HOOK UP RECORD-O-GRAPH  
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**National Iranian Drilling Company**

• Tender descriptions:

The Tender holder	Registration No. through national electronic tendering system	Tender No. /Indent No.	Estimated value (Rial/Euro)
National Iranian Drilling Company	3,179,523	Tender No. :FP/09-97/034 Indent No.:08-22-9745011	3,740,000,000 (Rial)

• Qualitative evaluation of tenderers

Method	R The evaluation will be made subject to submission of needed certificates in meeting for opening the received tenderers' proposals.

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Tender Document Distribution by Company	The distribution of the documents will be started one day after the publishing of second advertisement and ended on the following tenth day thereof.				
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="width: 30%;">Distribution Place</th> <th style="width: 70%;">Hall No.:113, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Foreign Procurement Dept., National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN</th> </tr> <tr> <th style="width: 30%;">Submitting Method</th> <th style="width: 70%;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt in the amount of 510,000 Iranian Rials under account number 4001114004020491 ( Shaba No. IR 52010004001114004020491) in name of "NIDC Incomes Centralized Fund" issued by I.R. of Iran Central Bank.</li> <li>Submitting format Request for the purpose of receiving Tender Documents.</li> </ul> </th> </tr> </table>	Distribution Place	Hall No.:113, 1 <sup>st</sup> floor, Foreign Procurement Dept., National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN	Submitting Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt in the amount of 510,000 Iranian Rials under account number 4001114004020491 ( Shaba No. IR 52010004001114004020491) in name of "NIDC Incomes Centralized Fund" issued by I.R. of Iran Central Bank.</li> <li>Submitting format Request for the purpose of receiving Tender Documents.</li> </ul>
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# New scheme saving lives of stroke patients in Iran

**HEALTH** TEHRAN — Some 23 thousand people have been saved from stroke by a scheme titled “724”, a national health plan starting from August 2016 to control and treat stroke patients at 54 care centers, ISNA reported on Saturday.

The 7-day, 24-hour plan has been implemented by a collaboration among Health Ministry, Emergency Care Service, and insurance organizations. It contains “Sama Code” which expedites the process of identifying stroke patients as well as transferring them to hospitals and treating them.

Brain stroke is the second leading cause of death and disability in adults in Iran; however, as a noncommunicable disease, it can be prevented by changing lifestyle and picking up a healthy diet.

## Stroke: the second cause of death

Dr. Masoud Mehrpour, the director of “724” National Acute Stroke Treatment Plan says the incidence of stroke and its death rate has been increasing rapidly.

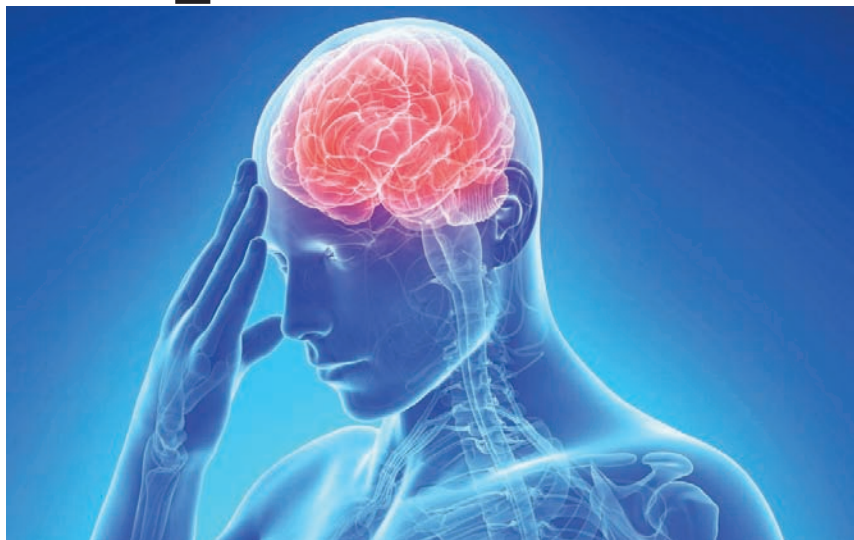
“15 years ago, acute stroke was the third leading cause of death in the world, but now it has become the second cause, and it is predicted that the number of victims will keep rising,” said Mehrpour in an interview with ISNA.

“Western countries have come up with new plans and treatments to reduce stroke victims. Now, stroke has declined from the second to 5th position among death causes in developed countries, but it has moved up to the second position in developing countries,” he said.

“In Iran, there are 150,000 to 200,000 strokes per year, one fourth of which occurs in people under 55, that is an alarming condition but unfortunately there isn’t enough awareness about stroke among people,” he said.

## “724” scheme: key to treat acute stroke

The increased incidence of stroke was the



main cause for development of “724” national plan, Mehrpour said, adding, the scheme was devised following the “247” plan which was targeted at heart diseases and was part of an initiative to fight noncommunicable diseases.

“Luckily, communicable diseases have been majorly controlled, but non-communicable diseases are gaining weight and need urgent attention,” said Mehrpour.

“There are two major kinds of stroke, ischemic and hemorrhagic. In an ischemic stroke a blood vessel becomes blocked, usually by a blood clot and a portion of the brain becomes deprived of oxygen and will stop functioning. Ischemic strokes account for 80% of all strokes.

A hemorrhagic stroke occurs when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain bursts and spills blood into the brain. When this happens, a portion of the brain becomes deprived of oxygen and will stop functioning. Hemorrhagic stroke accounts

for about 20% of strokes,” he said.

The “724” plan, he added, was devised for treatment of the ischemic stroke which is more prevalent.

## Collaboration by Health Ministry, insurance and Emergency Care Service

“Following to consultations between Health Ministry and insurance companies, drugs for treatment of acute stroke are now covered by insurance and are available to the patients,” said Mehrpour.

“Another problem is that there is a short window of time for treating stroke patients, as they need to get proper treatment within 3 to 4 hours after being admitted, so as part of the plan, we negotiated with Emergency Care Service to provide the staff with proper training,” he added.

## “Sama”, the saving code

“Sama code was created specifically for

stroke patients. When this code is activated, the patients are directly sent to the hospitals with proper facilities for stroke patients, so that no time is lost for their treatment,” said Mehrpur.

“Currently, 54 centers around the country including 8 clinical-academic centers in Tehran provide treatment for stroke patients,” he said.

The final goal, however, he added, is to increase these numbers so that there would be one hospital with proper equipment in every city with more than 300,000 population.

## Modern ambulances double the chances of saving stroke patients

“As time is the key factor in treating stroke patients, we have used air ambulances to provide care in remote areas as well,” said Mehrpour.

In some countries, he added, there are now ambulances equipped with CT scanner for rapid stroke treatment. The primary function of these ambulances is to allow the medics to perform a CT scan on the patient at the scene.

He said, “We are aiming to have these ambulances in Iran as well, but we haven’t succeeded yet.”

This is important, he said, because they will reduce care time by half which is critical in cities with heavy traffic such as Tehran.

## Moments that save lives

According to Mehrpour, reducing the transfer time to the hospital is a key part of “724” scheme as many stroke patients don’t get to the care centers on time.

Surveys show that every extra minute in transferring such patients to the hospital prolongs the recovery process by days, said Mehrpour.

According to him, 90% of patients who arrive at the care centers on time receive proper treatment, but the average rate of stroke patients’ treatment stands at around 8%.

## Common chemical tied to language delay in kids



Children may suffer delayed language skills if their mothers come in contact with common chemicals called phthalates in early pregnancy, new research suggests.

Phthalates are in countless products from nail polish and hair spray to food packaging and vinyl flooring. As plasticizers, they make things more pliable; as solvents, they enable other substances to dissolve.

In the new study, researchers found that the risk for language delay at about age 3 years was up to 30 percent higher among children whose mothers had higher exposure to two phthalates in particular: dibutyl phthalate (DBP) and butyl benzyl phthalate (BBP). Both chemicals are in products such as older vinyl flooring, cosmetics and plastic toys.

“Phthalates are known to be hormonally active and affect the body’s hormone system,” said researcher Shanna Swan, a professor of environmental and public health at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City.

Although the study cannot prove these chemicals cause delays in language development, Swan believes there is good reason to think they do.

Both DBP and BBP have been shown to lower testosterone in the mother during early pregnancy, Swan said. That helps explain how they can affect intellectual development, she noted.

Phthalates previously have been linked to developmental delays, lower IQ and underdeveloped male sex organs, the researchers said.

Because they are so commonplace, “we are all exposed all the time,” said lead researcher Carl-Gustaf Bornehag, a professor at Karlstad University in Sweden.

DBP and BBP are banned in many products, but they have very long life cycles. For example, vinyl flooring can be used for 20 to 30 years, meaning people are exposed for a very long time, he said.

Also, phthalates are routinely detected in indoor air, dust, food and water because they leach into the air, according to background notes with the study.

Swan said the only way to avoid these chemicals is to buy products labeled

phthalate-free or to carefully read label ingredients.

However, steering clear of the chemicals is easier said than done, Bornehag pointed out.

“It is often hard to get information about chemicals in products and articles, which makes it difficult to avoid exposure. We need better labeling systems,” he said.

And Swan added that banned phthalates have been replaced by similarly troublesome chemicals.

“Manufacturers have taken out the worst offenders and put in a slight change, which changes its name, but they are equally hormonally active,” she said. “There have been some substitutions.”

According to Steven Gilbert, director of the Institute of Neurotoxicology and Neurological Disorders, in Seattle, the real issue is that chemicals put into everyday household products are not regulated.

They’re only tested and potentially banned when a problem arises after years of use, he said.

“What we need to do is change the laws,” Gilbert said. “We’ve shown that these are bad actors and they cause cell changes, and we just need to stop using them.”

The study involved pregnant women and their children who took part in long-term studies in Sweden or the United States. Nearly 1,000 mothers were in Sweden; 370 were in the United States.

Parents were asked about how many words their kids understood at about 30 months to 37 months of age. Children who understood 50 or fewer words were said to have a language delay.

Overall, 10 percent had a language delay, boys more often than girls, the researchers found.

Urine samples collected from the mothers in the 10th week of pregnancy revealed a correlation between phthalate exposure and language delay, according to the study.

The researchers said the results were statistically significant in the Swedish study, but not in the U.S. study. They believe the difference is probably due to the U.S. study’s smaller sample size.

(Source: WebMD)

## Can cottonseed oil help lower your ‘bad’ cholesterol?



High levels of cholesterol can be harmful, and they can increase a person’s risk of serious cardiovascular events, such as heart attack or stroke. A high-fat diet can contribute to raised cholesterol levels, but some researchers say that ingesting a specific type of oil may prevent this negative effect.

Generally speaking, there are two types of cholesterol: high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol, also known as “good” cholesterol, and low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, which people describe as “bad” cholesterol.

Healthcare professionals often refer to LDL cholesterol as “bad” because the over accumulation of this fatty substance can interfere with blood circulation and increase a person’s risk of heart attack or stroke.

Conversely, they tend to say that HDL cholesterol is “good” because it helps remove LDL cholesterol from the body. It does this by taking the LDL cholesterol to the liver, which will break it down and process the resulting waste.

In order to prevent LDL cholesterol from reaching high levels in the blood, specialists advise people to adhere to diets that promote high HDL and low LDL cholesterol.

However, researchers from the University of Georgia in Athens have found that adding cottonseed oil to a high-fat diet can actually decrease a person’s LDL cholesterol levels.

The study paper reporting these results appears in the journal Nutrition Research.

## Pitting cottonseed oil against olive oil

The researchers worked with a group of 15 male participants aged 18–45 who were within healthy weight ranges. They asked the participants to follow one of two versions of a high-fat diet, each of which included a particular component.

In one version of the diet, the researchers used olive oil to enrich the meals. In the other, they used cottonseed oil instead. All of the participants adhered to their assigned diet for a period of 5 days.

After comparing the effects of the two diet regimens on the participants, the investigators found that those who had followed

the cottonseed oil-enriched diet had lower LDL cholesterol and triglyceride levels.

Conversely, the participants who had followed the olive oil-enriched diet saw no significant changes.

“One of the reasons these results were so surprising is because of the magnitude of change observed with the cottonseed oil diet,” says study author Jamie Cooper, an associate professor at the University of Georgia.

“To see this amount of change in such a short period of time is exciting,” she adds.

## Effects on LDL vs. HDL cholesterol levels

The individuals on the cottonseed oil-enriched diet saw, on average, a decrease of approximately 8 percent in total cholesterol levels. Their LDL cholesterol levels decreased by 15 percent on average, and their triglyceride levels decreased by 30 percent.

As for the levels of HDL cholesterol, these actually increased by about 8 percent for individuals on the cottonseed oil-enriched diet.

The researchers speculate that a specific type of fatty acid called dihydrosterolic acid, which is present in cottonseed oil but not in olive oil, may prevent triglyceride accumulation.

“By doing that,” Cooper explains, “it pushes the body to burn more of that fat because it can’t store it properly, so you have less lipid and cholesterol accumulation.”

Cooper also suggests that the polyunsaturated fats and omega-6 that are abundant in cottonseed oil may have beneficial effects.

The authors explain that several sponsors — including the nonprofit company Cotton Incorporated, the University of Georgia Clinical and Translational Research Unit, and the Augusta University and University of Georgia Medical Partnership — financially supported the recent study.

In the future, the investigators aim to learn more about the effects of cottonseed oil on health by recruiting older participants who already have high cholesterol levels and extending the dietary intervention period.

