



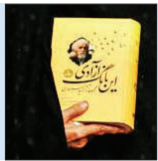
Condolences on demise anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and martyrdom anniversaries of Imam Hassan and Imam Reza (AS).



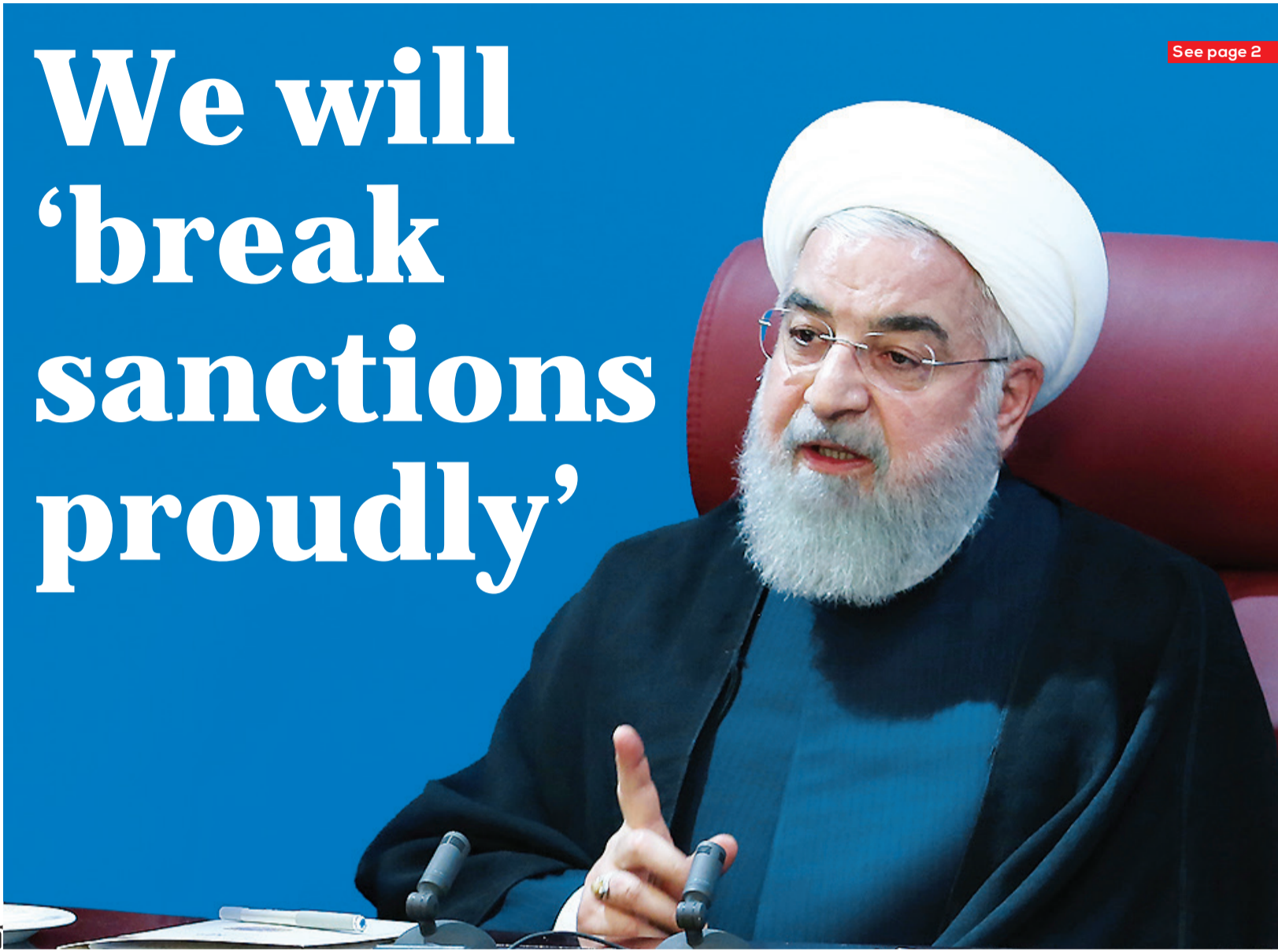
**Zarif says 'JCPOA is still strong'**  
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# We will 'break sanctions proudly'

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## Russia briefs Iran on quadrilateral Syria talks

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Alexander Lavrentiev, the Russian president's special envoy for Syria, said on Monday that had come to Iran to brief Tehran on the quadrilateral Syria talks in Istanbul and also to announce support for Iran against the U.S. sanctions. During a meeting with Ali Shamkhani, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, Lavrentiev said that Iran plays a

"constructive role" in Syria's peace process. On October 27, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel held a quadrilateral summit on Syria in the Turkish city of Istanbul. While Iran was not present in the summit, both the Russian and Turkish presidents underlined the role of Tehran in the Syria peace process. →2

## Pompeo: Sanctions intended to change Iran's behavior

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — U.S. sanctions on Iran are meant to make Tehran "change their ways", Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Monday, according to Washington Examiner. The sanctions will mount the highest pressure ever on Iran, he said, as Washington reimposed sanctions on Iran's

banking, energy and shipping industries. Eight countries - China, India, Greece, Italy, Taiwan, Japan, Turkey and South Korea - get temporary exemption from the oil sanctions, he added, Reuters reported. Pompeo said more than 20 countries have already cut their oil imports from Iran, reducing purchases by more than 1 million barrels per day.

## 2nd round of oil sales at IRNEX on Nov. 11

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) will offer 700,000 barrels of light crude oil at Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX) for the second time on November 11, IRNA reported on Monday. The set price for this round of oil sale is \$76.29 per barrel, the report added. On October 28, just few days before

new U.S. sanctions on Iran's petroleum sector took effect (November 4), NIOC could sell some 280,000 barrels of crude oil at \$74.85 per barrel on the first day of offering crude oil for export at the international ring of IRENEX. With the daily supply amount of one million barrels per day, the market wrappled up by selling eight 35,000-barrel-cargos of oil on the day. →4

## U.S. won't be able to impose its will 100% on Iran: ex-White House official

**EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW**  
By Javad Heirannia

TEHRAN — Professor Frank N. von Hippel, former assistant director for national security in the White House Office of Science and Technology says that it was a terrible mistake for the Trump Administration to take the United States out of the JCPOA. "The U.S. has lost credibility with the other permanent members of the UN Security Council, Germany and the EU," Frank N. von Hippel tells the Tehran Times in an exclusive interview. He adds that I don't think that the U.S. will be able to impose its will 100% on Iran and some countries will circumvent the sanctions.



Following is the full 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: It was a terrible mistake for the Trump Administration to take the United States out of the JCPOA. The U.S. has lost credibility with the other permanent members of the UN Security Council, Germany and the EU and, if Iran reacts by ending its own compliance with the JCPOA, we might be on a path to war. The United States does not need another unnecessary and costly war.  
■ 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: I suppose that these other countries could find other sources of oil but it is also possible that some of them will circumvent U.S. sanctions and continue to buy Iranian oil. →13

## "There is no justification for Nigerian Army to shoot at and kill unarmed Shiite protestors"

By Syed Zafar Mehdi

TEHRAN — Last week, on the day of Arbaeen, thousands of Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN) supporters took part in a series of peaceful protests in the Nigerian capital Abuja to demand the release of their incarcerated leader Sheikh Ibraheem Zakzaky. Nigerian security forces used live ammunition to crush the protest, leading to the death of at least 50 people. Human rights groups quoting eyewitness testimonies said the Nigerian military dispersed peaceful gatherings by firing indiscriminately without warning, in blatant violation of international and Nigerian law. Muhammadu Buhari government, despite the global outcry and court orders, continues to keep IMN leader Sheikh Zakzaky behind bars.

Oluyemi Fasipe is a Nigerian political analyst, social activist and communication strategist. In an interview with Tehran Times, he talks about the latest army crackdown on the supporters of IMN and the horrendous atrocities unleashed on Nigerian Shias by the Buhari government, backed by Western and Arab powers. Following are the excerpts:  
■ Nigerian police at the behest of Buhari government carried out another gory massacre against Shiites on the day of Arbaeen this year. Can you tell us exactly what happened?  
A: The army claimed that the Shiites attacked their convoy that was escorting ammunitions and attempted to overpower them, but the video circulated online only shows the army shooting at them while they

run away. The Nigerian Shiites are known for peaceful protests.  
■ Nigerian army cited a video of U.S. President Donald Trump, in which he said soldiers should respond with force to migrants throwing stones, to justify opening fire on the supporters of the Islamic Movement in Nigeria. How would you react to that?  
A: I have never been more embarrassed as a Nigerian. In the purported video of Trump, he was talking about Mexican immigrants trying to cross into the U.S. illegally and he later backtracked on it. The Nigerian Army has no justification whatsoever to shoot at and kill unarmed protestors simply because they belong to a Muslim sect different from that of the President. There can be no justification to it whatsoever. →6

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

## Trump's 'Iran sanctions' bluster boomerangs

U.S. President Donald Trump's lame attempts at projecting himself as a formidable world leader continue to boomerang. This week, he released a meme on his official Twitter handle, intended to replicate the uber-popular book series/TV show Games of Thrones (GOT) message, warning Iranians that the sanctions were coming. The image that read 'Sanctions Are Coming' - a reference to GOT saying 'Winter Is Coming' with imagery and typeface similar to the popular show was widely shared over social media with messages mocking the megalomaniac president and the wisdom behind posting such a ridiculous meme. After the tweet, HBO issued a statement, catching Trump off guard. "We are not aware of this messaging and would prefer our trademark not be misappropriated for political purposes," the statement read. Trump knew he had miscalculated again but there was no way for damage control. It was followed by heaps of scorn and sarcasm directed at the U.S. president, who seems to have redefined buffoonery and foolhardiness. Pertinently, the author of Game of Thrones series - George R. R. Martin - had once used his own creation to mock at the U.S. President, comparing him with King Joffrey, an iniquitous child who killed for fun and adopted extremely nasty ways. "I think Joffrey is now the king in America," he said in an interview to Esquire last year. "And he has grown up just as petulant and irrational as he was when he was thirteen in the books." Interestingly, Martin is not the only one to make such a comparison. Days before Trump's inauguration, Jimmy Fallon joked at the Golden Globes - "What would it be like if King Joffrey had lived... Well, in 12 days we are going to find out," drawing laughter from the packed hall. Trump's facetious meme elicited reactions on expected lines. "Not today," wrote GOT actor Maisie Williams, who plays the role of youngest surviving Stark sibling. In season one, when a sword-fighting instructor would ask her: "What do we say to death?" she would reply, "not today". →6