(source: medical news today)

## How to eat healthfully: Double your portion size

According to a recent study, larger portions of food might not be so bad for us after all. The findings add to our understanding of the psychology of healthful eating.

If somebody gives us a huge bowl of candy, we are likely to eat more of it than if someone gives us a smaller bowl of candy.



Scientists have studied the so-called portion size effect in some depth.

One review of the research found that when a portion size is doubled, people consume an average of 35 percent more.

Food outlets often advertise larger portion sizes to attract customers, and many health professionals believe that this tactic might play a role in the rise of obesity in the United States.

For this reason, health-conscious people around the world make sure to only give themselves small portions of foods that some may call unhealthy.

Despite a great deal of research into the negative consequences of portion size, very few studies have focused on the potential benefits. Could increasing portion size of healthful snacks increase their consumption?

With this in mind, researchers from Deakin University in Australia recently set out to see whether the effect would work in reverse.

The study, which Prof. Chris Dubelaar led, was a coordinated effort between scientists in Australia and France.

## Portion size revisited

In order to investigate, the team designed two complementary experiments. The first involved 153 university students in a laboratory setting. The scientists gave them large or small portions of healthful apple chips or unhealthy potato chips.

As expected, the participants to whom the team gave the larger portions of snacks — even the healthful versions — ate significantly more than the group with the smaller portions.

The second phase took place at a film festival. In total, the researchers gave 77 participants a small or a large bag of baby carrots. They watched either a film about a restaurant, which included many scenes involving food, or a romantic comedy with no particular food references.

Again, those with the larger bag ate more of the healthful snack. Interestingly, the effect was less pronounced in the group that watched the film about the restaurant; this demonstrates the significant impact that the environment can have on our eating behavior.

Prof. Dubelaar thinks that this could provide an “opportunity for those seeking to control intake to consider their environment when they’re eating to help reduce the effects of portion size.”

## Real-life implications

Overall, the study’s results give an interesting insight into the convoluted world of food psychology. They might also offer some new ways to improve our eating habits.

“The results of our current study tell us that this portion size effect also holds true with healthy foods, which opens up the potential for adjusting portion size when trying to encourage healthier eating habits,” Says Prof. Chris Dubelaar.

He continues, “For example, parents trying to get their children to eat more veggies could serve up larger portions. This would also work for healthy snacks such as fruit or any food you want someone to eat more of.”

The authors suggest that beginning a meal with a large portion of healthful food before a smaller plate of unhealthy food might be a useful approach.

Because obesity is a growing concern in the U.S. and elsewhere, understanding the nuances of our relationship with food is more important than ever. Though this study used a relatively low number of participants, it offers fresh insight and is likely to spur future investigations in a similar vein.

There is a myriad of variables that scientists could analyze in follow-up work. For instance, healthful and unhealthy snacks often have very different flavor and texture profiles, so understanding how each of these subtle differences impacts the portion size effect will be interesting.

Until more studies are carried out, the take-home message is: Don’t worry how large the portion is, worry about what you are apportioning.

(Source: medical news today)

**The results of our current study tell us that this portion size effect also holds true with healthy foods, which opens up the potential for adjusting portion size when trying to encourage healthier eating habits.**

**Prof. Dubelaar thinks that this could provide an “opportunity for those seeking to control intake to consider their environment when they’re eating to help reduce the effects of portion size.”**



## Iran supports smart city, IoT startup projects

**TECHNOLOGY d e s k** **TEHRAN** — The Information Technology, Communication and Cyberspace Development Council of Iran supports projects related to smart cities and Internet of Things (IoT) startups.

The council supports startups and accelerators verified by it to develop their minimum viable product (MVP), IRNA reported.

The council also provides free consultation in different fields of technology, finance and law.



The council also connects the startups and knowledge-based companies to some organizations in order to benefit from their services to develop their business.

The startups and knowledge-based companies active in the field of IoT and smart city can benefit from facilities provided by the innovation and prosperity fund.

The vice president for science and technology also provides some export corridors to facilitate their international interaction.

The council also support the startups and knowledge-based companies to participate the exhibitions in the region.

A local platform, data center and cloud computing services are available for the startups, accelerators and the knowledge-based companies.

The council also introduce startups to the venture capitals (VC) to support them.

The new IoT applications are enabling smart city initiatives worldwide. It provides the ability to remotely monitor, manage and control devices, and to create new insights and actionable information from massive streams of real-time data.

## Why founders should consider mentoring?

Mentoring is widely recognized, both within the entrepreneurial, start-up community and the wider professional world as important to career progression and success. Yet while we can all appreciate the benefits of mentoring, there are a lot of founders out there who either aren't mentoring people or haven't considered mentoring. Why?



Any fellow startup entrepreneurs out there will know just how little free time we have, particularly in the early stages of setting up a business. This is probably the single biggest reason why founders' shy away from mentoring. But what a lot of founders don't realize, is just how little time you have to give up to mentor someone. As a mentor, you can set the expectations and you can decide just how much or how little time you wish to offer to a prospective mentee; this is just one of the reasons why mentoring is so valuable and empowering – because it's done by both parties setting the expectations. Mentoring has no formal rules, although setting boundaries and deciding upon objectives can be very valuable. What's more, with whatever amount of time you decide to give to mentoring, you can have a very significant impact.

Having mentored others for a while now (as well as being mentored), I realize that it isn't just about giving back and helping others. Mentoring can help you to grow as an entrepreneur. I've been mentoring one university student for six months. He is developing his first business venture. In mentoring him we speak monthly about the challenges he faces, the markets he is targeting and the product he is developing. Having these conversations has opened my eyes to more marketing opportunities for my own business, as well as getting me to think about business from other perspectives. I think that a lot of founders are so wrapped up in their own business that they can easily forget the rest of the world's products, business ventures and ultimately opportunities. I know I've been guilty of this in the past. But the mentoring that I do continues to unlock these opportunities for me.

Being both mentored and mentoring others, I know how much benefit my mentors can provide to me – and indeed do on a regular basis. That, admittedly, was a big part of why I began to look at mentoring others. As a start-up founder, you are constantly aware of the extreme learning curves, the risks taken and the feeling of being so far from your comfort zone. These risks often result in failure. It is simply a fact of life, not only for entrepreneurs but indeed anyone taking risks. But minimizing those risks and learning from those failures is a key part of a business. I have learnt a lot from the mistakes and failures of business so far, but I can also learn from the failures of others and this can take shape in the form of both learnings from my mentors and my mentees. Often, we think that only those who are mentoring us have things to teach us. This couldn't be further from the truth. There have been several occasions when mentees of mine have taught me of their failures and in doing so saved me from repeating these mistakes. So, if you are in the start-up space and developing a business, founding a company or have already set up ventures, then I would strongly urge you to consider mentoring. It may surprise you just how much you learn from teaching and helping others. And if nothing else, giving back is always rewarding. It's something I'm passionate about and I am now developing PushFar.com, to help connect mentors and mentees, both in the entrepreneurial sector and the wider professional world too.

(Source: startupik.com)

# Central Insurance offers services to startups, tech insurances

**TECHNOLOGY d e s k** **TEHRAN** — The Central Insurance of Iran provides new services for startups and knowledge-based companies and cooperate with emerging technology insurances and startups.

The vice presidency for science and technology and the Central Insurance of Iran signed an agreement to boost cooperation in the field of insurance during a ceremony on Sunday.

According to the agreement, the Central Insurance of Iran supports the innovation ecosystem via different services and insurance coverage.

It also supports startups, which have innovative ideas in the field of insurance, including smart business, electronic services and data analysis.

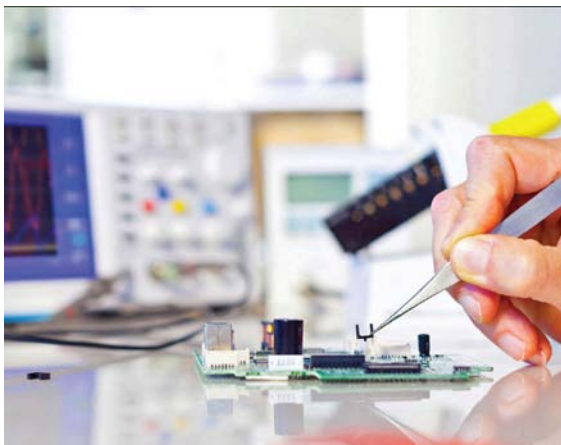
"The knowledge-based companies can provide accessible services with reasonable cost for the costumers," the vice president for science and technology Sourena Sattari said during the ceremony.

The agreement paves the way for expansion of knowledge-based economy in the field of insurance, he said.

The startups active in the field of insurance make different services accessible for the public so far, he said.

According to the Insurance CIO Outlook website, insurance technologies (Insurtech) startups are set to reinvent the insurance industry. Many policy holders and prospective clients are demanding seamless, speedy, on-demand experience that they get in so many other areas of digital economy.

As a result, innovative solution providers are emerging in every category of the insurance industry from health insurance to cybercrime with new technologies that help sync with fast changing customer behavior, new market dynamics and increasing competitiveness.



## 'Knowledge-based firms provide 80% of capital for private sector industries'

**TECHNOLOGY d e s k** **TEHRAN** — About 80 percent of the capital originated from the private sector industries in Iran are produced by knowledge-based companies, the deputy industry minister for research and technology announced on Friday, Mehr reported.

Barat Ghobadian made the remarks during his visit to the 6th Rab'e Rashidi Innovation and Technology Exhibition (Rinotex 2018), which is currently underway at the Iran northwestern city of Tabriz.

About 20 percent of knowledge-based companies in the country are active in the industry sector, he added.

The ministry supports the knowledge-based companies with providing legal and financial infrastructures, he noted.

"We try our best to move toward the knowledge-based economy at the ministry," he added.

The Rinotex 2018, which runs until November 5, offers 136 technological needs met by startups and knowledge-based companies.

Technological ideas, technology development and commercialization, selling knowledge-based products and services and meeting the technological needs are the main themes of the event.



## Balloons to bring internet access at crisis times

**1 →** During Arbæen pilgrimages, the balloons brought internet access at the borders of Mehran and Khosravi, which offered free WiFi services to pilgrims.

The balloon for internet access was tried during the Kermanshah earthquake in November 2017, he said.

Sarpol-e Zahab in the western Iranian province of Kermanshah experienced a devastating earthquake

in November 2017, which claimed hundreds of lives and injured thousands.

At the time of crisis, the telecommunication is very important during the first minutes of the event, which would be possible through these balloons, he added.

He said that the project is supported by the private sector.

## Cellphones and cancer risk: How to use your cellphone more safely



If you are a male rat and you use your 2G or 3G cell phone for over 9 hours a day, you should be worried about Thursday's National Toxicology Program (NTP) announcement. But what if you are a human?

The NTP announced the following findings from a set of \$30 million studies that took over a decade to complete:

- Clear evidence that high exposure to RFR used by cell phones was associated with tumors in the hearts of male rats. The tumors were malignant schwannomas.

- Some evidence that high exposure to RFR used by cell phones was associated with tumors in the brains of male rats. The tumors were malignant gliomas.

- Some evidence that high exposure to RFR used by cell phones was associated with tumors in the adrenal glands of male rats. The tumors were benign, malignant, or complex combined pheochromocytoma.

In this case, RFR is not a sound that Scooby-Doo makes but stands for radio-frequency radiation, the type of type of non-ionizing radiation that cell phones emit. The studies also found that rat

mothers and their newborns had lower body weight when exposed to high levels of RFR during pregnancy and lactation.

But before you toss your cell phones into the garbage (which you probably wouldn't do regardless), there are some caveats with these findings:

- The study exposed the entire bodies of rats to the RFR, which may be different from how you use cell phones, unless you have a gigantic cell phone or routinely cover yourself with dozens of cell phones.

- The amount of RFR exposure was significantly than what you normally would get from a cell phone.

- The studies mimicked the RFR from 2G or 3G cell phones, which you likely don't use anymore.

- The study did not find as clear evidence for female rats and male or female mice.

- You are probably not a male rat. Biologically.

The results of this study should not make you panic. Unless, of course, you are a male rat, because there are other

reasons to panic if you suddenly find yourself to be a male rat. However, these findings do further emphasize that RFR is not completely harmless. It is easy to forget that your cell phone is a machine and not a person, even though nowadays your cell phone can talk to you, entertain you, and even comfort you. But just as you wouldn't hug a microwave, you still have to be wary about how you interact with a machine.

Moreover, the advances and use of cell phone technology have far outpaced understanding of the potential health consequences. As the NTP study showed, it can take a while to measure the health effects of RFR. The technology has changed vastly since the beginning of the NTP study. Before more definitive statements are made in either direction, there is a need for more studies on the potential risks of cell phone use. Remember that cell phones have not undergone anywhere near the same amount of safety testing that things like vaccines have.

In the meantime, you may want to take the following 10 precautions:

- Carry your cellphone as far away from your body and head as possible. And don't strap it to your head, because there are other ways to say, "I am an idiot."

- Check where your cell phone is before you go to sleep. A cell phone can be like a rock bottom one night stand. You don't want to wake up and realize that it is next to you.

- Use a speakerphone or a headset whenever you can. This will help increase the distance between the phone and your brain. Plus pushing an object against your ear is never comfortable, unless you are in to that kind of thing.

- Try to avoid using your cellphone when you have a weak signal. When the cell signal is weak (only one or two bars are displayed), the phone amps up its RFR trying to connect. This will also help

you avoid asking, "what", "can you hear me", or "did you say 'love' or 'glove'" so many times.

- Don't use your cell phone to download large files or stream videos. This also pushes up the RFR emitted by your cell phone. You can wait until you get to your computer or other Ethernet or Wi-Fi connected device to download that video of cats falling off tables.

- Push for more clear labeling and information about RFR exposure on products. Different devices may vary in what they are emitting. Do you ask about such emissions when choosing a phone?

- Don't wear your headset when you are not taking a call. Sure, you may want to look like Tom Cruise in "Mission Impossible". But headsets do continue to release small amounts of RFR even when you are not "using" them.

- Put your phone on Airplane Mode or better yet turn it off whenever you can. A cell phone is like a toaster. If it is turned off, it is less likely to hurt you.

- Be skeptical about RFR shields or other devices that claim to reduce your RFR exposure. Surprise, surprise. People are trying to sell you junk that doesn't work. Many of these may even increase the RFR.

- Stop using your cellphone so often. A 5-year old does not need a cellphone. Who the heck is he or she going to call? A stock broker? There are many alternatives to using a cell phone, like actually talking to someone face-to-face. You can cut down your cell phone use by reducing the length of your calls. Telling him or her that you "love him 50 times on the phone" isn't going to compensate for the fact that you forgot his or her birthday.

Technology in itself is neither good nor bad. In the words of Eric Clapton, "it's in the way that you use it." Remember to be smart about smartphone usage.

(Source: forbes.com)



# To the moon and beyond: Airbus delivers powerhouse for NASA's Orion spacecraft

Europe's Airbus (AIR.PA) on Friday delivered the "powerhouse" for NASA's new Orion Spaceship that will take astronauts to the moon and beyond in coming years, hitting a key milestone that should lead to hundreds of millions of euros in future orders.

Engineers at the Airbus plant in Bremen, Germany on Thursday carefully packed the spacecraft into a special container that will fly aboard a huge Antonov cargo plane to NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida, a first step on its way to deep space.

In Florida, the module will be joined with the Orion crew module built by Lockheed Martin (LMT.N), followed by over a year of intensive testing before the first three-week mission orbiting the moon is launched in 2020, albeit without people.

Future production of Orion and the European module could result in billions of dollars of new orders for the companies involved in coming years, said Bill Gerstenmaier, associate administrator for human exploration and operations for NASA.

## ■ Into deep space

"This is the system that will enable humans to move sustainably into deep space ... and leave the Earth-moon system for the first time ever," he said.

Current plans are for a first crewed mission in 2022, but NASA and the European Space Agency (ESA) then plan to launch a manned mission every year, making the Orion project both politically and economically important at a time when China and other countries are



racing to gain a foothold in space.

Airbus's European Service Module will provide propulsion, power, thermal control and consumables to the Orion crew module, marking the first time that NASA will use a European-built system as a critical element to power an American spacecraft.

"This is a very big step. The delivery and the flight to America are just the beginning of a journey that will ultimately take us to 60,000 miles beyond the moon, further than any human has ever flown before," Oliver Juckenhoefer, vice president of on-orbit services and exploration for Airbus, told Reuters.

**NASA's researcher said ESA was interested in participating in a so-called "lunar gateway" with an eye to landing humans on the Moon again around 2028, and providing a base for travel to Mars and beyond.**

## Machine learning tool can predict viral reservoirs in the animal kingdom

Many deadly and newly emerging viruses like Ebola and Zika circulate in wild animal and insect communities long before spreading to humans and causing severe disease. However, finding these natural virus hosts – which could help prevent the spread to humans – currently poses an enormous challenge for scientists.

Now, a new machine learning algorithm has been designed to use viral genome sequences to predict the likely natural host for a broad spectrum of RNA viruses, the viral group that most often jumps from animals to humans.

The new research, led by the University of Glasgow and published today in Science, suggests this new tool could help inform preventive measures against deadly diseases. Scientists now hope this new machine learning tool will accelerate research, surveillance and disease control activities to target the right species in the wild, with the ultimate aim of preventing deadly and dangerous viruses reaching humans.

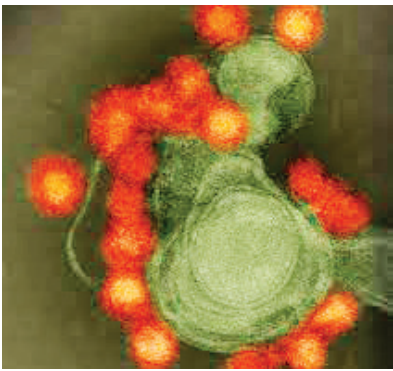
## ■ Diverse viruses

Finding animal and insect hosts of diverse viruses from their genome sequences can take years of intensive field research and laboratory work. The delays caused by this mean that it is difficult to implement preventive measures such as vaccinating the animal sources of disease or preventing dangerous contact between species.

Researchers studied the genomes of over 500 viruses to train machine learning algorithms to match patterns embedded in the viral genomes to their animal origins. These models were able to accurately predict which animal reservoir host each virus came from, whether the virus required the bite of a blood-feeding vector and, if so, whether the vector is a tick, mosquito, midge, or sandfly.

Next, researchers applied the models to viruses for which the hosts and vectors are not yet known, such as Crimean Congo Hemorrhagic Fever, Zika and MERS. Model predicted hosts often confirmed the current best guesses in each field.

Surprisingly though, two of the four species of Ebola which were presumed to have a bat reservoir, actually had equal or stronger support as primate viruses which could point to a non-human primate, rather



than bat, source of some Ebola outbreaks.

## ■ Piece of information

Dr. Daniel Streicker, the senior author of the study from the MRC-University of Glasgow Center for Virus Research, said: "Genome sequences are just about the first piece of information available when viruses emerge, but until now they have mostly been used to identify viruses and study their spread.

"Being able to use those genomes to predict the natural ecology of viruses means we can rapidly narrow the search for their animal reservoirs and vectors, which ultimately means earlier interventions that might prevent viruses from emerging all together or stop their early spread."

Dr. Pete Gardner from Wellcome's Infection & Immunobiology team said: "Healthy animals can carry viruses which can infect people causing disease outbreaks. Finding the animal species is often incredibly challenging, making it difficult to implement preventative measures such as vaccinating animals or preventing animal contact.

"This important study highlights the predictive power of combining machine learning and genetic data to rapidly and accurately identify where a disease has come from and how it is being transmitted. This new approach has the potential to rapidly accelerate future responses to viral outbreaks."

The researchers are now developing a web application that will allow scientists from anywhere in the world to submit their virus sequences and get rapid predictions for reservoir hosts, vectors and transmission routes.

(Source: phys.org)

## Study reveals how tiny flightless birds ended up in Inaccessible Island

For almost 100 years, researchers have been baffled as to how tiny, flightless birds made their way to an isolated island.

The researchers of a new study now know how the birds got to the island and successfully colonized it.

Inaccessible Island rails are the world's

smallest flightless birds, weighing in at just about 34 to 49 grams. But apart from the birds' size and striking features, what's even more incredible about the tiny birds is that they live on an island aptly named Inaccessible Island, an isolated island in the middle of the southern Atlantic Ocean.

It was in 1923 when British physician Percy Lowe of the British Museum first described the Inaccessible Island rail and gave it a separate Atlantisia genus, after the mythical island of Atlantis. Back then, he believed that the birds got to the island by walking to it via a foot bridge that had

## Researchers at IRB Barcelona explain the origin of the periodicity of the genome

Scientists at the Institute for Research in Biomedicine (IRB Barcelona) have found an explanation for a periodicity in the sequence of the genomes of all eukaryotes, from yeast to humans. The results published in the journal Cell offer an alternative explanation to the one based on natural selection, which has been accepted by the scientific community to date.

The researchers demonstrate that DNA damage and repair processes can play a role in the generation of sequence periodicity in the genomes of eukaryotic organisms. These processes are influenced by the orientation of the DNA structure when this molecule is packaged inside the cell nucleus, thus favoring a certain composition with a periodic nature in eukaryotic genomes.

The "answer we provide allows a better understanding of why our genome and that of other species have developed into what they are today," says Núria López-Bigas, head of the study and leader of the Biomedical Genomics lab at IRB Barcelona.

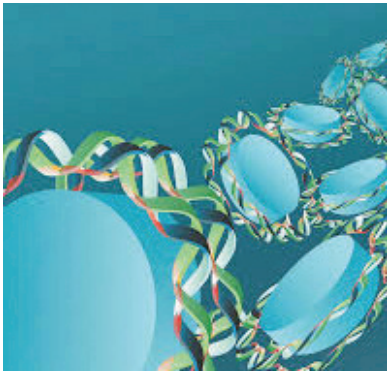
## ■ Marked periodicity

Since the sequence of the human genome and that of other organisms such as the mouse and fruit fly became known at the beginning of the 21st century, some researchers have noted a marked periodicity in the proportion of base pairs comprising adenine (A) and thymine (T). Indeed, the proportion of A/T pairs has been observed to be greater every 10 base pairs.

This periodicity has been associated with how DNA winds around nucleosomes (the simplest compaction form of DNA, in which it envelops proteins called histones). The explanation given has been that natural selection would favor the appearance of A/T bases as these bases would provide the DNA structure with a greater degree of flexibility, thus allowing it to wind around histones to form nucleosomes.

By studying the distribution of mutations in more than 3,000 human tumors, the team at IRB Barcelona observed that the mutations also accumulated every 10 DNA base pairs.

"By examining mutation distribution along the genomes in regions in which we ruled out the presence of selection, we found a marked periodicity of 10



base pairs in the DNA that forms part of nucleosomes," explains Oriol Pich, PhD student and awardee of a fellowship from the Barcelona Institute of Science and Technology (BIST) and first author of the paper.

The periodicity of mutations occurs because the structure of the DNA packaged inside the nucleosome favors the appearance of regions that are prone to damage and to repair. Consequently, these regions are more susceptible to mutations.

## ■ Both humans and plants

Next, the researchers turned their attention to mutations that are passed from one generation to another, in both humans and plants. They found that these hereditary mutations also accumulated every 10 base pairs.

With this new discovery of how nucleosomes affect DNA mutations, the researchers deduced that it could also explain the development of the mysterious periodicity of the sequence of eukaryotic genomes.

The scientists at IRB Barcelona hypothesized that, as most mutations that we get are in cytosines (C) that convert into thymines (T), most of those regions most prone to mutating over millions of years have become A/T base pairs.

To test this notion, the researchers performed a mathematical simulation of genome evolution and demonstrated that the periodicity of the sequence of the human genome and that of other eukaryotes could have arisen from the periodic rate of mutations.

(Source: eurekalert.org)

previously linked the island to Africa or South America.

However, the real story of how the Inaccessible Island rails got to the island remained a mystery for nearly a hundred years.

(Source: techtimes.com)

## Widely used mosquito repellent proves lethal to larval salamanders: new study

Insect repellents containing picaridin can be lethal to salamanders. So reports a new study published today in Biology Letters that investigated how exposure to two common insect repellents influenced the survival of aquatic salamander and mosquito larvae.

Insect repellents are a defense against mosquito bites and mosquito-borne diseases like dengue, chikungunya, Zika, and West Nile virus. Salamanders provide natural mosquito control.

During their aquatic juvenile phase, they forage on mosquito larvae, keeping populations of these nuisance insects in check.

Emma Rosi, a freshwater ecologist at Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies and a co-author on the paper explains, "Use of insect repellents is on the rise globally.

Chemicals in repellents enter aquatic ecosystems through sewage effluent and are now common in surface waters. We set out to understand the impact of repellent pollution on both larval mosquitoes and the larval salamanders that prey on them."

The paper is the first to suggest that environmentally realistic concentrations of picaridin-containing repellents in surface waters may increase the abundance of adult mosquitoes due to a decrease in predation pressure on mosquitoes at the larval stages.

The research team tested the effects of two of the most widely used insect repellents -- DEET (Repel 100 Insect Repellent) and picaridin (Sawyer Premium Insect Repellent) -- on larval salamanders and mosquitoes. In a lab, they exposed mosquito larvae and just-hatched spotted salamander larvae to three environmentally relevant concentrations of these chemicals, as well as a control treatment.

(Source: Science Daily)

## For the first time, physicists created a 'fifth' state of matter in space

In January last year, a rocket carrying a tiny chip packed with rubidium-87 atoms was launched more than 200 kilometers (124 miles) above the planet's surface. The mission was brief, affording just six minutes of microgravity at its height.

But in that time the tiny chip briefly held the record for being the coldest spot in space.

On top of that, German researchers still managed to cram in more than 100 experiments. Their results are set to impact how we will one day study big things in the Universe.

The Matter-Wave Interferometry in Microgravity (MAIUS 1) experiment launched from Kiruna in Sweden was the first of several missions aiming to study a special fifth state of matter called a Bose-Einstein condensate (BEC) under microgravity conditions.

Collections of atoms usually jiggle with energy in such a way that we can theoretically see them as individuals weaving through a crowd.

Once that energy is taken away, they fall into a lull, for all purposes ending up with an identical set of characteristics, or quantum states. Rather than jump to their own beat, they become indistinguishable - a super particle with one identity.

Forcing particles to be quiet typically entails holding them in an electromagnetic trap while carefully tuned lasers strike them with perfect timing, a little like hitting a person on a swing in such a way they slow down rather than speed up.

Once the atoms are quiet, the trap can be turned off and the experiment can begin. Just be quick -- you need to catch the atom cloud before it drops to the bottom of the container.

Without gravity ruining the party, researchers would have more time to conduct more complicated experiments.