**REPORT**  
Fateme Salehi  
Mehr News Agency Journalist

## Arab NATO against Iran, an unfulfilled dream

The largest military drill - land, naval, air and special forces kicked off in Egypt on Sunday with participation of the U.S., Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Jordan, and the observers Morocco and Lebanon. The drill is held at the Mohamed Naguib Military Base in Egypt's north-western governorate of Marsa Matruh until November 16. The exercise, dubbed Arab Shield 1, claims to come in the framework of strengthening joint military cooperation between Egypt and Arab countries, to build the combat capabilities of the armed forces, and achieve common objectives. This is a military campaign that has long been the subject of talks and statements from the rise of the Arab NATO. Interestingly, Qatar and Oman did not participate in this exercise, and the location of the drill, shows that Egypt, with the largest Arab army is likely to be the headquarters of the Arab NATO. The objective of this NATO surely is not to confront the Zionist regime, since the Arab states are moving towards normalization of their relations with Tel Aviv, which has intensified recently. In fact, the U.S. government seeks to end the step-by-step implementation of the century deal and unveil it in the latest plan to form a new security and military order in the region. Hence, the ultimate goal of this military-security organization is to confront opposition of the new order, and at the head of them lay Iran, and the Palestinian and Lebanese resistance forces. The military exercise comes only a month after the meeting of U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo with the foreign ministers of Arab states in New York. Earlier, Persian Gulf military commanders held a meeting in Kuwait at the invitation of U.S. military commanders in the region. U.S. President Donald Trump's government is pursuing to launch a so-called Arabic version of the NATO coalition to confront Iran by putting subtle pressure on the Persian Gulf Arab States along with Egypt and Jordan. Of course, this coalition will be formed partly under the name of the Middle East Strategic Alliance (MESA), but it is also known as the Arab NATO. →7



## Military holds air defense drill

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — On Monday, Iranian armed forces launched an air defense war game under the leadership of the Khatam ul-Anbia Air Defense Base. Dubbed "Air Defense of Velayat" [guardianship], the two-day war game is held in an area of 500,000 square kilometers by the Aerospace Force of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps, some flying legions of the Army's Air Force, and a reconnaissance and surveillance network. The drill kicked off under the command of Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, the deputy army chief for coordination affairs. →2

**MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS**



**Alavi: 11 terror groups disbanded during Arbaeen**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Iranian Intelligence Minister Mahmoud Alavi announced on Monday that more than 300 terrorist acts were foiled and 11 terrorist groups were disbanded during the Arbaeen march, Mehr reported.

Alavi also pointed to the hegemonic powers' animosity toward the Islamic Republic, saying such enmity is not because of human rights, women's rights and the like, but due to Iran's "political independence" and "regional influence".

"The enemies have failed to reach their goals, he said, adding, "Today, the Islamic Republic of Iran, with the guidance of the Leader of the Revolution, is more powerful and thriving than ever."



**U.S. bullying backfiring, FM says**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — In response to the restoration of a new round of sanction against Iran by the U.S., Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said the U.S. bullying is backfiring and the world can't allow U.S. President Donald Trump and his partners to destroy global order.

"Today, U.S. defied UN top court & Security Council by reimposing sanctions on Iran that target ordinary people. But U.S. bullying is backfiring, not just because JCPOA is important, but because the world can't allow Trump & Co. to destroy global order," Zarif tweeted on Monday.

"The U.S.—& not Iran—is isolated," he added.



**Israeli firm launches cyberattacks on Iran**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Azari Jahromi announced on Monday that Internet Gold Golden Lines, an Israeli-based company, was involved in a wave of cyberattacks earlier in the day against Iran's network infrastructure, IRNA reported.

"The [Israeli] regime, with a notorious background in using cyber weapons in cases such as Stuxnet, was this time attempting to harm Iran's communications infrastructure," Azari Jahromi said in a tweet.

He added, "But they had to go away empty-handed thanks to the vigilance of our technical teams. We will pursue this hostile move through international tribunals."

Israel is widely believed to be behind cyberattacks on Iran's nuclear facilities in 2011.



**Passing CFT necessary to go forward: ex-lawmaker**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Former senior lawmaker Mohammad Reza Bahonar who is aligned with the conservatives on Monday emphasized the necessity of endorsing the bill for countering financing of terrorism (CFT), ISNA reported.

"The Guardian Council has found faults with the CFT, but this doesn't mean that Iran will not join the CFT, because if this does not happen, we will face sanctions beyond the nuclear ones," Bahonar told reporters.

The Iranian parliament voted in favor of the CFT on October 7 but the oversight Guardian Council later said it had found 20 faults with the CFT, citing contradictions with the constitution and ambiguities in the bill.



**Members of pyramid network arrested**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — The Intelligence Ministry announced on Monday that members of a pyramid scheme network, called World Wide Energy, have been arrested and handed to judicial authorities, Mehr reported.

In order to ensure economic order and security, and prevent disruption in the economic system, 10 leaders and active members of the pyramid network were arrested and handed to the Judiciary to face trial, the ministry said in a statement.

It further said the individuals were arrested in Tehran, Hamedan and Isfahan provinces, adding that they are charged with deceiving people to gain money.



**Turkey says U.S. sanctions against Iran 'unfair'**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — The U.S. sanctions against Iran are unfair, Turkish Vice-President Fuat Oktay said, Turkish media reported on Monday.

Oktay said it is not correct to expect that all countries in the world to join the decision of one state acting exclusively by its own interests.

The sanctions will cover the sphere of oil exports. Washington has voiced determination to bring the Iranian oil exports to zero, calling on all its buyers to abandon such purchases.

U.S. President Donald Trump announced in May his country's withdrawal from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, and ordered reimposition of sanctions.

**Iran: Sanctions will fail to bear fruit**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — U.S. sanctions against Iran are facing with global defiance and Washington will fail to achieve its desired plans by returning sanctions, Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said on Monday.

Speaking at a press conference, Qassemi said Iran is no stranger to sanctions as it has gone through a wide range of sanctions since the victory of the Islamic Revolution 40 years ago.

"Experience has taught us that these sanctions are merely a psychological warfare, and Iran, despite all the pressures and threats, can continue to cooperate with the world," he remarked.

"These sanctions, too, will soon become history and we will pass this stage as well," he added.

The spokesman said such measures are the epitome of different U.S. administrations' addiction to sanctions, especially the current one.

It is very difficult for them to overcome this addiction, he added.

Qassemi went on to say that the sanctions will backfire on the United States and will be "a starting point for their in-



international isolation."  
**■ EU mechanism for trade with Iran progressing well**  
 On the Special Purpose Vehicle, the Euro-

pean Union's mechanism aimed at facilitating trade with Iran after the U.S. sanctions come into effect, he said. "We are in touch with the European Union and 4+1; the financial

and monetary mechanisms, as you know, are complicated and time-consuming."

4+1 refers to the remaining parties to the nuclear deal which includes four members of the UN Security Council (Russia, China, France and Britain) plus Germany.

"In this mechanism, the other sides should work on some of the conditions that Iran had already set up, which I hope will be operational as soon as possible," Qassemi stated. Qassemi said the generalities of the EU payment system to allow oil companies and businesses to continue trading with Iran during the sanctions era will become clear very soon.

The Islamic Republic and the EU are in constant talks on the SPV mechanism and the issue is progressing well, he stressed.

On May 8, U.S. President Donald Trump pulled his country out of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the official name for the 2015 nuclear deal, and ordered restoration of sanctions against Iran which were lifted under the agreement.

Defying the Trump administration's Iran policy, the EU has vowed to counter the sanctions by protecting European companies from punitive measures and opening up a new payment system to work with Iran.

**MP says U.S. was given samples from nuclear rotor sediments in late 2016**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — MP Hosseinali Haji-Deligani on Monday accused the government of having gone beyond the 2015 deal - aka Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) – by giving samples of nuclear rotor sediments to Americans.

Haji-Deligani, a conservative MP representing Shahin Shar, claimed this happened after the implementation of the deal in January 2016.

Addressing Foreign Minister Mohammad Zavaf Zarif who was attending the parliamentary session, the MP said following talks with U.S. negotiators in Frankfurt in 2016, the Iranian side had given the U.S. samples from sediments in rotors used in Iran's nuclear centrifuges, an act beyond Iran's commitments under the JCPOA.

"In the Frankfurt agreement you allowed the Americans to take samples from the carbon fibers used in the rotors. There was no such thing in the text of the JCPOA and thereby new information was given to the



Americans," Haji-Deligani said.  
 On the Frankfurt talks, he said, "In the Azar of 95 (November 2016), Mr. Zarif, exactly one year after the

implementation of the JCPOA and one day ahead of the American presidential election, held talks in Frankfurt and signed three new agreements against the unambiguous text of the JCPOA."

He added, "According to Article 7 of the JCPOA, Iran has explicitly accepted that there be 300 kilograms of enriched uranium in the country, and that it can use this uranium as ultimate manufactured product."

"But in the Frankfurt talks, you accepted and pledged to the Americans to count the sediments of these enriched materials [that are left] inside tubes and equipment as part of that 300 kilogram."

"This new agreement was a violation of the nation's right and a violation of the JCPOA," Haji-Deligani stressed.

Zarif spoke after Haji-Deligani and some other MPs who had posed their questions to him. But in his response, there was no direct reference to Haji-Deligani's claims about the Frankfurt agreements.

**Zarif says 'JCPOA is still strong'**



**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Monday that he had dreams of a better nuclear deal than the current one, officially called as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"Today, Iran's nuclear program is in a situation that if the system decides to return, it will be better than the past. We have said clearly that the JCPOA was what we could get and I still say that it was the best possible deal. I had better dreams, but the JCPOA was what could be reached," Zarif, a chief nuclear negotiator, said in an open session of parliament.

He also noted that the U.S. cannot weaken the JCPOA.

"They sought to create a consensus against Iran and said lies in line with this, but the JCPOA is still strong and in its place," the chief diplomat remarked.

Zarif said the assumption that Iran has not realized its goals is wrong.

In May, Trump unilaterally withdrew the U.S. from the multilateral nuclear agreement and ordered sanctions on Iran. The first round of sanctions went into force on August 6 and the second round, which targets Iran's oil exports and banks, were announced on November 4.

**Military holds air defense drill**



**1** → Detection, identification, and interception of threats by using advanced equipment, including electronic warfare, were the key objectives of the drills, Saeedi stated.

Manned and unmanned air-based defense systems as well as anti-radar and cruise missiles were also used.

Saeedi said all the air defense systems and equipment used in the exercises were designed and built by Iranian experts.

Commenting on the drill's coincidence with the U.S. reimposition of sanctions against the Islamic Republic, the rear admiral said the economic pressure is never going to affect Iran's ability to defend itself. One of the new air defense systems

successfully tested on the first day of the Velayat exercises was the Third of Khorad missile system, developed by the IRGC Aerospace Force.

The Third of Khorad is a date in the Iranian calendar marking the liberation of the port city of Khoramshahr from the occupation of the Saddam Army on May 27, 1982.

**■ Seraj anti-aircraft gun system**  
 Another air defense weapon unveiled on Monday was the 35mm Seraj anti-aircraft gun system, which, armed with radar and a new optical target acquisition system, is intended to act as an effective weapon against a wide range of targets particularly drones and other small flying objects.

**We will 'break sanctions proudly': Rouhani**

**Rouhani says leaders of 4 major countries sought to broker talks between him and Trump at UN summit**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — President Hassan Rouhani announced on Monday that leaders of four major countries sought to broker talks between him and U.S. President Donald Trump during the UN General Assembly session in New York in September.

Rouhani did not mention the name of the leaders of the four countries.

"There is no need for a broker. We have no problem to talk on the condition that the other side attaches value to its obligation," Rouhani said during a meeting at the headquarters of the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

He said Washington's violation of international law has made the U.S. more isolated than ever.

In May, Trump officially withdrew the U.S. from the 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and ordered the new round of

sanctions on Iran. The first round of sanctions went into force on August 6 and the second round, which targets Iran's oil exports and banks, were announced on November 4.

**■ 'Success of diplomacy'**

Rouhani said the European Union has stood against the U.S. violation of the nuclear agreement which is a "success of diplomacy" for Iran.

The president added, "Some think that we negotiated and came to conclusion in nuclear talks which was a great success, but the U.S. ruined this success."

"No, it is not like that. This interpretation is wrong. We have this success from political view... today all countries in the world, except a few number of countries, are against the U.S. and stand beside Iran. This is a success for our diplomacy."

European Economic Affairs Commissioner Pierre Moscovici said on Monday that the European Union is

opposed to the U.S. decision to reimpose oil and financial sanctions against Iran.

"The European Union does not approve of it," Reuters quoted Moscovici as saying.

**■ 'We will break sanctions proudly'**

Rouhani also said that Iran will "break sanctions proudly," because they are "cruel" and against law.

"I told all the leaders of the countries with whom I held meetings on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly that this time we will break sanctions proudly, because they are cruel and against law and the United Nations' resolution," he stated.

**■ 'Iron will to fight sanctions'**

Talking at the meeting, the new Economy Minister Farhad Dejjasand said Iran has "plans" to overcome sanctions. He added, "We have iron will to counter sanctions."



Larantiev (L) meets Shamkhani in Tehran

**Russia briefs Iran on quadrilateral Syria talks**

**1** → Shamkhani said that Iran and Russia will continue to support the Syrian armed forces against militants.

Elsewhere, he called for actions by countries, which have been victims of the U.S. "cruel sanctions", to stop Washington from using "destructive weapon of dollar against the independent countries".

U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew Washington from the 2015 nuclear deal in May and ordered sanctions on Iran. The first round of sanctions went into force on August 6 and the second round, which targets Iran's oil exports and banks, were announced on November 4.

# Syria, Russia discuss constitutional committee

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad has discussed a yet-to-be-formed constitutional committee with a delegation of high-ranking Russian officials in the capital Damascus.

According to a statement released by the Syrian Presidency Office on Sunday, the Syrian leader met with Russian special envoy to Syria Alexander Lavrentiev and Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Verzhin in the Presidential Palace in Damascus earlier in the day.

President Assad held talks with Lavrentiev on "forming the committee to discuss the current constitution", the statement said, adding that they agreed "to continue joint Syrian-Russian work towards removing the obstacles still in the way of forming this committee."

Last week, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel held a quadrilateral summit on Syria in the Turkish city of Istanbul and called for the committee to be formed by the end of the year to discuss a post-war constitution, "paving the way for free and fair elections" in the war-torn country.

The committee is expected to include 150 members: 50 chosen by Damascus, 50 by the opposition and the final 50 by the United Nations' outgoing envoy to Syria Staffan



de Mistura. It will also include civil society representatives, religious and tribal leaders, experts and women.

The UN-prepared list has already been rejected by Damascus, which is to draw up its own list, along with Russia, Iran and Turkey, according to the envoy.

Even if the committee is finally established, analysts say the task of discussing a post-war constitution will be difficult.

The Syrian government has repeatedly said that it would only agree with some alteration to the current constitution, whereas the opposition is pushing for an entirely new

constitution. Syria has been gripped by foreign-backed militancy since March 2011. The Syrian government says the Israeli regime and its Western and regional allies are aiding Takfiri terrorist groups wreaking havoc in the country.

(Source: Press TV)

## German domestic spy chief sacked for breaching neutrality rules

The head of Germany's domestic security service has been dismissed for a speech in which he criticized government parties, Interior Minister Horst Seehofer said on Monday.

Seehofer said the speech made by Hans-Georg Maassen, in which he accused the Social Democrats (SPD), junior partners in Chancellor Angela Merkel's coalition, of "naivety

and harboring "radical left" elements, was unacceptable.

"I have asked the president to place the head of the domestic security service in early retirement," Seehofer told a news conference. "The speech he gave contained unacceptable formulations which have made impossible a trusting relationship with me or other people involved."

Germany's ruling coalition had agreed in September to transfer spy chief Maassen to the Interior Ministry following accusations that he harbored far-right views. Maassen had questioned the authenticity of video footage showing radicals hounding migrants in the eastern city of Chemnitz.

(Source: Reuters)

## Saudi Arabia grilled over human rights record at UN council

Delegations have been grilling Saudi Arabia on its human rights record at the UN in Geneva as it faces a torrent of international condemnation over the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

Member states have also been criticizing abuses of the Saudi-Emirati coalition's role in the war in Yemen in Monday's so-called "Universal Periodic Review" - which all 193 UN countries must undergo every four years.

The U.S. delegation told the UN human rights council that it condemns the "premeditated killing" of Khashoggi.

"A thorough, conclusive and transparent investigation carried out in accordance with due process with results made public is essential," the delegation said.

Washington, which has long backed the Saudi-led coalition, called last week for an end to air raids in the country.

The Saudi delegation in Geneva is headed by Bandar al-Aiban, who serves as the head of the country's Human Rights Commission.

The delegation is presenting a report over the country's efforts to live up to its international human rights obligations, and will respond to questions and comments from countries around the world on its record.

Activists are urging countries not to hold back.

"UN member states must end their deafening silence on Saudi Arabia and do their duty of scrutinizing the cruelty in the kingdom in order to prevent further outrageous human rights violations in the country and in Yemen," Samah Hadid, Amnesty International's Middle East director of campaigns, said in a statement.

"The Saudi government's long-standing repression of critics, exemplified by the



extrajudicial execution of journalist Jamal Khashoggi last month, has until recently been willfully ignored by UN member states."

### 'Regret and pain'

Addressing the council, the Saudi delegation restated the kingdom's position that it is investigating Khashoggi's case and will prosecute those responsible for the killing.

"The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has already expressed its regret and pain for the death of Jamal Khashoggi," Bandar Bin Mohammed al-Aiban, president of Saudi Arabia's human rights commission said at the meeting.

"King [Salman bin] Abdulaziz has already instructed the prosecution to proceed with the investigation into this case according to the applicable laws and preparation to reaching all facts and bringing all the perpetrators to justice in order to bare the facts to the public."

A number of countries have already submitted lists of detailed questions for the review, including questions from the UK, Austria and Switzerland on the Khashoggi case.

"Given the recent violent death of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, can Saudi Arabia elaborate on their claim that the laws of Saudi Arabia guarantee freedom of opinion and expression?" the UK asked.

Al Jazeera's Paul Brennan reporting from Geneva said that the questioning that Saudi Arabia faces is stern, particularly because of the context of the recent murder Khashoggi.

"You can see that [the UK's question] very elegantly phrased, but there's no mistaking the bite behind it," Brennan said.

"In some ways, it's been predictably partisan of the tone of some of the questions. Uzbekistan and Algeria, for example, patted Saudi Arabia on the back for the progress that they said Saudi Arabia had made, for example, under the crown prince's vision 2030 which they say upholds human rights," Brennan said.

### A 'less vicious' government

Explaining in their national report how the country upholds human right, Saudi Arabia

mentioned its protection against abuse act, a child protection act, the ability that women now have the right to drive and various royal orders such as giving women more involved in government.

However, other reports submitted by UN committees and various NGOs paint a different picture, Brennan said.

Their reports highlight persistent discriminatory laws, a big increase in the number of executions between 2013-2015, the fact that there is no law that protects the rights to free assembly and continuing concerns about the lack of female involvement in governing process.

The reports point out that minors under the age of 18 who are found guilty of crimes could be stoned, or amputated and are even sentenced to death for non-violent crimes.

Abdulaziz Almoayyad, a Saudi human rights activist told Al Jazeera from Dublin that due to the international outcry over Khashoggi's murder, Saudi Arabia is now treading more carefully.

Khashoggi's murder has saved a lot of lives in Saudi Arabia, since just a couple of weeks before his death, the Saudi government was planning to behead a lot of Saudi activists, Almoayyad said.

"The Saudi government doesn't care about the Saudi people but they care about international relations; they get their weapons from there, they get their support from there," Almoayyad said.

"So what is happening now is affecting the scene inside of Saudi Arabia where the government is a bit weaker and less vicious towards activists inside and outside."

(Source: Al Jazeera)

## UK announces joint Omani-British military training base

Britain announced on Monday it would open a joint military training base in Oman in March 2019 as it looks to bolster its relationships with allies in the region.

At a time of rising tension in the oil-producing Persian Gulf region, Britain is diplomatically entwined in overlapping conflicts and disagreements involving Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Iran and others. Defense secretary Gavin Williamson announced the British-Omani training base as he visited

the country to observe the end of a large-scale joint military exercise involving thousands of personnel practicing desert combat. "Our relationship with Oman is built on centuries of cooperation and we are cementing that long into the future with the opening of our new joint base," Williamson said in a statement released by his department.

"This has never been more important as malign activity by hostile states and violent extremist organizations seek

to undermine stability and subvert the rules based order on which we all rely."