Usually, BECs need a room of equipment to cool atoms. So researchers from a number of German institutions had to first work together to miniaturize the setup.

The end result was a small chip containing atoms of rubidium, which could be packed inside a sounding rocket -- an unplanned research vessel -- and shot up to a height of 243 kilometers (150 miles).

(Source: sciencealert.com)

## NASA team wants to make rocket fuel from Martian soil

Humanity is building powerful rockets like the SpaceX BFR and NASA Space Launch System that can take a payload far away from Earth. However, making the return trip means you have to lug a lot more fuel with you. Efforts to send humans to Mars in the coming decades would be helped if we could make fuel on the red planet. That may be more feasible than we thought. NASA team lead Kurt Leucht has explained how the agency might use Martian soil to make the fuel astronauts need to get home after a mission.

According to Leucht, it's best to make whatever you can at the destination because of the inescapable realities of physics. The "gear-ratio" for Mars is 226:1, meaning every kilogram of material you send requires a rocket to burn 225 kilograms of fuel. That's true for any material -- water, food, scientific equipment, people, and even reserve fuel for the return trip. With payloads being so expensive, it makes sense to produce whatever you can on Mars. This is known as in situ resource utilization (ISRU).



If you're determined to make fuel on Mars, you'll want to find a source of water. Water molecules contain hydrogen and oxygen, which you can split up to make fuel. You won't come across many large chunks of water ice on Mars (the poles are mostly carbon dioxide ice), but the soil might have more than enough. Under the dusty surface layer, many regions of Mars have significant deposits of water. Leucht notes that gypsum sand dunes in the lower latitudes are about 8 percent water.

NASA calls the process of making fuel from Martian regolith "dust-to-thrust," and it's working on robots that can potentially do all the heavy lifting before humans even land on Mars. The Regolith Advanced Surface Systems Operations Robot (RASSOR) uses two opposing bucket drums with multiple digging scoops to gather up material as the wheels drive the robot slowly forward. NASA designed RASSOR to operate in a low-gravity environment -- the drums spin in opposite direction to cancel out most of the digging force.

(Source: extremetech.com)

## Highly-Specialized Cancer Diagnosis Hospital to Launch in Coop. with BSI

The most highly-specialized hospital for the diagnosis and treatment of cancer in the country will be put into operation in cooperation with Bank Saderat Iran (BSI), the Public Relations Dept. of the bank reported.

The first phase of the most advanced and equipped hospital for the diagnosis and treatment of cancer, costing 250 billion rials, will be launched in western Tehran in very near future.

This hospital has been equipped with 250 hospital beds named 'Salamat-e Farda' which will start its work in the field of diagnosis and treatment of cancer.

Up to the present time, approx. 70 percent of facilities required for the construction of the bank has been provided by the bank, the report added.

Hamid-Reza Rahbar Deputy CEO of BSI in Western Tehran Branch revealed the establishment of a booth, installation of an Automated Teller Machine (ATM), POS system as well as presenting all banking services in the Treatment Center.

Also, Seyed Reza Hosseini of founder of the hospital, while expressing his thanks to the cooperation of Bank Sad-

erat Iran in launching this center, seized this opportunity to the role of this bank in constructing and equipping this hospital and added, "this specialized Center will start its activity with 100 hospital beds in line with diagnosing and treating cancer disease."

This treatment center is equipped with the world's most modern medical equipment and machinery, he said, adding, "once this treatment center is launched, moreover preventing from capital flight, giant steps will be taken in line with reducing medical and treatment costs of patients."



## Govt. allocates \$500m to pharmaceutical industry

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — The government has allotted a total budget of \$500 million from the National Development Fund to the country’s pharmaceutical industry which will be provided within the current week (ending on November 9), an official with the Planning and Budget Organization has announced.

Some 97 percent of the whole medicine consumed in the country is produced domestically and only 3 percent is imported, therefore the budget must support the domestic medicine industry, IRNA quoted Saeed Namaki as saying on Sunday.

So, some \$500 million has been earmarked to the medicine industry to increase production in addition to eradicating problem facing the industry, he added.

It is planned that the budget will be mostly spent on pharmaceutical industry, however, we are also considering to allot some of the budget to insurance companies as well, he further stated.

Elsewhere in his remarks, referring to the budget allocated to the patients suffering special diseases such as multiple sclerosis, kidney failure and epidermolysis bullosa, he said that this year, some 2 trillion rials (nearly \$48 million) have been earmarked to the special diseases, half of which has been provided during the first six months of the year (March 21- September 22).

Next year, the budget will be considered to increase mostly due to the number of patients and the population covered by the insurance, he concluded.

## Seed banks will not save over third of critically endangered plants

More than a third of critically endangered plant species cannot be saved from extinction by freezing them in seed banks, scientists have warned.

Projects such as the Svalbard Global Seed Vault have been set up to protect the world’s plant diversity from doomsday events ranging from nuclear war to extreme climate change.

In the UK, Kew’s Millennium Seed Bank is aiming to protect three quarters of the world’s threatened plant species within the next two years.

“Ex-situ conservation of plants is more critical than ever, with many threats to plant populations including climate change, habitat conversion and plant pathogens, we need to make sure we’re doing all we can to conserve the most important and threatened species,” said Dr John Dickie, head of seed collections at Kew.

However, for many of the most at-risk plants, conventional storage techniques will not work, and a team of Kew scientists has called for research into alternative measures to ensure their survival.

In total around 8 per cent of all plant species cannot be banked by drying and freezing their seeds, including trees like oaks and horse chestnuts, and foods including mangos and avocados.

These seeds are recalcitrant, meaning they do not survive the drying process. In a new paper published in the journal Nature Plants, the researchers estimated that 36 per cent of the plants at the greatest risk of extinction are recalcitrant.

They also noted that tree seeds were particularly likely to die following attempts to dry and freeze them, with around a third deemed “unbankable”.

Using this analysis Dr Dickie and former colleague Dr Sarah Wyse were able to predict that the target of preserving 75 per cent of threatened species by 2020 is practically impossible.

With numbers of unsuitable seeds particularly high among endangered species, the scientists recommended investing in an alternative technique known as cryopreservation.

The method involves removing a seed’s embryo and then using liquid nitrogen to freeze it at -196C, far colder than he conventional seed bank temperature of -20C.

(Source: The Independent)

## LEARN ENGLISH

### Human Anatomy

A: OK class, so today we are going to continue with our **anatomy** class, today we will review everything we have learned. Can anyone tell me what the first major **organ** is?

B: The **brain**!

A: That’s right the brain! It serves as a **control** center for the body, handling the **processes** of the central nervous system as well as cognition. Then what major organ is in our **chest**?

B: The **heart**!

A: Very good! It **pumps blood** throughout the body, using the circulatory system such as blood vessels and veins. Now let’s not forget that our **lungs** provide **oxygen** to our heart and body to keep us alive! Now what about the organs that help us **digest** food?

B: The **stomach** and intestines!

A: Very good! Let’s not forget that the stomach is the one that breaks down our food and our intestines process that food and then **expel** the waste. Are we forgetting anything?

B: Yeah! Our kidneys, liver and bladder!

A: Oh yes, you are right. Very important organs indeed.

B: So what do these organs do teacher?

A: Well, umm, they... Time for a break! We can talk about it when you get back.

#### ■ Key vocabulary

**anatomy**: the trunk of the body from the neck to the abdomen  
**organ**: a grouping of tissues into a distinct structure e.g, heart  
**brain**: an organ enclosed in the skull that controls and coordinates the body.

**control**: the ability to direct the actions of something  
**process**: a planned series of steps or actions that leads to something

**chest**: the front of the body, from neck to the waist

**heart**: an organ in the chest that pumps blood

**pump**: to supply, to circulate

**blood**: the fluid that circulates in the body

**lung**: body part that inflates with air and allows breathing

**oxygen**: a gas that we breath in order to live

**digest**: to swallow and dissolve something

**stomach**: the organ people use to digest food

**expel**: to release something

#### ■ Supplementary vocabulary

**skull**: the bony framework of the head, enclosing the brain and supporting the face  
**embalm**: to treat a dead body so as to preserve it, as with chemicals, drugs

**spine**: backbone of the body

(Source: irlanguage.com)

# Iran to nominate Islamic capital of environment and sustainable development

**ENVIRONMENT** **TEHRAN** — Iran is making plans for nominating a city as the Islamic capital of environment and sustainable development at the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), the deputy education minister for international affairs has said.

The possible inclusion of an Iranian city in ISESCO list will make the cities environmentally friendly in line with achieving sustainable development goals, Gholamreza Karimi who is also a secretary general at ISESCO national commission and a member of ISESCO executive council explained.

The ISESCO plans to announce three cities in three parts of the Muslim world (Asia, the Arab region, and Africa), as the Islamic capital of environment and sustainable development each year from 2019 to 2027, Mehr news agency quoted Karimi as saying on Sunday.

Each country must propose a city to ISESCO which should live up to the standards declared by the organization with a 20-page report attachment which provides the information about the chosen city, its environmental condition, waste management plans, soil and air pollution condition, transport development plans as well as other environmental standards, Karimi further explained.

He also added that steps that have been taken so far and what will be done for the next 10 years and the year the city is supposed to be the capital of the environment must also be included in the report.

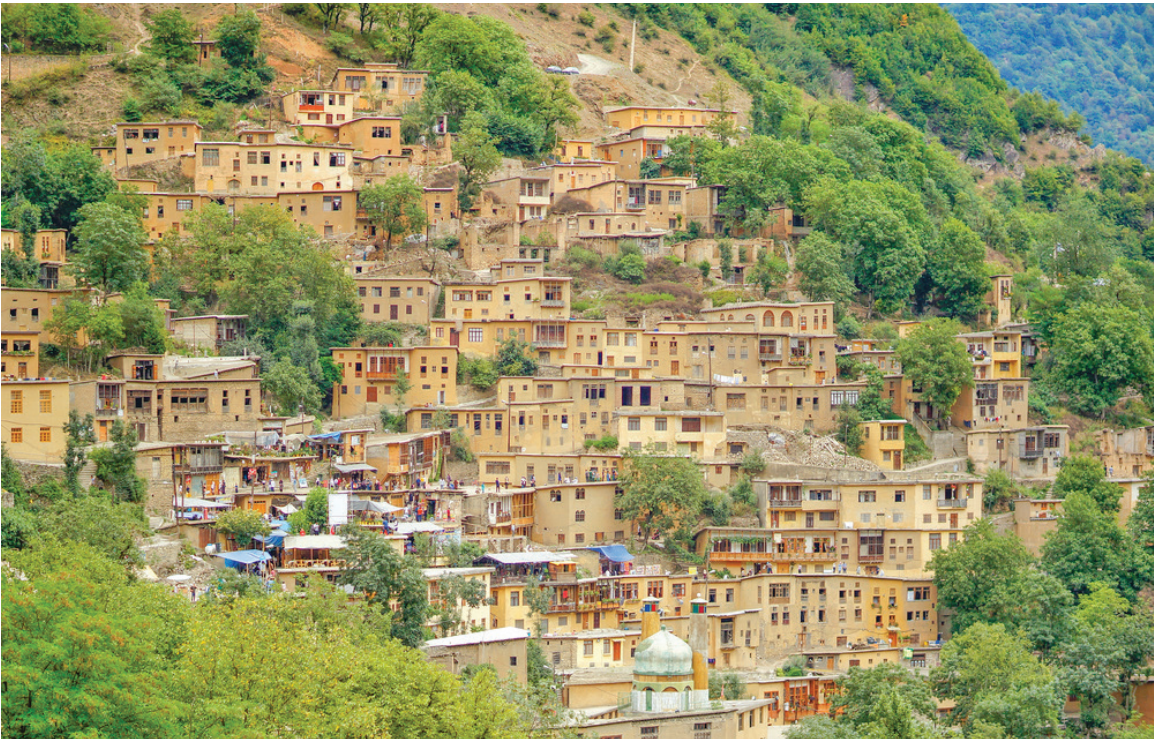
The city which succeed in winning the position, will host over 70 international events and occasions during the year, Karimi stated.

“We will definitely choose a city to be nominated for the capital, given that we tend to promote environmental standards in the cities of the country, as well as environmental culture,” he highlighted.

The candidate city is not yet chosen, while the Department of Environment is currently carrying out assessments to help find the proper candidate, Karimi concluded.

ISESCO, the largest international Islamic organizations, was founded by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in May 1979. With 52 member states, ISESCO headquarters are in Rabat, Morocco.

According to the OIC, ISESCO’s objectives are to strengthen and promote cooperation among the Member States in the



Masuleh Village, Gilan, Iran, photo by Roserunn/Shutterstock

fields of education, science culture and communication; consolidate understanding among peoples inside and outside Member State; contribute to world peace and security through various means; publicize the true image of Islam and Islamic culture; promote dialogue among civilizations, cultures and religions; encourage cultural interaction and foster cultural diversity in the Member States, while preserving cultural identity and intellectual integrity.

In November 2017, the Islamic Conference of Environment Ministers adopts various documents and projects aiming to give substance to environmental protection and promote

sustainable development in Islamic world.

Progress report on the creation of the OIC water council and its terms of reference, the creation of the Islamic academy for the environment and sustainable development, honoring the best environmentally friendly Islamic city, guidance document on green cities and their role in achieving sustainable development goals, the creation of an OIC joint commission for sustainable development (OIC-CSD), along with the programme on the celebration of Islamic capitals of environment and sustainable development are among the various documents adopted in this session.

## Poor waste management posing a challenge to DOE

**ENVIRONMENT** **TEHRAN** — While proper waste management and separation of waste at source could help create many jobs and solve the country’s environmental problems, the budget requested by the Department of Environment (DOE) for waste management has not been approved by the Majlis [Iranian parliament], the head of DOE’s soil and water office has said.

“Due to poor waste management practices, the country’s recycling industry is importing plastic waste from Iraq, while collecting solid waste not only protects the environment but prevents currency flow out of the country,” ISNA quoted Ali Moridi as saying on Sunday.

He went on to explain that domestic solid waste disposal has a major economic share in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in some countries around the world while generating various job opportunities, however, “we use foreign solid waste rather than domestic ones.”

With appropriate waste management, which mainly refers to separation of waste at source, we can avoid currency flow out of the country while protecting the environment and preventing water, soil and air from pollution, he noted.

The responsible body for waste management is the Ministry of Interior, and the DOE is the only supervisor in this field, he said, adding, the DOE’s plan for waste management in the country is concentrating on waste sorting at source and reduction of waste generation.

“In this regard, the Municipality must support startups working on new ideas in waste collection and recycling,” Moridi highlighted, adding that undoubtedly such plans require legal support more



than financial support.

He further explained that the plans must be implemented through materials recovery facilities or mechanical biological treatment systems, not traditional methods of curbside recycling bins, so using IT to provide online waste collecting services offered by some private companies and startups is of great importance.

Pointing to the need to create a waste disposal infrastructure for proper management of waste, he noted that in the past few months we have been studying the most modern methods of waste management, adding, so that we found that in Iran the focus is mainly on the inefficient phase of waste management

which is waste disposal.

So, we are pursuing the necessary legal infrastructure to manage wastes appropriately, and supporting startups to purchase domestic plastic waste is among the legal infrastructures, he also added.

The Municipality must also support waste collecting companies and avoid unsanitary waste disposal which is mostly done by children, he also highlighted.

Separation of waste at source reduces waste management costs by 40 percent, he stated, adding that in addition to reduction of waste generation in the country by over 50 percent, which will then become more operational by reducing the cost of purchasing

the equipment.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Moridi lamented that the DOE has demanded a budget for waste management from the National Development Fund which has not been approved by the Majlis.

“We try to focus on separation of waste at source, which requires less budget, and naturally decreases the amount of waste being generated in the country, to propose a lower amount for the budget to be approved by the Majlis in the Iranian calendar year of 1398 (March 2019- March 2020),” he said.

There are two ways to receive the budget, which are the National Development Fund and taxes from products generating electronic waste, such as refrigerators and TVs, he concluded.

According to a report published by United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in October 2016, waste generation per capita in Iran’s urban areas is about 658 grams per day while Iranian waste generation per capita in rural areas is about 220-340 grams per day. Average Iranian waste generation per capita amounts to some 240 kilograms per year.

In Tehran alone waste generation per capita is estimated at 750-800 grams per day and each Tehrani citizen generates about 270-450 kilograms of waste per years.

The report continues that unfortunately only 7 percent of the waste is separated at the source, 13 percent is recycled and only 2.5 percent of them end up in formal or sanitary landfills and some 77.5 percent of the waste will be burnt or buried in informal landfills located in the countryside or deserts near cities.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ع

## ‘Climate change main cause of recurrent droughts in Iran’

Climatic change along with changes in precipitation patterns are the main reasons behind recurrent droughts haunting different parts of the country, head of National Disaster Management Organization has said.

Esmaeil Najjar, made the remarks on a meeting held on Monday to address the impacts of drought and climate change in order to provide tackling solutions, with the representatives of responsible bodies and governor officials of the drought ridden provinces, in attendance and under the chairmanship of the minister of interior.

## PREFIX/SUFFIX

### “batho-, bathy-”

■ **Meaning:** deep

■ **For example:** This is a very rare naval diver’s watch, **bathometer** and wrist compass set.

## PHRASAL VERB

### Let on

■ **Meaning:** to tell someone something, especially a secret

■ **For example:** I’m sure he knows more than he’s letting on.

## IDIOM

### Clap eyes on

■ **Explanation:** If you clap eyes on someone or something, you actually see them

■ **For example:** I’ve heard of him but I’ve never clapped eyes on him.

## تغییرات اقلیمی گسترده موجب خشکسالی‌های وسیع شده است

تهران - ایرنا - معاون وزیر کشور و رئیس سازمان مدیریت بحران کشور گفت: تغییرات اقلیمی گسترده و کاهش و تغییر الگوی بارش، موجب وقوع خشکسالی‌های وسیع در مناطق مختلف کشور شده است.

به گزارش دوشنبه شب ایرنا، اسماعیل نجار افزود: امروز با حضور دستگاه‌های متولی به همراه ۱۰ تن از استانداران استان‌های تحت تأثیر، جلسه بررسی اثرات خشکسالی و تغییر اقلیم به منظور ارائه راهکارهای اجرایی به ریاست وزیر کشور برگزار شد.



# War-torn Yemen 'living hell' for children: UN

1→ "Yemen is today a living hell – not for 50 to 60 percent of the children – it is a living hell for every boy and girl in Yemen," he told a news conference in the Jordanian capital.

According to UNICEF, 1.8 million Yemeni children under the age of five suffer from acute malnutrition, and the lives of 400,000 severely affected children are under threat.

Cappelaere said that 30,000 children die of malnutrition each year in Yemen, while a child dies every 10 minutes from easily preventable diseases.

He said the figures were "a reminder for all of us to realize how dire the situation has become."

"We call on all parties to get together later this month under the leadership of the UN special envoy... and agree on a ceasefire and a road to peace for Yemen," he added.

The appeal came as fighting intensified in the key rebel-held Red Sea port city of Hudaida, despite growing international pressure to end a conflict that has left the country on the brink of famine.

The port is the entry point for more than 70 percent of imports into the impoverished country.

The Arab coalition intervened in the war in 2015 to bolster Yemeni President Abed Rabbou Mansour Hadi after the Houthi rebels took over the capital Sanaa.

According to the World Health Organization, nearly 10,000 people have since been killed. Some rights groups estimate the toll could be five times higher.

**■ Yemeni forces foil Saudi-led push to seize port before talks**

Meanwhile, Yemen's armed forces have decisively countered an all-out Saudi offensive, which was in the works for days to seize the country's strategic Red Sea port.

Yemeni Armed Forces spokesman Brigadier General Yahya Saree said the army thwarted "all attempts by the enemy to penetrate and infiltrate the defenses" in the port city of Hudaydah.

The counterattacks killed 113 of the enemy forces and injured 156 others,



Yemen's al-Masirah television network quoted him as saying on Saturday.

Earlier this week, the Saudi-led coalition deployed some 10,000 forces as part of efforts to capture the key port city, which is seen as the main entry point for aid needed by millions in the war-torn country.

Saudi Arabia and its allies have launched a massive offensive to capture Red Sea city of Hudaydah over the past several months.

But they have faced stiff resistance by Houthi fighters and local residents who have been defending the Arab world's poorest nation against the Saudi-led invasion which started more than three years ago.

According to the United Nations, at least 10,000 people have been killed since the Saudi-led war on Yemen broke

out in March 2015.

However, a new report suggests that the real death toll is over five times higher than the UN figure, which has not been updated since August 2016.

According to a count by a nonprofit conflict-research organization, 56,000 people have lost their lives in Yemen since early 2016.

The number does not include those dying of malnutrition, or diseases such as cholera.

The death toll is soaring by more than 2,000 every month as the Saudi-led coalition intensifies military strikes on the Red Sea port of Hudaydah.

Saudi Arabia has intensified its efforts to capture the strategic port even as its staunch ally, the United States, has called for an end to the aggression.

Earlier this week, US Secretary

of Defense James Mattis called for a ceasefire in Yemen and for all parties to come to the negotiating table within the next 30 days.

"We have got to move toward a peace effort here, and we can't say we are going to do it sometime in the future," he said during a discussion at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) in Washington.

The Saudis have been receiving arms and logistical support as well as bombing coordinates and aerial refueling, mostly from the United States, but also from its close European allies, the UK and France.

**■ Children dying as Hudaydah under siege**

On Saturday, the United Nations children agency (UNICEF) said every 10 minutes, an under-five-year-old Yemeni child died of preventable diseases and severe malnutrition.

The children were dying from starvation and disease as trucks with life-saving supplies were blocked in Hudaydah -- which is under siege by Saudi Arabia and its allies, said Geert Cappelaere, Middle East director for UNICEF.

"Already 1.8 million Yemeni children are malnourished, and more than 400,000 of them suffering from severe acute malnutrition," Reuters quoted him as saying.

The official made the remarks after meeting with families in Hudaydah and Sana'a.

Earlier, media reports showed that a seven-year-old severely malnourished Yemeni girl, whose picture recently further alerted the international community to the disaster-hit nation's plight, had died amid an ongoing Saudi-led war on the country.

Amal Hussein's picture turned up in The New York Times last week, showing her lying on a bed at a health center in Aslam in the northwestern Yemen Hajjah Province, 144 kilometers (90 miles) northwest of the capital, Sana'a. Her mother, Mariam Ali, has told the paper that she died on October 26.

(Source: agencies)

## Sri Lanka's Tamil parties vow to vote against Mahinda Rajapaksa

Sri Lanka's newly appointed Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa has suffered a setback in his power struggle with a deposed rival after a coalition representing the country's Tamil minority pledged to back a motion of no-confidence against him.

In a statement on Saturday, the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) called Rajapaksa's shock appointment by the president last week "unconstitutional and illegal" and said its members would back a bid by sacked Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe to remove him.

The minority coalition has the backing of 15 legislators in the 225-member parliament and could play a key role in swaying a no-confidence vote as Rajapaksa and Wickremesinghe now command the support of about a 100 politicians each.

But analysts said the TNA's decision did not spell defeat for Rajapaksa because the former president has managed to whittle away at Wickremesinghe's initial majority by getting at least six members from his United National Party (UNP) to switch camps.

A majority of 113 is required to vote a prime minister out.

Sri Lanka was plunged into a constitutional crisis on October 26 when President Maithripala Sirisena fired his former ally Wickremesinghe and replaced him with Rajapaksa, an ex-president he defeated in a 2015 presidential election.

The turmoil was exacerbated by Sirisena's subsequent decision to also suspend parliament until November 16.

Wickremesinghe, who insists he remains prime minister, has demanded a parliamentary vote to prove his majority. The United Nations backed that call on Friday, just as the UNP submitted a no-confidence motion against Rajapaksa and said the vote will be put on the agenda as soon as parliament reconvenes.

But observers believe the longer parliament remains suspended, the more likely the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) - a coalition mainly comprised of Sirisena and Rajapaksa's political parties - will be able to tempt defections.

The TNA said Sirisena's suspension of parliament was "undemocratic and in violation of parliamentary supremacy".

Explaining its decision to vote against Rajapaksa, the TNA said: "Remaining neutral in such a situation would pave the way for achieving an undemocratic end by force."

The alliance has long opposed Rajapaksa, who ruled the country from 2005 to 2015, over alleged atrocities against the ethnic minority at the close of a decades-long civil war in 2009.

The 26-year conflict left at least 100,000 people dead. According to the UN, about 40,000 people - mostly Tamil civilians - were killed in the final five months alone.

In recent days, human rights groups have warned Rajapaksa's return might jeopardize the country's incremental progress on transitional justice and put war victims who have spoken of human rights abuses at risk.

Still, in a surprising move, TNA legislator S Vimalendran defected on Friday and was later named Rajapaksa's deputy minister of regional development.

In its statement, the TNA strongly condemned S Vimalendran for taking part in the "conspiracy" of Sirisena and Rajapaksa, whom it accused of using the suspension to "bribe members of parliament with both money and ministerial posts" to obtain a "fraudulent majority".

Palitha Range Bandara, a UNP member who al-

leged he was offered \$2.8m and a ministerial post to switch support, on Saturday aired an audio clip at a news conference in which a purported senior official from Sirisena and Rajapaksa's United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) could be heard offering him a cabinet post.

"We have 113 MPs, but we would really like to have you," the man was heard saying. "If you come now you can get a cabinet position ... don't wait."

The UPFA has previously dismissed allegations of bribery.

Rajapaksa, in a statement soon after his appointment, pledged to "eschew politics of hate" and said he will hold long-delayed provincial elections and call a general election as soon as possible.

Dayasiri Jayasekara, a UPFA member, said the Tamils have "no reason to fear" the newly appointed prime minister.

"His administration ended the war," he said on Saturday.

"His government developed so much infrastructure in the north and there was law and order. But Wickremesinghe has given them nothing. No jobs, no development and there is only crime. So I urge our Tamil friends not to worry," he said.

Namal Rajapaksa, the newly appointed prime minister's son and a member of parliament, condemned TNA's decision in a Twitter post and said Sirisena and Rajapaksa will continue to address "the needs of the North/East", including rehabilitating former Tamil fighters.

The UNP, meanwhile, thanked the TNA for "joining our struggle", saying its fight was not "for a single political party, but for the future of our nation".

(Source: Al Jazeera)

## U.S. universities reconsidering ties with Saudi Arabia

American colleges and universities are reconsidering ties with the House of Saud regime despite having received over \$350 million from the kingdom over the past 10 years, according to a report.

This follows the assassination of Saudi dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi, who was killed after entering the Saudi regime mission in Istanbul on October 2.

The incident triggered international condemnation and in the U.S. several lawmakers have called for sanctions against the kingdom, while others demanded Washington stop its nuclear talks with Saudi Arabia.