Earlier this year, Britain also opened a permanent military base in Bahrain. Williamson also signaled in meetings with Omani leaders his intent to sign a new bilateral agreement early next year which would cover enhanced defense ties and broader cooperation, the Ministry of Defense said.

(Source: Reuters)

## Taliban seize post in defensive belt around embattled Afghan city

Taliban militants captured an important security post outside the central Afghan city of Ghazni Monday, killing 13 members of government forces and underscoring their vulnerability even in areas where defenses have been bolstered. The post was part of a belt of strongholds built around Ghazni, which is on the main road between the capital, Kabul, and the Afghan south, after the city was briefly overrun by Taliban in August in one of their biggest offensives in years.

As well as the 13 killed, 13 members of the Western-backed government's security forces were wounded in the attack, said Arif Noori, a spokesman for the provincial governor.

He said the Taliban had suffered heavy casualties but he had no exact information.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said in a statement 18 policemen were



killed and six wounded and large quantities of weapons and ammunition were seized.

The attack is only the latest indication of the precarious security around Ghazni

following the big Taliban assault in August, which shocked the government and was only repelled with the help of U.S. air strikes and special force troops.

A U.S. watchdog agency said last week the Afghan government was struggling to recover control of districts lost to the Taliban while casualties among security forces had reached record levels.

The government had control or influence over 65 percent of the population but only 55.5 percent of Afghanistan's 407 districts, the agency, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, said in a report.

The latest phase of Afghanistan's decades of war began in late 2001, when U.S.-led troops overthrew the Taliban in response to the Sept. 11 attacks that year on the United States.

(Source: Reuters)

## U.S. backs disarmament steps along Korean demilitarized zone

The outgoing commander of American troops in South Korea voiced support on Monday for controversial measures to reduce military activity along the border with North Korea, as U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo prepared for talks with North Korean officials on denuclearization and plans for a second leaders' summit.

Writing in a South Korean military publication, U.S. General Vincent Brooks said recent steps by South and North Korea to disarm areas along the so-called demilitarized zone between the two nations have "the support and agreement of the United States."

Last week a no-fly zone went into effect along the border, despite private concerns by U.S. officials that the move could restrict training and the ability to monitor the border. Other steps included disarming some areas of the border and removing some landmines and guard posts.

"Together, these activities demonstrate a shared commitment to positive action and work to develop the trust essential to the next steps along the road to a lasting and stable peace," Brooks wrote.

Pompeo previously expressed "discontent" with the deal that created the no-fly zone, which South Korean sources said became a key sticking point for the United States because it would effectively prevent close air support drills.

Brooks' comments came as U.S. and South Korean marines conducted military drills under the Korean Marine Exchange Program for the first time in months, according to the South Korean ministry of defense.

The exercises were among the training drills indefinitely suspended in June after U.S. President Donald Trump met North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Singapore and promised to end U.S.-South Korea military exercises.

Although larger exercises were suspended, the two countries have continued small-scale drills, the South's Ministry of National Defence said on Monday, adding that the marines were holding a training round near the southern city of Pohang.

Pompeo, interviewed on broadcaster CBS's "Face the Nation" program said on Sunday he would be in New York at the end of this week to meet his North Korean counterpart, Kim Yong Chol.

"I expect we'll make some real progress, including an effort to make sure that the summit between our two leaders can take place, where we can make substantial steps towards denuclearization," he added. North Korea has not tested a ballistic missile or nuclear weapon for nearly a year, and has said it has shuttered its main nuclear test site and plans to dismantle several more facilities.

In recent weeks, North Korea has pressed harder for what it sees as reciprocal concessions by the United States and other countries. Over the weekend, Kim hosted President Miguel Diaz-Canel of Cuba - another country under U.S. sanctions - during a lavish visit in Pyongyang, where the two leaders vowed to boost their cooperation.

During a banquet on Sunday, Kim said the "two countries are in the same trench in the struggle for defending sovereignty and dignity of their countries and safeguarding international justice," according to a state media report.

Diaz-Canel, meanwhile, "voiced his will to meet all challenges by the hostile forces" alongside North Korea, according to the report.

### 'No economic relief'

On Friday North Korea warned that it could resume development of its nuclear program if the United States did not drop its campaign of "maximum pressure" and sanctions.

"The improvement of relations and sanctions are incompatible," a foreign ministry official said in a statement released through state-run KCNA news agency.

"The U.S. thinks that its oft-repeated 'sanctions and pressure' lead to 'denuclearization.' We cannot help laughing at such a foolish idea."

South Korea hopes the North and the United States will make "big progress" during the talks set for this week, presidential spokesman Kim Eui-kyeom said on Monday, but declined to comment on the North's Friday statement.

American officials have remained skeptical of Kim's commitment to give up his nuclear arsenal, however, and Washington says it will not support easing international sanctions until more verified progress is made. Pompeo, interviewed on television's "Fox News Sunday," said the Trump administration wants a full, verifiable denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, adding that Trump insisted on "no economic relief until we have achieved our ultimate objective."

South Korean President Moon Jae-in's continuing efforts to engage with North Korea have fanned U.S. concerns that Seoul could weaken pressure on North Korea to give up nuclear weapons. In Washington last week, South Korea's defense minister said the two countries would decide by December on major joint military exercises for 2019. Vigilant Ace, suspended this month, is one of several such exercises halted to encourage dialogue with Pyongyang, which has criticized joint U.S.-South Korea exercises in the past.

The biggest combat-readiness war game ever staged in and around Japan has gone ahead, however, with nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan joining Japanese destroyers and a Canadian warship in the ocean off Japan, another key player in the effort to pressure North Korea.

(Source: Daily Star)

## Some 80 people, mostly school children, kidnapped in Cameroon

More than 80 people, mostly children, were kidnapped from a school in the city of Bamenda in western Cameroon early Monday, government and military sources said.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the abduction in the English-speaking region where separatists are fighting to form a breakaway state.

The separatists have imposed curfews and closed down schools as part of their protest against President Paul Biya's French-speaking government.

"In total 81 people were kidnapped including the principal. They were taken to the bush," a military source told Reuters.

A government spokesman said it was keeping track of an event but that it could not comment further.

The separatist movement gathered pace in 2017 after a government crackdown on peaceful demonstrations. Many people have fled Bamenda and other centers to seek refuge in more peaceful Francophone regions.

(Source: Reuters)



# Oil slips as U.S. sanctions on Iran begin, Tehran defiant

Oil prices fell on Monday as U.S. sanctions against Iran's fuel exports were softened by waivers allowing major buyers to import Iranian crude for a while, while Tehran said it would defy Washington and continue to sell. Brent crude oil was down 15 cents a barrel at \$72.68 by 1030 GMT. U.S. light crude was 30 cents lower at \$62.84 a barrel.

Both oil price benchmarks have lost more than 15 percent since hitting four-year highs in early October, as hedge funds have cut bullish bets on crude to a one-year low, data show.

Washington imposed sanctions against Iran on Monday, restoring measures lifted under a 2015 nuclear deal negotiated by the administration of former U.S. president Barack Obama, and adding 300 new designations including Iran's oil, shipping, insurance and banking sectors.

In response, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said in a speech broadcast on state TV that Iran would break the sanctions and continue to sell oil.

Washington has granted some exemptions. The United States said on Friday it will temporarily allow eight importers to



keep buying Iranian oil.

"U.S. sanctions against Iran... created serious concerns with traders earlier in September. But they are turning into a damp squib," said Fiona Cincotta, market

analyst at City Index.

Washington has so far not identified the eight. China, India, South Korea, Turkey, Italy, the United Arab Emirates and Japan have been the top importers of Iran's oil,

while Taiwan also occasionally buys Iranian crude.

South Korea said on Monday it had been granted a waiver, at least temporarily, to import condensate, a super-light form of crude oil, from Iran. It was also allowed to continue financial transactions with the Middle East country, it said.

Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hula Chungking expressed regret at the U.S. decision, but would not directly say if China had or had not been granted an exemption. Oil markets have been anticipating the sanctions for months and the world's biggest producers have been increasing output.

Joint output from the world's top producers - Russia, the United States and Saudi Arabia - in October rose above 33 million barrels per day (bpd) for the first time, up 10 million bpd since 2010.

In the Middle East, the Abu Dhabi National Oil Co plans to increase its oil production capacity to 4 million bpd by the end of 2020 and to 5 million bpd by 2030, it said on Sunday, from output of just over 3 million bpd.

(Source: Reuters)

## Official: U.S. actions may render null OPEC efforts to prevent oil price rise

US destructive actions on the international arena can render null the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and non-OPEC countries' efforts toward oil market stabilization and prices increase prevention, First Deputy Chief of the Russian Government Staff Sergei Prikhodko told reporters on Monday.

"Unfortunately, U.S. destructive actions on the international arena can render null the efforts that the oil-developing countries, signatories of the agreement [OPEC], make in order to prevent a new [oil] prices upsurge and market destabilization," Prikhodko said at a press briefing held ahead of Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev's visit to China.

Prikhodko emphasized that Russia was sticking to the agreements that OPEC and a number of non-cartel oil producers reached in June in order to stabilize the oil market.

In 2016, OPEC and several non-OPEC oil producers, including Russia, agreed to cut output by a total of 1.8 million barrels per



day in an effort to stabilize oil prices. The agreement, which came into effect in 2017, has been extended twice since then and will remain in force until the end of 2018.

The U.S. has been reintroducing sanctions on Iran after Washington pulled out from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), commonly known as the Iranian nuclear deal, in May.

The OPEC presented in September its short- and mid-term forecasts, as well as for the period up to 2040, in its report World Oil Outlook 2040.

(Source: Sputnik)

## Iraq's Kurds add capacity to oil pipeline to export Kirkuk crude

Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurds upgraded their oil export pipeline to accommodate future production growth from their region as well as from the contested Kirkuk area controlled by the central government in Baghdad.

The Kurdistan Regional Government completed improvements to the pipeline to the Mediterranean port of Ceyhan, Turkey, by installing another pumping station in the Shaikhan area, the KRG's Ministry of Natural Resources said on its website. The link's capacity increased to 1 million barrels a day from 900,000, it said.

The KRG currently exports more than 400,000 barrels a day of crude, according to the statement.

"This extra capacity will accommodate future production growth from KRG producing fields, and can also be used by the federal government to export the currently stranded oil in Kirkuk and surrounding areas," the KRG said.

On his first day in office last week, Iraqi



Oil Minister Thamir Ghadhbhan said Baghdad plans to start talks with Kurdish authorities to discuss oil exports.