Now, the questions about Khashoggi's death have caused some U.S. colleges or universities to reconsider current or future deals, The Associated Press reported.

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), which cooperates with Saudi universities on research projects, has been working with Saudi company Aramco for a long time.

In March, the company pledged to



provide the school with \$25 million for research in areas like renewable energy and artificial intelligence.

On October 22, the institute said, however, it planned to conduct a "swift, thorough" examination of its partnerships with Riyadh, calling Khashoggi's

disappearance a serious concern.

Another company, SABIC, has given Babson College, near Boston, \$2.5 million through a contract, but college officials told the AP they were pursuing events and gathering opinions from their community about how to continue their

work with the company.

Babson trains Saudi business leaders in addition to other areas of work it shares with Saudi universities that include research and training partnerships.

Meanwhile, many other U.S. universities have not indicated whether they are reconsidering ties with Saudi Arabia.

The University of California, Berkeley, said their financial support from Saudi Arabia, that is part of a \$6 million contract to develop special technology for renewable energy, was not being reconsidered.

Northwestern University refused to say whether it was reviewing any of the money it receives from Saudi Arabia.

Other schools, including the University of Michigan, refused to elaborate on Saudi Arabia's financial support.

According to an examination by the AP, the amount of financial help from Saudi Arabia or organizations under its control that has gone to 37 American schools since 2011 is at least \$354 million.

(Source: Press TV)

## New Caledonia rejects independence from France: report

Partial results from an independence referendum in the French Pacific territory of New Caledonia showed that a large majority of voters had opted to remain part of France, local media reported Sunday.

With 70 percent of voting slips counted, 59.5 percent of people had rejected the proposition that New Caledonia become independent, television channel Nouvelle-Caledonie la 1ere reported. (Source: AFP)

## Migrant caravan struggles ahead in Mexico toward U.S.

A caravan of Central American migrants on the move in Mexico is traveling closer to the southern borders of the United States despite warnings by President Donald Trump's administration to block its way and attempts by Mexico to frustrate its advance.

The migrants continued their march toward the U.S. by hitchhiking and walking along highways on Saturday.

Reports said the caravan of an estimated 4,000 Central American migrants had now advanced into the Mexican state of Veracruz, just one Mexican state away from the southern U.S. state of Texas.

The caravan continued its travel to the US on foot after Mexico canceled a plan to provide the migrant group with transportation.



Veracruz Governor Miguel Angel Yunes had announced on Friday that authorities in the Mexican state would be providing not only humanitarian assistance to the migrants but also dozens of passenger buses to quickly transport them to the country's capital, Mexico City, "or to the place they wish."

In a second video released on Saturday, however, the governor reneged on the transportation offer, claiming that Mexico City's water system was undergoing maintenance and seven million of its people would be without water over the weekend if the migrants were shuttled to the capital.

Later in the day, caravan organizers released a statement in rejection of the Veracruz governor's decision, demanding that he fulfills his offer of buses to Mexico City.

The Mexican government had ignored the migrants' request for buses to the capital days earlier before they reached Veracruz.

The Central American migrants say they are escaping from violence, corruption, and unemployment at home. They believe traveling in caravans would better ensure their safety while passing through violence-hit Mexico before reaching the U.S. soil.

Trump has called the Central American migrants a security threat, ordering the deployment of thousands of troops to the Mexican border to contain them.

More than 7,000 active duty troops have been deployed to the U.S. states of Texas, Arizona, and California.

The U.S. president has also suggested that the U.S. troops deployed to the southwest borders can shoot at migrants if the latter threw stones or rocks at them.

Trump also plans to sign an order "next week" that could lead to the large-scale detention of migrants crossing the southern border and bar anyone caught crossing illegally from claiming asylum. (Source: Press TV)

## Head of CORC: Iran was top saffron producer in 2017

**TEHRAN** — Hossein Shirzad, head of Central Organization of Rural Cooperatives of Iran (CORC) has recently said that Iran ranked first in saffron production last year with over 88 percent of the world's share.

Addressing attendees in a symposium called Targeted Interventional Strategy in Saffron Market, Shirzad said that Iran's saffron export last year was 96 percent of the global saffron market.

Iran's cultivation of saffron is generally done around 1,350 to 2,200 meters above sea level which tends to be the best altitude for saffron cultivation. Therefore, in pricing the spice the preservation of foreign markets as well as the farmers' income should be taken into account.

Shirzad added that Iran's saffron exports requires a modern market and standard production, thus, if the price of saffron is lower than what is supposed to be, the domestic farmers will lose out, and if the price is higher, businessmen and foreign consumers will buy saffron from other countries, promoting the cultivation of the spice in countries like Afghanistan, India, and soon they will become Iran's rival.

Therefore, he noted, saffron pricing is a very sensitive which requires the experience and instruction of all parties involved in the production chain, including framers, packaging industry and exporters. To that end, the CORC has tried to modernize the saffron market and help standardize the product. Last fiscal year, the organization exported over 250 tons of saffron valued over \$352 million to the international market. (Source: corc.ir)





## Rooney set for England farewell match – two years after last international

Wayne Rooney is set to come out of international retirement to make a farewell appearance for England against the United States next month.

The 33-year-old - England's record goalscorer with 53 - has not played for the Three Lions since a 3-0 victory over Scotland in November 2016.

But Rooney, who plays for DC United, is expected to earn his 120th cap in the friendly at Wembley on 15 November.

The game will raise funds for the Wayne Rooney Foundation. The Wembley Arch will be lit up in the gold colours of Rooney's charity.

After moving to the United States in July, Rooney scored 12 goals to guide DC United from the bottom of the Major League Soccer table into the play-offs.

But the former Manchester United and Everton forward missed a penalty in a shootout as his side were knocked out in the first round.

(Source: BBC)

## CONMEBOL reject appeal, confirm River in Libertadores final

Argentine side River Plate were confirmed as Copa Libertadores finalists on Saturday after the South American Football Confederation (CONMEBOL) threw out an appeal by their defeated semi-final opponents Gremio.

Brazilian side Gremio wanted Tuesday's result overturned after River scored two late goals in the semi-final in Porto Alegre.

River coach Marcelo Gallardo had been banned from contact with his players but entered the dressing room at half-time with his team 1-0 down.

River, who lost the home leg 1-0, won the second leg 2-1 to go through on away goals.

CONMEBOL, however, decided to ban Gallardo from entering the Bombonera stadium where the final's first leg will be held against Boca Juniors next Saturday (Nov. 10).

He was also banned from the touchline for three subsequent games and fined \$50,000.

Gremio have seven days to appeal the decision, CONMEBOL's disciplinary tribunal said in a statement.

River's last-gasp victory set them up for a hotly anticipated final against their Argentine arch-rivals Boca Juniors.

It is the first time the two sides have ever met in the final of South America's premier club competition.

The first leg of the home-and-away final is scheduled for Nov. 10 at Boca, with the second game set for two weeks later at River's Monumental stadium.

(Source: Reuters)

## Barty beats Wang to win WTA Elite Trophy

Australia's Ashleigh Barty claimed the biggest singles title of her career with victory in the WTA Elite Trophy final in Zuhai, China.

Barty, ranked 19th in the world, beat China's Wang Qiang 6-3 6-4 to claim her third WTA title.

She saved four of six break points and hit 22 winners to Wang's 15 as she closed out victory in 83 minutes.

"I'm looking forward to a bit of holiday and then getting ready for the Australian summer," Barty, 22, said.

Barty raced to a 4-0 lead in the opening set before 22nd-ranked Wang forced the match back on serve.

The Australian served out the set and, after saving a break point for 2-2, she broke Wang for a 4-3 lead before racing to victory.

It is Barty's second singles title of the year after she beat Britain's Johanna Konta at the Nottingham Open in June.

She also won the US Open women's doubles title with Coco Vandeweghe in September.

(Source: BBC)

## Allegri hails 'leader' Ronaldo as Juve hold off Cagliari

Massimiliano Allegri praised Cristiano Ronaldo's leadership skills as Juventus beat Cagliari 3-1 for their 10th win in 11 games to maintain their six-point cushion at the top of Serie A on Saturday.

Paulo Dybala scored after just 44 seconds, with a Filip Bradaric own-goal accounting for Juventus' second after 39 minutes, two minutes after Joao Pedro had pulled the Sardinians level.

Ronaldo failed to add to his seven-goal league tally for new club Juventus with the Portuguese superstar hitting the woodwork before next week's Champions League visit by former club Manchester United.

But the 33-year-old's pass across goal set up Colombian Juan Cuadrado for his first of the season three minutes from time in the Allianz Stadium.

"He has always been a leader and an extraordinary player, as you saw from the assist he put on Cuadrado's foot," said Allegri. "These are different players who in the decisive moment always come up with a goal or a great pass."

Juventus have 31 points from 11 games with Inter and Napoli both on 25 points.

It is the best ever start to a season for the Turin giants who have drawn just one game against Genoa.

Earlier, Inter Milan crushed Genoa 5-0 to reclaim second spot on goal difference ahead of Napoli, who had eased past Empoli 5-1 on Friday, and keep the pressure on the seven-time reigning champions.

But Allegri insisted: "This isn't good enough.

"We have to defend better, we concede too many goals and risked letting in an equaliser in the 85th minute.

(Source: Eurosport)

# Williams went too far in US Open row - Federer

Roger Federer says fellow tennis great Serena Williams "went too far" in her outburst at the umpire during September's US Open final.

Williams received a code violation for coaching, a penalty point for racquet abuse and a game penalty for calling the umpire a "liar" and a "thief" during her defeat by Naomi Osaka.

Federer said the incident could have been handled differently.

"I feel like Serena should have walked away," he told the Sunday Times.

"She did, but she went too far. She should have walked earlier."

Federer did, however, say Williams' actions were "a little bit excusable".

He added: "The umpire maybe should not have pushed her there. It's unfortunate, but an incredible case study."

### ■ What happened in New York?

Osaka's 6-2 6-4 victory over Williams on 9 September was overshadowed by the American's outbursts during the second set.

Williams, 37, was given a first code violation after umpire Carlos Ramos judged a gesture from coach Patrick Mouratoglou to be coaching.

The American - a 23-time Grand Slam singles champion - told Ramos she would "never cheat to win and would rather lose". Mouratoglou later admitted he had been coaching from the box.

Williams received another code violation for smashing her racquet, leading to Ramos docking her a point.

When the game finished, she called him "a liar" and "a thief". That led to Ramos docking her the next game - leaving Osaka needing just one for victory.

Williams later said it was "sexist" to have been penalised a game.

She was fined \$17,000 (£13,100) by the United States Tennis Association for the code violations.



### ■ 'What was the problem with the catsuit?'

In the Sunday Times interview, Federer also addressed the subject of female players' on-court attire.

It was announced in September that Williams would be banned from wearing a black catsuit at future French Opens, with the tournament set to introduce a stricter dress code.

She wore the outfit at the tournament in May, and said it made her "feel like a superhero".

At the US Open, meanwhile, France's Alize Cornet was given a code violation for changing her shirt on court.

"What was the problem with taking the shirt off or the catsuit?" said Federer, a 20-time Grand Slam singles champion.

"Serena has worn crazier stuff in the past. Guys have worn crazier stuff. For me it was all a bit of nonsense.

"I was totally on the women's side. Leave them alone."

(Source: BBC)

## LeBron backs Lakers' coaching staff after big win over Blazers



With heightened attention on Luke Walton following his tense meeting with Magic Johnson, LeBron James said the coaching staff put the Los Angeles Lakers "in a position" to score perhaps their biggest victory of the season thus far.

ESPN reported Friday that Johnson had chided Walton in a meeting earlier this week.

The Lakers responded by holding on for a 114-110 road win and snapping a 16-game losing streak to the Trail Blazers on Saturday. "I mean, it's great to win, period," James said when asked about winning amid the drama surrounding Walton. "Listen, coaching staff put us in a position to win, and it's up to us to go up and execute.

"Luke can care less about what's going on outside. We could as well. I'm the last person to ask about scrutiny or anything of that nature. So none of that stuff matters to me. The only thing that matters to me is what goes on inside this locker room, both home and away."

The Lakers (4-5) led 97-77 with 9:16 remaining, but they had some nervous moments when Portland sliced it to five with 1:03 left. JaVale McGee, who continues to be a revelation for the Lakers, came up with a big offensive rebound and then a reverse layup to push the lead to seven before the Lakers held on.

James scored 10 of his 28 points in the fourth and delivered a key block on Jusuf Nurkic under the basket with the Lakers clinging to a six-point lead with just over a minute to go.

This was the second straight game in which the Lakers avoided a collapse. They nearly blew a 19-point lead to the Dallas Mavericks on Wednesday at home.

Nevertheless, the Lakers -- who are still learning to mesh with a roster made up of veterans and a young developing core surrounding James -- believe their ability to survive the past two tension-filled fourth quarters is a sign of their growth.

The Lakers have struggled at times to come up with stops and scores in the clutch. Despite going through more fourth-quarter difficulties in Portland, they were very encouraged to come away with a triumph in a place where they lost in the season opener.

"It just shows that what we're doing is working," Walton said of beating the Blazers for the first time since March 3, 2014. "It's tough to get a win in Portland [even] when they don't have a good team. When they got the team that they have right now, it's even more challenging. So you don't just come up here and get hot and beat Portland."

(Source: ESPN)

## Ramos 'not aware' at being booed by Bernabeu fans vs. Valladolid



Sergio Ramos' every touch was jeered by Real Madrid fans during the opening exchanges during his side's 2-0 victory over Valladolid -- but the Bernabeu skipper said he was not aware of any booing.