The Kirkuk area in northern Iraq produces about 230,000 barrels a day for local refining and power generation only and hasn't exported crude since Iraqi forces retook the area from Kurdish fighters in October 2017, following the defeat of ISIS militants.

Kirkuk shipments by truck to Iran halted three weeks ago in line with U.S. sanctions.

(Source: Bloomberg)

## Offshore wind projects hasten Asia's renewable shift from solar

China is starting to build its largest offshore wind-power facility in the latest move in an accelerating shift in Asia away from solar to wind and other renewable energy sources.

Work began in late October on the facility off Nanpeng Isle in China's southern Guangdong Province. The project has a planned capacity of 400,000 kilowatts, and its developer, China General Nuclear Power Corporation, expects it to generate about 1.46 billion kilowatt hours of power annually when it goes on stream in 2020.

Wood Mackenzie, an energy consultancy, sees wind-generated capacity in the region growing by a factor of 20 over the next decade, powered by Beijing's plans for a 15-fold expansion. Guangdong plans to build 23 offshore wind farms by 2030, according to China's official Xinhua News Agency.

Meanwhile, Asia's solar-powered electricity capacity is set to fall this year for the first time since 2001, as countries such as China cut subsidies.

Solar demand will drop 18% in 2018 due to reduced installations in China, India and Japan, according to a

Wood Mackenzie estimate. Beijing has already hit its 2020 target for photovoltaic, or PV, installations, prompting a reduction in subsidies for solar power.

Reduced demand in Japan will also undermine the regional solar outlook, according to Masaru Yarime, associate professor at the School of Energy and Environment, City University of Hong Kong.

Asia accounted for nearly two-thirds of the worldwide increase in renewable energy generating capacity last year, and around 18% of total energy supply in the region was derived from renewable sources in 2014, according to a United Nations report last year. This puts Asia above the international average, meaning shifts in big markets such as China, India and Japan greatly affect the global outlook for clean energy.

India, especially, provides major opportunities for clean energy providers. The International Renewable Energy Agency estimates that 80 million of the country's 250 million households "have limited or no access to electricity."

But more traditional sources, such as coal, remain in common use in India and across the region. Inefficient and outdated infrastructure also hamper the possible growth of solar and wind, meaning dirty fuels are likely to remain popular.

Cheap coal and outdated infrastructure will likely hinder the growth in clean energy until costs come down and technology becomes more widely available.

It's a similar story across Asia, with a slew of new coal plants now operating or under construction. China's coal power generation increased by 4 percent last year due to rising electricity demand, according to the International Energy Agency. In India, it rose 13 percent.

Yongping Zhai, chief of the Asian Development Bank's Energy Sector Group, said that the falling cost of photovoltaic panels means "it is likely that grid-parity [in costs] will be achieved earlier than expected so that solar PV can compete with conventional power without subsidies."

(Source: Nikkei)

## Oil looks set for a rapid bounce

WTI has recently experienced one of its biggest one-month declines in several years, having lost around eighteen percent since hitting a multi-year high of \$76.90 last month. There has been a perfect storm for sellers, with factors on both the supply and demand side of the pricing equation putting downward pressure on crude. However, there are indications that things are about to turn and while that high is probably out of reach for now, the bounce back should be sharp and could be very profitable.

The supply side drivers of the drop have been twofold. First, U.S. shale production has been booming again as prices have climbed. As we found out all too well during the last bust, shale production is very price sensitive, and as WTI climbed into the \$70s output also jumped rapidly. Now, though, with prices in the low \$60s, it is only logical that that growth will at the very least slow significantly before long.

The other supply side issue has been more international. Part of the reason for the run up was the expectation that the U.S. sanctions on Iran would hit supply, but that worry has faded over the last month or so. That is largely because Saudi Arabia, under pressure from President Trump among others, have stepped up production to offset that. Right now, that is in their interest politically given the fallout from



the Kashoggi affair, but they pushed for a production cut agreement last year for a reason and cannot afford to see prices much lower.

The worries on the demand side of the equation are the same as those that have caused the selloff in stocks over the last month. Ongoing trade disputes and tighter monetary policies have resulted in fears that there will be a significant slowdown in

growth, both here in the U.S. and around the globe. Over the last couple of days though, the White House has given indications that a deal with China on trade is at least possible, so one of those worries should be fading. That still leaves interest rate hikes as a concern, but the Fed and other Central Banks are gradually raising rates in anticipation of an inflationary environment that would put upward pressure on oil.

(Source: oilprice.com)

## Analysts see opportunities in embattled energy stocks

Just as energy stocks began to cautiously recover from the lows during the worst of the oil price crash in 2015-2016, equity markets and oil prices took a hit last month in what analysts and financial reporters dubbed the 'Red October'.

The carnage on the equity markets and the sell-off in oil in the latter half of last month, after Brent and WTI prices had hit four-year highs on October 3, created a perfect storm for energy exchange-traded funds (ETFs), some of which booked their worst monthly performance in years.

Analysts, however, see buying opportunities in oil stocks—one group of investors sees U.S. majors Exxon and Chevron as defensive plays with nice yields that could offer protection from volatility going forward.

Others now see the energy sector as a whole as a buying opportunity, expecting stocks in oil production and exploration and oil field services to start rising in a year or two, when the underinvestment in the industry starts to affect the oil supply and when the current Permian constraints are overcome with the new pipelines coming online through 2020.

During the 'Red October', the two key international oil benchmarks sustained their biggest monthly drops since July 2016. WTI Crude plunged by 10.8 percent in October, according to Dow Jones Market Data, while Brent Crude prices fell 8.8 percent.

The month of October began with rallying oil prices that surged to their highest in four years as investors and traders feared a shortage of supply would follow thanks to the U.S. sanctions on Iran. As the month progressed, the mood flipped from bullish expectations of 'not enough oil' to bearish sentiment of a possible glut next year and demand destruction in emerging markets due to the higher oil prices.

The first day of November didn't offer any relief for oil prices and oil stocks either, as WTI settled at its lowest level since April 9, dropping for the first time in more than a year below its 200-day moving average. Brent settled at its lowest since August 21, falling below the 200-day moving average for the first time since September 2017, according to FactSet data, as carried by MarketWatch.

The XLE energy ETF lost 11 percent in October—its worst monthly performance since September 2011.

Amid this volatile market, shares in Exxon and Chevron are attractive because of their defensiveness, Boris Schlossberg, managing director of FX strategy at BK Asset Management, told CNBC on October 31.

The higher dividend yields of both companies—Exxon's 4.1 percent and Chevron's 4 percent—compared to the 2.65-percent yield of ETFs XLE and 1.85 percent for SPDR S&P 500 ETF Trust, makes them attractive, according to Schlossberg.

Craig Johnson, chief market technician at Piper Jaffray, also believes that the energy stocks could start to pick up, with emphasis on Exxon, which could break out from the range of its 40-week moving average.

"Exxon Mobil looks like a name that's been consolidating when you look at that chart over the past couple of years," Johnson told CNBC. "From our perspective, those kinds of charts usually resolve themselves to the upside, not the downside."

The backdrop in energy has never been better with the underinvestment in the industry over the last three-four years, Edward Muztafago of Societe Generale told CNBC on October 24. James Wicklund of Credit Suisse concurred that energy could be a great buying opportunity, noting that when the Permian constraints are resolved, there would be recovery in onshore U.S. services sector stocks. Longer term, Societe Generale sees stocks exposed to the offshore business having better long-term potential, Muztafago said.

Yet, amid the peak oil demand narrative, investors have been cautious about betting too much on oil stocks for the long term. Energy stocks have been underperforming the rising prices of the underlying commodity over the past year, despite the fact that the oil supermajors called the end of the downturn a few quarters ago and have been raking in more cash and profits thanks to higher oil prices.

(Source: oilprice.com)

## Abu Dhabi to boost oil output capacity to 4m bpd by end-2020

Abu Dhabi intends to boost its oil production capacity to 4 million barrels per day (b/d) by the end of 2020 and to 5 million b/d by 2030 under plans approved Sunday by the Supreme Petroleum Council, which also announced new discoveries totaling 1 billion barrels of oil, Abu Dhabi National Oil Company said.

The SPC, Abu Dhabi's highest hydrocarbon policy-making body, also approved the emirate's unprecedented gas strategy, enabling the UAE to achieve gas self-sufficiency, with the potential to be a net gas exporter, ADNOC said in a statement Sunday. At its meeting, SPC also announced new discoveries totaling 15 Tcf of gas.

The announcement of Abu Dhabi's discovery of significant oil reserves follows the emirate's "historic decision" earlier this year to open six geographical oil and gas blocks for competitive bidding, ADNOC said.

The first exploration and production licenses are expected to be awarded in the first quarter of 2019, ADNOC said. It added that existing data from detailed petroleum system studies, seismic surveys, log files and core samples from hundreds of appraisal well estimates suggest "these new blocks hold multiple billion barrels of oil and multiple trillion cubic feet of natural gas."

Abu Dhabi's gas strategy will sustain LNG production to 2040, and allow ADNOC to seize incremental LNG and gas-to-chemicals growth opportunities, where they arise, ADNOC said.

"The integrated gas strategy is the first time in ADNOC's history it has been in a position to commercially and holistically unlock its abundant new gas resources," ADNOC said.

Under the new gas strategy, ADNOC said it will develop the Hail, Ghasha and Dalma project that taps into Abu Dhabi's Arab formation, which is estimated to hold multiple trillions of cubic feet of recoverable gas. The project is expected to produce more than 1.5 Bcf/day of gas, it said.

ADNOC added it will also unlock other sources of gas, which include Abu Dhabi's gas caps and unconventional gas reserves, as well as new natural gas accumulations, which will continue to be appraised and developed as it pursues exploration activities.

(Source: Platts)

## NEWS IN BRIEF



### India to expand presence at Chabahar

**INTERNATIONAL** TEHRAN — With petroleum related U.S. sanctions against Iran coming into force from November 5, India is not only looking for waiver from the sanctions to continue importing crude oil from Iran but it is also exploring mechanisms to secure its interests in the strategic Chabahar Port.

India is scheduled to hold a ministerial-level meeting with Tehran and Moscow this month to implement the much-delayed International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC), according to a report in Economic Times.

During the past month, India has looked at ways to safeguard its interests at Chabahar Port if no waiver is granted for the project, which is New Delhi's key gateway to Afghanistan. Kabul is also a party to the project through a trilateral mechanism, the report stated.

Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale, while addressing an Indo-Pacific connectivity meet in New Delhi on Thursday, announced that India will continue to use Chabahar Port as part of its wider Indo-Pacific connectivity project. It is understood that hard negotiations by India and its refusal to be threatened by sanctions led to the U.S. waiver for oil purchased from Iran for the next few months.



### 'CPEC vital link for China, Pakistan'

**INTERNATIONAL** TEHRAN — The ambitious China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would serve as a vital link for the two countries to the Middle East and Central Asian Republics and open fresh investment avenues, new markets and vistas, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan said on Monday.

Addressing the opening ceremony of China International Import Expo in Shanghai, Prime Minister Khan said as the Belt and Road Initiative gives shape to a global community of shared interests, this Expo will help spread dividends of freer trade, among more closely integrated economies.

Khan, who is on a four-day official visit to China on the invitation of President Xi Jinping, is in Shanghai on the second leg of his visit, where Pakistan has set up a pavilion to showcase its products.

He said the Karakoram Highway in Pakistan merges into a network of modern highways that are part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and link to the deep sea port of Gwadar - where it converges with the Belt and Road.

The prime minister said the CPEC shall cut distances and costs, bringing much needed resources to producers, and new products to consumers. "CPEC is a mechanism to forge even closer connectivity between the Middle East and China, and between Central and South Asia," he said.

He said Pakistan was blessed with an abundant array of resources ranging from mineral riches to fertile lands, and New Pakistan will be a more conducive and a more competitive place for transacting business.



### 'Peaceful Afghanistan in interest of region'

**INTERNATIONAL** TEHRAN — Afghan President Ashraf Ghani has said that a peaceful Afghanistan is in the best interest of the region, especially Pakistan so all the regional countries should come together to ensure peace in Afghanistan.

Addressing media persons in Kabul on Sunday, President Ghani said the war-ravaged country wants peace with Pakistan and good working relations based on mutual interests.

He said that any third party cannot be given the right to play an arbitrary role in peace talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

It is worth mentioning here that talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban's political office in Doha are likely to hold peace talks on November 9 2018, in Moscow.

The security situation has alarmingly deteriorated in Afghanistan in recent years with Taliban remodeling their offensives and Afghan security forces finding themselves in a difficult situation. The fragile political leadership has also compounded the problems of security. Afghanistan will go to polls early next year and President Ghani has decided to run for the highest office again.



### 'Mainstream space shrinking in Kashmir'

**INTERNATIONAL** TEHRAN — The former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Omar Abdullah says people in the trouble-torn valley are losing their appetite for the mainstream parties as political space has "shrunk" for them due to the worsening security situation.

Speaking at a book-launch in New Delhi, Omar said Jammu and Kashmir needed more than just the words repeated from the ramparts of the Red Fort, in an apparent reference to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Omar said the situation in the valley was becoming worse with militancy re-emerging in areas that were earlier free from it. "I don't think in recent years more damage has been done to the idea of mainstream polity than when former Chief Minister Mufti Sayeed was publicly humiliated at a rally in Srinagar," referring to a 2015 rally in Srinagar where Modi snubbed Mufti when he offered some advice to the Prime Minister on starting a dialogue with Pakistan.

He said although Pakistan was a part of the problem, the sentiment on the ground cannot be linked to it.

# Russia to host international 'peace talks' on Afghanistan on Nov 9

**INTERNATIONAL** TEHRAN — In a bid to broker peace between the Afghan government and the Taliban, Moscow will be hosting international talks on Afghanistan on November 9, which is likely to see participation of representatives from the Afghan government, the Taliban and regional countries.

The announcement was made by the Russian foreign ministry on Saturday. The conference, which was scheduled to be held earlier, was postponed by Moscow after the Afghan government turned down the invitation arguing that the peace talks must be owned and led by Afghanistan.

"It will be the first time that a delegation of the political office of the Taliban movement in Doha will take part in international talks (at) such a level," the statement said, adding that the Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and the Taliban have agreed to send delegations to the conference. Afghan foreign ministry, however, has not yet confirmed its participation in the talks. The ministry spokesman was quoted by AFP saying that they were in talks with Russian officials about the conference and had not reached an agreement yet.

According to sources, Russia has quietly reached out to many influential Afghan political leaders, inviting them to the conference, including the likes of former president Hamid Karzai and former Balkh governor Ata Mohammad Noor.

Karzai's spokesman confirmed that the former president will be travelling to Moscow as "any opportunity for peace talks with the



Taliban must not be ignored". Noor, who believes that the single fixed formula prescribed by one foreign power (U.S.) will not help the peace process, has also agreed to participate in the talks.

The conference will see participation from 12 countries including India, Iran, China, Pakistan and five former Soviet republics in Central Asia, according to reports.

"The Russian side reaffirms its position that there is no alternative to a political settlement in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan," the statement added.

The deteriorating security situation has

pushed Ashraf Ghani government on the back foot, emboldening insurgents to carry out attacks across the country. According to recent studies, the control of Afghan government forces has diminished alarmingly with insurgents upping the ante.

Now with general elections approaching, Ghani, who has decided to run for office again, has been trying to woo the group to join peace talks. The unprecedented three-day Eid ceasefire had rekindled hopes of a breakthrough but it turned out a chimera.

In recent months, the U.S. has also renewed efforts to engage the group in peace

talks, with newly appointed 'peace envoy' Zalmay Khalilzad leading the efforts. Taliban representatives have met with U.S. officials at least twice in recent months, most recently on October 12. However, it has proved futile.

Russia, which has traditional rivalry with the U.S. in Afghanistan, earlier hosted an international conference on Afghanistan in April 2017. The U.S. had rejected the invitation. The upcoming talks are on a bigger scale with larger participation, which is likely to irk Washington even more, as they will feel virtually sidelined in Afghanistan.

## "There is no justification for Nigerian Army to shoot at and kill unarmed Shiite protestors"

**1 ->** Contrary to the claims of Nigerian authorities, Amnesty International said the protestors were unarmed, calling on the U.S. and Nigerian governments to abide by international human rights law. Do you think the international community needs to put more pressure on Buhari government?

A. Yes but whether it will yield any results different from what we have witnessed in the last three years is another thing entirely.

Sheikh Ibraheem Zakzaky is still in prison despite a 2016 High Court ruling ordering his unconditional release. On what grounds is the Nigerian government justifying his continued incarceration?

A. The three arms of the Nigerian government distrust each other, go against each other and have worked over the years to sabotage any semblance of synergy between each other. The executive government justifies Zakzaky's continuous incarceration by alleging that the judiciary has been compromised and lacks the credibility to pass judgments that are for the good of the country. The judiciary holds similar sentiments towards the legislative and executive and vice versa.

Why is the Nigerian government so afraid of Sheikh Zakzaky and the Islamic Movement in Nigeria?

A. Nigerian politicians, especially those from Northern extraction, view Shia Islam as a threat to the majority Sunni Islam. This isn't peculiar to Nigeria. Globally, Shia Muslims



are not generally viewed positively. In Nigeria, they have been accused of not recognizing the Nigerian state and of trying to run a parallel government. There is also the fear of Sunni Muslim youth in Nigeria being converted to Shia Islam.

We all know their history and conflicts over the years. This escalation of hostilities is as a result of the emergence of a Sunni bigot as Governor of Kaduna State (the base of the Shia Muslims in Nigeria and the emergence of a Sunni bigot as President of Nigeria.

These two leaders sought for and got the endorsement of Zakzaky while they were campaigning for their various offices. After getting their votes, they turned against them.

It is believed that their ultimate plan is to exterminate the Shia Muslims from Nigeria, which is practically impossible. So the alternative is to try and break their will by imprisoning their leader and attacking them at will, just like we saw a few days ago and the way we have seen in recent past.

We don't see much coverage about Nigerian Shiites in the international media the way we see about Rohingya or Tibetans. Why is the world media not interested in the plight of Nigerian Shiites?

A. Shiites are not part of the mainstream global Muslim Sunni community. The only major Islamic state backing Shiites is Iran, a country singled out as being a 'sponsor of terrorism'. Saudi Arabia, Israel and other major political actors in the Middle East who lobby the United States and greatly western posturing on the global state already consider Iran as an enemy. They also consider Shia Islam as its major export that needs to be curtailed. The plight of Shiites isn't viewed as the plight of Muslims.

What does future hold for Shiites in Nigeria? Do you see situation improving and Zakzaky being released in immediate future?

A. The next election and subsequent elections will be critical to Zakzaky's fate. If the Buhari administration loses power, the next government will likely release Zakzaky. Such an act will be popular both locally and internationally. And it would be another subtle means of showing the world how terrible the incumbent government is.

## Trump's 'Iran sanctions' bluster boomerangs

**1 ->** The National Iranian-American Council also jumped in with their own GOT-inspired meme, saying "Donald Trump is a literal White Walker, fear-mongering, warmongering and championing division at every opportunity for political gains."

American writer and blogger Andy Ostroy took to Twitter to lambast Trump, asking "what kind of sick, twisted, cliff-hanging reality show stuff was it?". Author and speaker Tomi Ahoneh warned Trump that indictments, not sanctions, were coming after the elec-

tion, as Mueller has been waiting. "Your real nightmare starts on Wednesday. Sleep tightly Trump, sleep tightly," he wrote.

A Twitter user termed it a "complete joke", saying the idea of sanctioning Iran because they stood by the nuclear deal, while the U.S. withdrew from it, was "despicable". Another compared the Trump administration with a reality TV show.

The reaction from Iran has been remarkably measured and restrained. Iranians have dismissed what they believe is the

customary bluster from the U.S. President who is not taken seriously even by his own people. Young Iranians took to Twitter to warn the U.S. President not to threaten the Islamic Republic as such hollow bluster was not going to intimidate the proud and brave Iranians.

Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) Quds Force General Qassem Soleimani responded to Trump's tweet with his own version of GOT-inspired meme, saying 'I Will Stand Against You'. The

image was circulated widely and became viral. Soleimani is known for walking the talk and hawks in Washington know very well that he cannot be unsettled by such hollow bluster.

The fact that the sanctions have been timed a day before the mid-term elections in the U.S. explains how it is a political maneuver to garner votes. But the move is most likely to backfire and Trump will understand that later this week. He evil plots would be defeated by his own people before Iran does.

## The U.S. midterms: blue wave wanted

The United States midterm elections are always important. But the elections on Tuesday matter in ways that few midterm contests can have matched. Yes, it will take more than one election to mend the damaged and angry political mood that, in the last two weeks alone, has seen a fervent Donald Trump supporter send bombs to several Democrats, and a white supremacist commit the most heinous act of anti-Semitic violence in the country's history. The man in the White House is not the only thing that must change. But the journey has to start somewhere. You only have to imagine how much more difficult the journey will otherwise be to grasp the exceptional responsibility that rests on the shoulders of U.S. voters on Tuesday.