Ramos was one of number of Madrid players targeted by the home fans following a difficult week in which they were beaten 5-1 by Barcelona in El Clasico and saw Julen Lopetegui sacked as manager.

Speaking after the narrow victory, Ramos claimed not to have heard whistles aimed in his direction and noted the more positive atmosphere in the stadium at the end of the game.

"I honestly did not notice that, but those of us who are here the longest must take on this role," Ramos told BeIN Sports. "And as captain I am proud that they fill my rucksack with stones and to have to pull from the front."

"My pride is what has got me where I am today, and beating all the records I have beaten. We understand how the fans feel. We are the ones who must change this, and after the goal it seemed like the Bernabeu lifted again. With more results we will get back the confidence of the fans in a team which has won a lot."

Gareth Bale was also jeered when he was substituted with the score at 0-0. New

boss Santiago Solari defended his players, however, and said they were hurting just as much as the supporters.

"This team has great professionals with a lot of experience," Solari said. "Obviously there are difficult moments, with 80,000 people, and you feel what they are thinking."

"But it is important for this group that have won so much to have the fans with them. The players did great today, had patience and did not lose their organisation. And in the end we got the victory."

"It is always like that in football -- it is about spirit, confidence, and after the first goal the dynamic changed."

Madrid once again struggled with both goals coming inside the final seven minutes through a Kiko Olivas own goal and a penalty by Ramos.

The introduction of 18-year-old Vinicius Junior was greeted with loud cheers by the crowd, with the Brazilian forward taking the ambitious shot which was going well wide before hitting Olivas and bouncing into the net for the opening goal.

"I told [Vinicius he was] going on to be brave and take people on; and not forget his defensive duties -- but above all to go for it," Solari said. "It is good if the fans get excited about what a player he can be."

(Source: Soccernet)

## Marquez wins Malaysian MotoGP as Rossi crashes out of lead

World champion Marc Marquez fought his way from seventh place on the starting grid to win the Malaysian MotoGP Sunday, as Valentino Rossi crashed out while leading four laps from the end.

Suzuki's Alex Rins came in second after overtaking Yamaha rider Johann Zarco, who finished third, in the final stage of a hard-fought race at Sepang in baking hot temperatures.

Italian star Rossi, a nine-time world champion who has struggled recently to find form against younger foes, appeared on course for his first win in Malaysia since 2010 after a strong start from second on the grid put him firmly in the lead.

But Honda's Marquez, who won the world title last month for the fifth time in motorcycling's premier class, methodically fought his way up through the pack after beginning near the back.

The Spaniard, who qualified in pole position but was hit with a six-place grid penalty for impeding another rider, made it to second place and was starting to close the gap on Rossi, 39.

It looked like the final stage of the Malaysian Grand Prix would be a classic battle between two MotoGP titans



known for their fierce rivalry.

But as he rounded a sharp turn on the 16th lap, Yamaha rider Rossi leaned over too far and tumbled off his bike -- effectively handing victory to his 25-year-old foe.

Rossi, who has won in the premier class at Sepang on five

previous occasions, got back on his bike but only managed to finish a lacklustre 18th.

"It is a great, great shame. I am very disappointed for the mistake," admitted a crestfallen Rossi, who has not won a race this season.

"It is frustrating."

But he tried to look on the bright side: "It is the best race of the season for me, it is also coming in a difficult condition and a difficult track for us. This is important."

Marquez cruised to a comfortable victory in 40 min 32.372 sec, with Rins and Zarco left far behind battling it out for second place.

Marquez, who notched up his ninth win of the season Sunday and his first in Malaysia since 2014, said that fighting his way up from the back was not easy.

"It was a very, very, very hard race," he said, but added that having the odds stacked against with a third row start proved to be an "extra motivation".

It is not the first time this season that Marquez has lost his pole position due to a penalty, and nevertheless gone on to victory.

(Source: AFP)



# Iran, Trinidad and Tobago friendly confirmed

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iran national football team will play Trinidad and Tobago in a friendly match on Nov. 15.

The warm up match will be held in Tehran's Azadi Stadium as part of preparation for the 2019 AFC Asian Cup.

“The match against Iran will be a good warm-up for us ahead of the 2019 CONCACAF Gold Cup. Iran are a strong team and sit in the 33rd place in FIFA ranking. They had an excellent performance in the 2018 World Cup and it shows how good they are,” Trinidad and Tobago head coach Dennis Lawrence said.

Iran defeated Trinidad and Tobago 2-0 ahead of the 2014 World Cup thanks to the goals from Ehsan Haji Safi and Reza Ghoochannejhad at the Corinthians soccer team training center in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Iran defeated Bolivia 2-1 in a friendly match on Oct. 16 at the Azadi Stadium.

The Iranian media reports suggest that Team Melli will face Venezuela in Doha, Qatar on Nov. 20.

Iran have been drawn in AFC Asian Cup Group D along with Iraq, Yemen and Vietnam.



## Iran to host IFCPF Asia-Oceania Championships

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iran will host the 2018 IFCPF (International Federation of Cerebral Palsy Football) Asia-Oceania Championships in late November.

The prestigious competition will be held in the Iran's southern Kish Island, located in the Persian Gulf, from Nov. 22 to 30.

Iran (host), Australia, South Korea, Jordan and Thailand will compete at the eight-day competition.

Iran will meet Thailand on Nov. 24 in the opening match, while Australia face South Korea.

“We invited young players to our team after the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games. Team Melli have held five training camps so far and are ready to participate at the IFCPF Asia-Oceania Championships. The competition can be considered as good preparation for the world championship,”

Iran coach Ali Boka said.

2018 IFCPF Asia-Oceania Championships is an important event for the participants since the champions will automatically qualify for an undisclosed fee.

Football 7-a-side was introduced to the Paralympics during the 1984 New York Games, originally called Cerebral Palsy football. The sport now includes athletes with other brain injuries and similar conditions.

Football 7-a-side is governed by the Cerebral Palsy International Sports and Recreation Association (CPISRA) using the modified rules of the International Federation of Associated Football (FIFA).

International Paralympic Committee (IPC) decided Football 7-a-side is not included in the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games.

## Ivankovic expects second leg comeback



The first leg of the 2018 AFC Champions League final may not have gone to Persepolis' plans but head coach Branko Ivankovic is confident his team will bounce back in Tehran next week.

Second-half goals from Leo Silva and Serginho secured Japan's Kashima Antlers a 2-0 win in Saturday's first leg, leaving Persepolis to rue what it could have been.

The Islamic Republic of Iran giants started the match aggressively and had a couple of early sights at goal but their intensity dropped in the second half, allowing Kashima to take a good lead into next Saturday's return fixture in Azadi Stadium.

“Firstly, I would like to congratulate Kashima for their win but we still have another match in Tehran next week and I am both hopeful and confident that we will bounce back,” said Ivankovic.

“I agree that this is a good result for Kashima. A big result in fact but the final isn't over and we will do our homework and come back stronger in the second leg.”

That the Iranians will be up for it is

definite for they took - at least for the opening 20 minutes on Saturday - the game to Kashima and an early goal would have surely changed the complexion of the game for Persepolis.

Ivankovic admitted that his side lost some of their edge in the second half and this allowed Kashima to gradually take control and ultimately seal the win.

“We tried to play with the same intensity in the second half but couldn't and this allowed Kashima to control the game. Even then, I am satisfied with the performance of my players.”

Ivankovic is counting on the home fans to push them to a famous comeback in the return leg, as they did in the Round of 16 and quarter-finals when Persepolis overcame first leg deficits advance.

“Just as the Kashima fans did for them, I am expecting our fans to cheer my players on to victory. We can do it, especially with the backing of the thousands who will be in the stadium for the return leg.”

(Source: the-afc)

## Half-time pep talk revitalizes Kashima



Go Oiwa's half-time pep talk had the desired effect as Kashima Antlers bounced back from a lethargic opening 45 minutes to score a 2-0 win over Persepolis in the first leg of the 2018 AFC Champions League final on Saturday.

The capacity crowd at the Kashima Soccer Stadium had endured a nervous first-half as Islamic Republic of Iran's Persepolis took the match to the home team, with the Central Asians unlucky not to have taken the lead on a couple of occasions.

A more settled Kashima were able to control the match better in the second half and Brazilian duo Leo Silva and Serginho struck one each for the Japanese side to take a 2-0 lead into next Saturday's return leg at Tehran's Azadi Stadium.

“I stressed to the players during the break that we had not played to our normal standard from the first blow of the whistle in the first half,” said Oiwa.

“Persepolis were very positive and aggressive while we were slightly negative

in our play.”

Persepolis certainly started brightly as they pinned Kashima in their own half and the Iranians had more looks on goal than the Japanese side did.

Oiwa said he told his players to play a more attacking game in the second half.

“We were too defensive in the first half and this allowed Persepolis to come at us. We changed that in the second half.

“We pushed forward more, used our flanks more freely which stretched their defence. This allowed us to go through the middle and create chances and score.”

Oiwa described his team's second half performance as ideal but said Kashima can't yet think that they have their hands on a first ever AFC Champions League title.

“This was just the first half and we need to focus on the second leg and our J League challenge as well. It was good to have won but we must concentrate on getting ready for the second leg.”

(Source: the-afc)

## Saudi Arabia emerge champions

Saudi Arabia claimed the AFC U-19 Championship Indonesia 2018 title on Sunday thanks to a hard-fought 2-1 win over Korea Republic.

A scintillating first half display, with the talismanic Turki Al Ammar to the fore, proved the difference at Bogor's Pakansari Stadium, as the Saudis sealed their third title success at this level, and their first since 1992.

Both sides, along with beaten semi-finalists Qatar and Japan, will now go on to represent the Asian Football Confederation at next year's FIFA U-20 World Cup in Poland.

On a night of high drama, it took Saudi Arabia less than two minutes to break the deadlock, Al Ammar firing home after Korea Republic goalkeeper Lee Gwang-yeon had done well to save Abdulmohsen Al Qahtani's initial shot.

With Saudi Arabia sensing a second, Lee Gwang-yeon smothered Hassan Al Tambakti's header from Khalid Al Ghannam's corner on the line, before excelling once again to divert Al Ammar's firm strike behind for a corner in the 12th minute.

Korea Republic responded through Go Jae-Hyeon's

strike which Abdulrahman Al Shammari parried to the feet of Um Won-Sang who could only drill the rebound over the bar.

It was, though, to prove a false dawn for the Koreans as a rampant Saudi Arabia extended their lead on 22 minutes, this time Al Ghannam sending a delightful shot over Lee Gwang-yeon from distance much to the delight of their supporters.

Midfielder Hamed Alghamdi then forced Lee Gwang-yeon into another fine stop, only for Cho Young-wook to fizz a shot inches past the post as Korea Republic valiantly searched for a way back into the match.

After seeing Al Ghannam's curling effort go agonizingly wide, and in the last genuine chance of a pulsating first half, Kim Hyun-woo headed Goo Boon-cheul's whipped free-kick narrowly off target to leave Saudi Arabia in the ascendancy ahead of the second period.

In a bright start to the second period, another Kim Hyun-woo headed attempt only just landed on the wrong side of Al Shammari's right-hand upright, before

Al Ammar struck a post with a scuffed shot from 14 yards on 48 minutes.

With their need clearly the greater, Korea Republic continued to prod and probe, and they reduced the deficit in the 64th minute, Cho calmly dispatching a penalty after Jeon Se-jin had been upended in the area by Muhannad Al Shanqiti.

Clearly buoyed by the goal, Korea Republic work tirelessly to find an equalizer, Lee Jae-ik's rampaging run and cross narrowly failing to find a teammate, and Cho forcing Al Shammari into a diving save with less than quarter of an hour remaining.

As the tension showed no sign of subsiding, a sliding Jeon could, and very possibly should, have restored parity moments later when he steered his attempt at the far post wide of the target following Um's pinpoint delivery.

It was not to be for Korea Republic though as Saudi Arabia duly held on to claim the continental crown and spark wild celebrations.

(Source: Fox Sports Asia)

## Iran advance to AUSF Football Cup quarters

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iran booked a place at quarter-finals of the AUSF (Asian University Sports Federation) Football Cup.

Iran, which is represented by the University of Applied Science and Technology (UAST), defeated the Malaysian team 6-0 on Sunday.

Iran, headed by Farshad Karami, had already defeated the teams from China and Hong Kong in the competition.

The fourth edition of the competition is being held in Jinjiang, China from 29th October to 11th November 2018.

The competition organized by the Asian University Sports Federation has brought China, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Oman, South Korea, Nepal, Hong Kong, Macau, Mongolia, Malaysia, Chinese Taipei, Vietnam and the UAE together.

The top two teams will qualify for the FISU University World Cup.

## Nottingham Forest coach Karanka lauds Ansarifard

Nottingham Forest coach Aitor Karanka has praised their new signing Karim Ansarifard.

The 28-year-old striker joined the English side on Saturday an 18-month contract for an undisclosed fee.

At club level, Ansarifard spent seven years in the Iranian league before signing for Spanish club Osasuna, where he spent a single season ahead of a move to Greece.

In the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia, he scored a late equalizer against Portugal in the group stage.

“Karim is an important signing because he gives us an alternative option,” Karanka said.

“He is a very good player, he'll be a good person in the changing room and he has shown how hungry he is to succeed,” the coach added.

(Source: nottinghamforest.co.uk)

## AFC stands with Palestine FA

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has expressed its concern at incidents which are reported to have taken place in East Jerusalem last week.

The AFC received reports from the Palestine Football Association that Israeli military personnel entered the headquarters of Silwan FC, a Palestinian football club, based in East Jerusalem.

The AFC has been a strong supporter of Palestine FA complaints to FIFA and subsequently the Court of Arbitration for Sport about Israeli interference in the football infrastructure in Palestine.

The AFC insists that the sovereignty of the PFA must be recognised and must be defended. The entire AFC Executive Committee has consistently adopted a very strong position in support of the principle and the AFC stands alongside the Palestine FA.

(Source: the-afc)

## Italian Muay Thai boxer dies

An Italian man and former world champion in Muay Thai and boxing has tragically following a fight in Bangkok.

Christian Daghigho, 49, died on Friday in hospital in Bangkok after being put in a coma due to injuries suffered during a WBC Asia title match against Don Parueang on October 26th.

Footage of the fight posted on YouTube showed Daghigho being knocked out in the 12th round after taking multiple punches to the head and face. He could then be seen being treated by medical staff inside the ring before later being rushed to hospital.

Daghigho, who had over 200 professional fights, won seven world titles in Muay Thai and boxing.

He moved to Pattaya more than twenty years ago where he ran the Kombat Group training facility.

He had also spent time working as a volunteer for the Tourist Police, who paid tribute to Daghigho on their Facebook page.

Daghigho's brother, Fabrizio, who was also his manager, said: “Christian died as he wanted to die, that is in the ring.”

“He dreamed of fighting until he was 80 years old”, Fabrizio told Italian media.

Daghigho leaves behind his wife and five year old daughter. News sites in Italy described Daghigho as a “legend of Muay Thai”.

(Source: Khaosodenglish)



## Justin Rose to return to world No. 1

England's Justin Rose regained the world number one spot after successfully defending his Turkish Airlines Open title, overcoming China's Li Haotong in a playoff on Sunday.

Rose carded five birdies in a typically consistent display to take a one-shot advantage after 16 holes in the final round at the Antalya event but bogeyed the 17th hole to slip to a share of the lead with overnight leader Li.

Two lacklustre putts on the 18th from both Li and Rose meant they both finished at 17-under-par after 72 holes.

A Li three-putt on their return to the 18th hole for the playoff handed Rose the victory that moves him above American Brooks Koepka at the top of the world rankings.

Belgian Thomas Detry and Spaniard Adrian Otaegui both finished with rounds of 65 to share third on 15-under.

Dane Lucas Bjerregaard and German Martin Kaymer ended the tournament at 14-under, a shot clear English pair Tommy Fleetwood and Danny Willett, and another Dane, Thorbjorn Olesen.

(Source: AP)



INTERNATIONAL DAILY  
www.tehrantimes.com

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» Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603  
» www.eshterak.ir Distributor: Padideh Novin Co.  
Tel: 88911433  
» Webmaster: webmaster@tehrantimes.com  
» Printed at: Rooztab - ISSN: 1017-94

No. 18, Bimeh Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran  
P.o. Box: 14155-4843  
Zip Code: 1599814713



## Iranian architects receive nominations at 2018 MEA Awards

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Twenty-one designs and architects from Iran are among the nominees for the 2018 Middle East Architect Awards, which were announced by the organizers last week.



Golshahr Mosque and Plaza by Arash G. Tehrani.

The Iranian nominees in the Landscape Design of the Year category are the Thirty-Pine Villa by Aleshtar Architectural Office and the City Hall Square Rehabilitation by Polsheer Architects.

Valiasr Mosque by Fluid Motion Architects is the sole Iranian nominee in the Community & Cultural Project of the Year section.

Villa Safadasht by Kamran Heirati Architects, Hamsaye Apartment by Razan Architects, V Villa by Reza Asadzadeh and Shabnam Khalilpour, and the Mahallat Residence by CAAT Studio are contending for the award for the Residential Project of the Year.

In the Public Sector & Education Project of the Year section, the Fazili Educational Complex by Mohammad Shamaeizadeh and Shirin Shariffar and Sam Building by Navid Emami are competing.

Arash G. Tehrani and Mohammad Khavarian are the nominees for the Young Architect of the Year award while Behzad Atabaki and Amir-Hossein Tabrizi were nominated for the Architect of the Year award.

L.E.D Architects from Tehran received a nomination in the Boutique Firm of the Year category.

Iranian architects and firms did not receive nominations in several sections.

Winners will be announced during a special ceremony in Dubai on November 21.

## “Track 143” director Narges Abyar on Listapad jury panel

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Narges Abyar, director of the acclaimed movies “Track 143” and “Breath”, has been selected for a jury of the 25th Minsk International Film Festival Listapad underway in Belarus.



Narges Abyar at the 25th Minsk International Film Festival Listapad.

Last year, Abyar received Special Jury Award for Best Director for “Breath” in the Children and Youth Film Competition, and Sareh Nur-Musavi won the Best Young Actress Award for her role in the film.

## “Gladiator 2” in the works from Ridley Scott

**LONDON (Guardian)** — Ridley Scott has begun to develop a sequel to “Gladiator”.

According to Deadline, the director is set to take on the project for Paramount with a script to be written by Peter Craig, whose credits include “The Town” and the forthcoming sequel “Top Gun: Maverick”.

The story will reportedly focus on Lucius, the son of Lucilla, played by Connie Nielsen in the 2000 original. Lucius was also the nephew of Commodus, played by Joaquin Phoenix, who killed Russell Crowe’s Maximus at the end of the film.

After Gladiator made \$460m worldwide and won five Oscars, including best picture, talk of a sequel has come up in the years since. Nick Cave took it upon himself to write his own take that would have brought back Maximus from the dead via the body of a slain Christian martyr.

# Iranian nominees for 2020 Hans Christian Andersen Awards announced

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — The Children’s Book Council of Iran has nominated author Farhad Hassanzadeh and illustrator Farshid Shafiei for the 2020 Hans Christian Andersen Awards.

The International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) in Basel, Switzerland presents the awards to a living author and illustrator whose complete works have made a lasting contribution to children’s literature.

Hassanzadeh has authored over 80 books, including “The Backyard”, “The 7th Bench by the Lake”, “Bambak’s Scorpions”, “Watermelon with Love” and “Call Me Ziba”. Shafiei has illustrated many books including “Iron Shoes” written by Farideh Khalatbari, “Shahrzad” written by Farideh Khalatbari, “Zarbal” by Jamaledin Akrami, “My Tales” by Marjan Keshavarzi Azad and “Farshid” by Mahdokht Kashkuli.

Junko Yokota, a professor of children’s literature from the U.S., will preside over the jury of the 2020 Hans Christian Andersen Award.

The members are Mariella Bertelli from Canada, Denis Beznosov from Russia, Tina Bilban from Slovenia, Yasuko Doi from Japan, Nadia El Kholi from Egypt, Viviane Ezratty from France, Eva Kaliskami from Greece, Robin Morrow from Australia, Cecilia Ana Repetti from Argentina and Ulla Rhedin from Sweden.



An illustration by Farshid Shafiei.

## Peyman Maadi crowned best director at Bosphorus Film Festival



Peyman Maadi (L) and Leila Hatami act in a scene from “Bomb, a Love Story”.

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Peyman Maadi was picked as best director for his Iranian drama “Bomb, a Love Story” at the 6th International Bosphorus Film Festival in Istanbul, the organizers announced on Saturday.

Maadi is also the writer of the screenplay for the film, whose story is set in 1988 at the height of the Iran-Iraq war as Tehran is bombed relentlessly. The days that pass are full of foreboding, and yet love, affection, hope and life itself manage to sweep away the fear of death from those surrounded by it.

The festival also honored Iranian director Babak Jalali with the jury

special award for his latest film “Land”.

“Screwdriver” by Palestinian director Bassam Jarbawi received the Golden Dolphin for best film.

Kushtrim Hoxha was named best actor for his role in Ismet Sijarina’s drama, “Cold November”, a co-production between Albania and Serbia.

Valeria Bertuccelli won the award for best actress for her role in “The Queen of Fear” that she co-directed with Fabiana Tiscornia.

Iranian director/writer Parviz Shahbazi who won the award for best screenwriter at last year’s festival, was the president of the jury this year. Belçim Bilgin, Iris Ng and Marc Baschet were members of the panel.

## Mark Wallinger wants football teams in the UK to kick his artworks

**LONDON (Guardian)** — Up to 2,000 artworks by the Turner prize-winning artist Mark Wallinger are to be distributed to grassroots football teams across the UK with the message — please do kick it.

Wallinger was commissioned to create a new work of art by the Liverpool Biennial and 14-18 NOW, the UK arts program marking the first world war centenary.

He has been inspired by the Christmas Truce events of 1914 when, possibly, British and German soldiers came out of the trenches, exchanged gifts and played a game of football.

The artist has used a football as a canvas, digitally printing on it a NASA satellite photograph of the world. Wallinger said he had in mind the celebrated Earthrise image taken during the Apollo 8 lunar orbit on December 24, 1968.

The resulting artwork is called ‘One World’, a contribution Wallinger said to the legacy of the Armistice signed 100 years ago and the Earthrise photograph 50 years ago.

“I wanted to make something which was hopeful,” said Wallinger. “It’s time to stop fighting and start playing, play the beautiful game... the world would be a better place.

“Let’s take that image of a precious and fragile world into the future and celebrate the joy of playing together.”

Editions of the work will be sent to community and grassroots football teams across the UK with a request that people, with “whatever creative inspiration they



Mark Wallinger with his ‘One World’ artwork. (John Nguyen/PA)

might have”, upload their own #OneWorld video message.

Wallinger is one of the UK’s leading contemporary artists, winning the Turner Prize in 2007 for his installation State Britain. His work Ecce Homo was the first piece to occupy the empty fourth plinth in Trafalgar Square and he represented Britain at the Venice Biennale in 2001.

He hopes teams will use the football for what it is meant for. “It needs to be used,” Wallinger said. “It is very hard to keep a football indoors, it really needs to get outside. It is an infectious thing. If a ball rolls towards you in the park, you’ve got to kick it.”

The 1914 football match is embedded in the national psyche although whether it actually took is another matter. Wallinger is a believer although he added: “I’m not sure it matters. There were other truces during the war, a kind of live and let live policy, tacit agreements to make repairs and gather the wounded.

## Italy’s National Museum of Cinema CEO visits Film Museum of Iran



Sergio Toffetti, the director of Italy’s National Museum of Cinema, poses at the Film Museum of Iran in Tehran on November 3, 2018. (FMI)

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Sergio Toffetti, president of the National Museum of Cinema in Turin, visited the Film Museum of Iran (FMI) in Tehran on Saturday, the FMI has announced.

Toffetti also held a meeting with FMI director Alireza Qasemkhan after his visit to the different sections of the museum.

He said that the National Museum of Cinema in Turin preserves a collection of 200 Iranian feature, documentary and animated films from filmmakers such as Bahram Beizai, Amir Naderi, Manuchehr Tayyab, Nasser Taqvai and Shahrokh Golestan.

The two directors also discussed en-

hancing bilateral relations between the cinemas of Iran and Italy.

Toffetti is in Iran to attend a five-day session on the Italian neorealist cinema that opened at the Film Museum of Iran on Thursday.

Italian neorealism is a national film movement that is characterized by stories set among the poor and the working class.

The program reviews Roberto Rossellini’s 1945 war thriller “Rome, Open City” and Vittorio De Sica’s movies “Shoeshine” (1946), “Bicycle Thieves” (1948), “Miracle in Milan” (1951) and “Umberto D.” (1952).

An exhibition of posters and stills from the Italian neorealist films has also been organized on the sidelines of the event.

## “Cool to vote”: Hollywood election telethon aims to get youth to polls

**LOS ANGELES (Reuters)** — Hollywood celebrities will make a push next week to urge young people to the polls in Tuesday’s U.S. elections, when control of Congress and many state governorships are at stake.

In a first-of-its-kind event, more than 50 actors, comedians and YouTube stars will join a two-hour, live-streamed telethon on Monday night aimed at firing up younger voters, the age group least likely to cast a ballot.

Stars will not ask for money during the “Telethon for America.” Instead, they will urge viewers to call in to a celebrity phone bank and pledge to vote the next day.

Comedian Chelsea Handler, who left her Netflix (NFLX.O) talk show a year ago to focus on activism, said she believes young people expect “older, more responsible adults” will act to solve problems through government.

“They just think someone else is going to take care of it, it’s not their problem and they may not be directly affected by it,” Handler, who is 43, said in an interview.

Turnout in midterm elections is traditionally lower than in presidential elections. Reuters/Ipsos polling bit.ly/2yNqop7 found that in October only 25 percent of people aged 18-29 said they were certain to vote in the election, the lowest percentage of any age bracket.

Leonardo DiCaprio and Brad Pitt on Friday added their voices to the campaign



Netflix show host Chelsea Handler appears on stage at Politicon, “the unconventional political convention”, at the Pasadena Convention Center in Pasadena, California, U.S., July 29, 2017. (Reuters/Andrew Cullen)

to get out the vote.

“This election might be the most consequential of our lifetime,” DiCaprio said in a video message with Pitt released on social media, mentioning issues like gun control, the environment and immigration, without referencing any political party.

While the organizers of Monday’s event say it is a nonpartisan effort, increased turnout among young voters could help Democrats. Forty percent of people in that age group identified as Democrats, while 22 percent called themselves Republicans.

Jane Fonda, Charlize Theron, Judd Apatow and others will participate in the telethon.

Viewers will be directed to information about how and where to vote in the elections.