Donald Trump is not the sole reason why American politics have become so toxic, why Americans' faith in their institutions has been so shaken, or the influence of the U.S. for good in the world so diminished. In many ways Trump was the product of already existing toxicity, shaken faith and declining prestige. But he has turbo-charged this decline deliberately, as a matter of conscious policy. He seeks consistently to be the president of some of the United States, not of the country as a whole. Against those who do not support or agree with him he deploys only hate and scorn. He lies and provokes as a matter of strategy. This is a president without precedent, and although in the U.S. democracy is strong, it is not indestructible.

Take the issue of voting rights. It is often assumed that

the U.S. constitution embodies a federal right to vote. It does not. Voting is administered by the states. Most states are in Republican hands, and the districts that will send members of Congress to Washington this week have frequently been gerrymandered. In many states, including North Carolina and Wisconsin, Republicans have imposed restrictions on

**These elections are more important than any in recent memory. Only a vote for a Democratic Congress can constrain Donald Trump and his campaigns of hate.**

early voting, postal voting and voter identification, all of them designed to prevent black Americans from voting. In Georgia, officials tried to close seven out of the nine voting places in a predominantly black area on the pretext that disabled access was inadequate.

The U.S. constitution is celebrated for its checks and balances. Yet partisanship is now so entrenched and unbending that institutions themselves are beginning to creak. The White House is in the hands of a lying and rule-breaking racist executive who, apart from all his policy failings, refuses to release his

tax returns, blurs the distinction between official and personal interests, meddles in investigations in which he has no business and who deployed thousands of U.S. troops for a purely partisan reason. Meanwhile, since the Brett Kavanaugh confirmation, the Supreme Court is now more firmly than ever under partisan rightwing control, opening up the near certainty of an attempt to overturn U.S. abortion rights.

So there is a strong constitutional case, as well as a strong political one, for recapturing the legislative branch from its dishonest and scyophantic rightwing Republican leadership. Democratic control of the House of Representatives would constrain Trump by investigating issues that have been shamelessly ignored by the current House leadership. Democratic control of the Senate, a long shot, would clip his wings even more. Democratic failure this week, by contrast, would be — and would be taken to be — an electoral endorsement of Trump.

This is a pivotal election for Americans, for American democracy, and for the rest of the world. Yet it comes at a time of decent U.S. economic growth and high employment, when Republicans are energized, and Democrats are divided about their future course. It is far from guaranteed, in the light of 2016, that Democratic enthusiasm and money will turn into the blue wave that we want. But there is no more important political task anywhere in the world today than to seize this moment.

(Source: The Guardian)



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# Meeting on regional co-op for building resilience to disasters opens in Tehran

By Maryam Qarehgozlou

**TEHRAN** — An Expert Consultation Meeting on Regional Cooperation for Building Resilience to Slow-Onset Disasters, Including Sand and Dust Storms and Information Management for Cross-Border Disaster in Asia and the Pacific opened in Tehran on Monday.

The two-day event is co-organized by Planning and Management Organization, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM).

The key objectives of the meeting are reviewing the draft cross-border disaster atlas that serves as the first component of APDIM's database repository, agreeing on the elements for an information sharing and capacity development framework for decision-making support on slow-onset disasters, including sand and dust storms, and setting up the partnership network for implementation through APDIM's programme of work.

## Disaster risk reduction pivotal to achieve SDGs

In her opening speech at the meeting UN resident coordinator and UNDP representative Ugochi Daniels explained that disasters continue to impose heavy losses and damages on nations and people and impeded social and economic development at a global scale.

"Disaster risk reduction is pivotal to achieve sustainable development goals (SDGs)," Daniels highlighted.

"Iran is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world and exposed to various types of natural hazards; earthquakes, drought, floods and sand and dust storms are the most frequent natural disasters which the country faces."

Iran has gained valuable experience and developed considerable knowledge on disaster risk reduction and management, she said, adding that effective response to major disasters such as Kermanshah earthquake in 2017 and many other disasters are testimony to Iran's capacity to respond to natural hazards and disasters.

Daniels went on to say that under the current UN Development Framework for Iran for 2017-2021 the United Nations has been supporting the government's effort in developing and implementing national and regional initiatives aimed at sand and dust storms to control and investing

in disaster risk reduction and effective disaster and emergency preparedness response.

"The Department of Environment, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) organized an International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms in Tehran in July 2017 and a high-level dialogue on sand and dust storms was convened during the 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly on July 16, 2018."

"This dialogue focused on action-oriented recommendations and challenges faced by affected countries and discussed ways to improve policy coordination at the global level to address those challenges in the context of sustainable development goals."

On September 24, 2018 establishing a UN coalition on combatting sand and dust storms for enhancing collaboration, exchange of information, knowledge and good practices, advocacy and communication amongst various actors including UN entities, governments, academia, and the private sectors at the regional and national levels was proposed, she added.

"The establishment of APDIM based on ESCAP Resolution 71/11 and with the generous support of the government of Iran is a great achievement and an important step towards enhancing disaster risk reduction and resilience building in the region."

Disaster information management is critical in all aspects and areas of disaster risk reduction and resilience building. Holding this meeting in Tehran is also a valuable opportunity to discuss ways and means for expanding regional cooperation in this regard.

She concluded that the UN Country team in Iran stands ready to engage in and support all types of cooperation within the scope of APDIM's programmes as well as through other regional and multilateral cooperation mechanisms to reduce the risk and negative impact of disasters in the region.

## Global solidarity a must to tackle environmental challenges

Naser Moqaddasi, Chief of Center for International Affairs and Conventions at Department of Environment, in his opening speech explained that the prospect of resolving the challenges and environmental problems that threaten the future



of human life require interaction, co-operation, bringing together ideas, and moving from divergence toward convergence and solidarity.

"We believe that this global solidarity has never been necessary like today," he highlighted. "Although the origin of most of the current environmental challenges is natural, it seems to be in many cases due to unreasonable, unstable, and sometimes selfish exploitation of nature."

"The Middle East and North Africa region with an area of 7.3 million square kilometers, ranging from 20 to 40 degrees north latitude as the world's dry belt, is the place of emerging the great challenge of dust storms."

"The region has the largest deserts in the world in both hemispheres, and despite the fact that more than 6.2% of the world's population is located in this area, only 1.4% of the Earth's renewable water resources are gathered here. This means that about 200 million people in this area, directly or indirectly, are affected by water scarcity and dust storms."

"Large parts of Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia,

Iran, Kuwait, Jordan, and other countries in the region are affected by dust storm damages."

"Statistical surveys show that the largest amount of dust that affects Iran comes from neighboring countries. The insecurity in these countries, and in particular the devastating phenomenon of terrorism, has severely hampered the implementation of joint plans to curb this phenomenon among the countries of the region."

Moqaddasi went on to regret that according to the report by the Ministry of Health, the average annual PM2.5 concentrations of particles observed in these cities are estimated to be 2 to 6 times the standard amounts and that the phenomenon of dusts in only five of the most affected countries since March 2018 has caused a premature death of 1,717 people.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is fully prepared to contribute to a wide range of bilateral, multilateral, regional and international cooperation, in order to root out and identify the phenomenon of dust, identify its destructive effects in the region, and formulate concrete solutions

by providing Immediate, medium-term and long-term measures to deal with dust storms, he concluded.

## Serious, cross-sectoral solution needed to address sand and dust storms

Ali Mohammad Mousavi, Director General for International Environmental and Sustainable Development Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, also said that given that the regional risks and vulnerabilities reach beyond national borders, their efficient management naturally requires regional cooperation and measures facilitated by all relevant and necessary information aggregated and utilized in a practical manner by a center which is fed and owned by all regional stakeholders with view to contributing and addressing the region's exposure to variety of risks.

Sand and dust storm is a transboundary phenomenon that requires far more serious, multi-faceted, multi-disciplinary, and cross-sectoral solution and goes beyond the capacity of an individual country and needs to be coordinated among all parties concerned, he added.

Mousavi went on to say that APDIM is expected to work towards establishing mechanisms for creating regional networks and platforms to share information to promote best practices, devising guidelines and setting up necessary infrastructure to assist adaptation and mitigation measures for countries affected by sand and dust storms.

## APDIM a starting point for South-South Cooperation

Hamid Pourmohammadi, Chairman of APDIM's Governing Council and Deputy Vice President at Budget and Planning Organization, also highlighted that APDIM is considered as an appropriate starting point for the promotion of development in the context of South-South Cooperation.

The center has the potential to bear fruitful results by setting up an integrated network of disaster-related information management and data processing in order to better monitor, prepare, mitigate, build resilience, and recover in the face of natural hazards, Pourmohammadi said.

Iran, in line with APDIM program of work expresses its readiness to take measures and initiatives through regional cooperation to bridge the existing gaps between information management and capacity building in the field of disaster risk reduction, he stated.

## Alzheimer's may be treated with diabetes drugs

A new study finds that people with Alzheimer's disease who also took anti-diabetes medication exhibited fewer molecular markers of the neurological condition. These findings could inform future Alzheimer's treatments.

A study examined the molecular pathways of brain tissue and the cells that line the inside of blood vessels in the brains of people with Alzheimer's and diabetes.

New research — led by Vahram Haroutunian, Ph.D., a professor of psychiatry and neuroscience at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City, NY — analyzed the brain tissues of people who had both Alzheimer's disease and diabetes.

The findings suggest that anti-diabetes drugs may protect the brain against Alzheimer's.

As Prof. Haroutunian and colleagues explain in their paper, a mounting body of evidence has been pointing to a link between the risk of mild cognitive impairment, dementia, and type 2 diabetes.

Additional studies have uncovered an association between an insulin receptor pathway in the brain and the accumulation of Alzheimer's-specific brain pathologies.



Previous studies conducted by the same Prof. Haroutunian and colleagues found that the brains of people with Alzheimer's who had also undergone treatment for diabetes, such as insulin or antidiabetes medicine, had reduced brain pathologies.

So, in the new study, the researchers wanted to understand what goes on at the molecular level and identify the molecular pathways that are responsible for this link between diabetes and Alzheimer's.

More specifically, the researchers examined the molecular pathways in brain tissue and endothelial cells that line the inside of blood vessels.

## The findings now appear in the journal PLOS One.

The researchers designed a technique

that allowed them to isolate brain capillaries from the brain tissues of 34 people who had both Alzheimer's and type 2 diabetes, and who had undergone treatment for both conditions.

The scientists compared these brain tissues with those of 30 people who had had Alzheimer's but not diabetes, as well as 19 control brain tissues from people who had neither of these two conditions.

Then, the scientists analyzed the blood vessels and brain tissues separately, examining either the Alzheimer's-related molecular changes in the brain's capillary cells or the insulin signaling.

The study revealed that about half of these markers were lower in the group that had both Alzheimer's and diabetes.

Also, the vast majority of the changes in molecular RNA markers present in Alzheimer's disease, including irregularities in gene expression, were not found in the Alzheimer's group that took antidiabetes medication.

"The results of this study are important because they give us new insights for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease," says Prof. Haroutunian.

(Source: [newsmax.com](http://newsmax.com))

## Major depression: Existing drug reduces symptoms by 45 percent

For the first time in decades, researchers have identified a new medication that can successfully treat major depression.

An existing oral drug may relieve major depression. Depression affects about 300 million people across the globe, making the condition the "leading cause of ill health and disability worldwide," according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

In 2016 in the United States, over 10 million adults had at least one major depressive episode. Approximately 64 percent of these people had their lives severely impaired as a result.

Despite the prevalence and severity of this condition, the current treatments are limited and often ineffective. Up to 30 percent of people with major depression are resistant to treatment.

Furthermore, some studies have suggested that antidepressants may have a host of unexpected side effects, such as raising the risk of stroke and heart attack or that of premature mortality.

Now, new research finds hope for treating major depression in an existing anticonvulsant drug called ezogabine.

Scientists at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City, NY, tested the drug in 18 participants who were having a major depressive episode but not taking any medication.

Dr. James Murrough, the director of the Mood and Anxiety Disorders Program at the Icahn School of Medicine, is the senior author of the paper, which now appears in the journal Molecular Psychiatry.

## First new depression medicine for decades

For the new research, Dr. Murrough and his colleagues drew from one of their previous studies, in which they showed

that ezogabine, or retigabine, was successful in treating depression-like symptoms in mice.

The drug is a potassium channel opener. As the researchers explain, previous studies have shown that potassium channels in the brain's ventral striatum — a region involved in processing reward — mediate the brain's resilience to depression.

In the new study, Dr. Murrough and team administered up to 900 milligrams of ezogabine, orally, to 18 people with major depressive disorder for a period of 10 weeks.

Using functional MRI scanners, the researchers examined the participants' brain circuitry pre- and post-treatment, looking to see whether the drug had had any effect on their brains' reward systems.

The study revealed that ezogabine led to a 45 percent reduction in depressive symptoms, as measured by the activity in the brain's reward circuitry.

More specifically, an "[i]mprovement in depression was associated with decreased functional connectivity between the ventral caudate and clusters within the mid-cingulate cortex and posterior cingulate cortex," report the researchers.

Also, a subgroup of participants showed improved reward learning after the treatment. The study's senior investigator comments on the findings, saying, "The results of this study are exciting because we haven't had a new medicine to treat depression in decades."

"Most antidepressants are in the same class of drugs and work by increasing serotonin. Our research suggests a different molecular target that works through other brain mechanisms and could be helpful for patients."

(Source: [flipboard.com](http://flipboard.com))

## EMBASSY OF PAKISTAN TEHRAN

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**Golestan province preparing for tribes festival**



UNESCO-registered Gonbad-e Qabus

**HERITAGE** TEHRAN — Iran's northern Golestan province, which is home to various ethnic communities, is preparing to hold the 12th International Festival of Tribes Culture on the theme of "unity between tribespeople".

The first leg of the festival will be held in the capital city of Gorgan from November 20 to 23 while the second is scheduled to take place in the city of Gonbad-e Qabus between November 25 and 28, CHTN reported.

The festival will embrace a wide scenes of regional arts, handicrafts, workshops, souvenirs, culinary traditions and tourist-attraction exhibits, as well as live performances.

Similar to previous editions, the event will convene diplomats, cultural officials, indigenous performers, craftspeople, and artists from Iran and neighboring countries such as Armenia, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

The one-millennium-old, UNESCO-registered Gonbad-e Qabus is one of the most significant tourist destinations in Golestan province, neighboring the Caspian Sea.

**Fars exhibit to sharpen focus on medical, religious tourism**



**TOURISM** TEHRAN — Iran's southern Fars province will play host to the 10th Pars tourism exhibition from December 12 to 15, aiming to explore potential for medical and religious travels.

"So far, the religious tourism of Fars province has been paid less attention that would be emphasized in this year's exhibition," Fars province's tourism chief said in a press conference on Sunday. "Also, Fars province is exemplary in the field of medical tourism," Mosayeb Amiri added, CHTN reported.

The exhibit will also highlight handicrafts, hotels and eco-lodges, marine and air sports, air traveling, online booking, free trade zones, recreational activities amongst others.

A poster for the 10th Pars tourism exhibition was unveiled in the press conference.

**Iran's H1 foreign arrivals up over 51% y/y**

**TOURISM** TEHRAN — International tourist arrivals in Iran rose by more than 51 percent in the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (started March 21) from a year earlier, tourism chief has said.

"Despite threats of the U.S., foreign tourist arrivals in Iran has risen by more than 51 percent during the first six months of this year," Ali-Asghar Mounesan said, adding, with regard to last year's growth of four percent, it has been an unprecedented progress for the past few decades, ISNA reported.

The official declined to provide further details or to say how many foreigners visited the country in the six-month period.

Mounesan, who doubles as vice president, in September said Iran's international visitors surged 45 percent in the first five months from the same period last year.

Other sources have reported that Iran hosted some three million of inbound passengers from March 21 to September 22. Iran attracted five million foreign nationals in the past year. U.S. President Donald Trump in May pulled out from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, re-imposing new sanctions on Iran's economy.

The U.S.-led restrictions and propaganda campaign, however, have cut the number of Westerner travelers to Iran but the country is trying its best to attract more visitors from neighboring countries.

Mohammad Moheb-khodaei, a senior Iranian tourism official, said in June: "The number of travelers from European countries cut by 24 percent in the first three months of the [current Iranian calendar] year from a



Tourists from Hong Kong visit Persepolis, a UNESCO-registered property in southern Iran, February 11, 2016. (AFP Photo/Behrouz Mehri)

year earlier." Over the past couple of years, Air France, British Airways and KLM Royal Dutch Airlines stopped flights to Tehran due to what they publicized as "negative results and financial outlook." Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, the country is expecting to increase the number of tourism arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million.

**Rouhani lauds CHHTO for full restoration of Ali Qapu**

**HERITAGE** TEHRAN — President Hassan Rouhani has appreciated the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization for fully restoration of the landmark Ali Qapu Palace. "Preservation of ancient works are of especial importance," Rouhani wrote on November 3 in a letter to CHHTO Director Ali-Asghar Mounesan, ISNA reported.

"I appreciate the organization. Preservation of ancient works [of art], particularly magnificent monuments in Isfahan, are of especial importance. Provincial governorates and municipalities should cooperate in this regard," the letter reads.

Some 13 years of rehabilitating projects on Ali Qapu has recently come to an end as scaffoldings are removed from the facade of 17th-century monument.

Built at the very end of the 16th century as a residence for Shah Abbas I, a Safavid king, the six-storey palace overlooks the UNESCO-registered Imam Square.

Profusion of tree-lined boulevards, Persian gardens and important Islamic buildings give Isfahan a highly touristic appeal that is unmatched by many other Iranian cities. In addition, the city is home to many versatile artisans who underpin its reputation as a living museum of traditional culture.



President Hassan Rouhani writes a letter in an undated photo.

**How did Egyptians build the pyramids?**

The discovery of a 4,500-year-old ramp offers clues about Egyptians' technological knowledge

Researchers in Egypt have discovered a 4,500-year-old ramp system used to haul alabaster stones out of a quarry, and news reports have suggested that it could provide clues as to how Egyptians built the pyramids. Yet while the ramp system is a significant technological discovery, the pyramid connection is still a bit of a stretch.

Archaeologists from the French Institute for Oriental Archaeology in Cairo and the University of Liverpool discovered the ramp system's remains in an ancient alabaster quarry at Hatnub, a site in the Eastern Desert. The ramp system dates at least as far back as the reign of Pharaoh Khufu, who built the Great Pyramid at Giza.

"This system is composed of a central ramp flanked by two staircases with numerous post holes," Yannis Gourdon, co-director of the joint mission at Hatnub, told Live Science. "Using a sled which carried a stone block and was attached with ropes to these wooden posts, ancient Egyptians were able to pull up the alabaster blocks out of the quarry on very steep slopes of 20 percent or more."

It's difficult to tell the significance of this discovery since the archaeologists haven't yet published their research on it, says Kara Cooney, a professor of Egyptian art and architecture at the University of California, L.A., who is not involved in this research.

"It's a stretch to take an alabaster quarry and say this is how the pyramids were built, because the pyramids weren't built out of alabaster," she says. "The way that the ancient Egyptians cut and moved stone is still very mysterious."



Alabaster is a softer mineral, different from the heavy stone blocks with which Egyptians built the outer structure of the pyramids.

"We actually don't know [their] mechanism of cutting hard stones like red granite," she says. "And we still don't know how the ancient Egyptians lifted blocks weighing hundreds of tons up the sides of the pyramids."

Most Egyptologists already think that Egyptians used ramp systems to build the pyramids, but there are different theories

about what types they used. Cooney says experts have theorized they could've used straight ramps that went up the pyramid's outside walls, ramps that curved around these walls or ramping systems inside the pyramid itself.

So although the ramp system discovery in the alabaster quarry does tell us something about Egyptians' technological knowledge, it doesn't answer the big questions about how they built the pyramids. And that's exactly the way the ancient Egyptians would've wanted it.

Just as "any authoritarian regime is going to hide their secrets as long and as best as they can," Cooney says, the Egyptians purposefully left no record of how they built their pyramids.

"The pyramids are there as mountains of stone proving the otherworldly nature of their god-kings. You stand in front of those pyramids and you feel it's impossible to build such a thing." That means, she says, that "the propaganda is still working."

(Source: History.com)

**More ancient statues, graves unearthed in a Greek field**

**ATHENS (AP)** — Greece's Culture Ministry says a Greek farmer's recent discovery of a fragment of an ancient statue while tilling his field has yielded three more statues and several graves in the past month.

Archeologists have been busy since mid-October, digging part of a field near the central Greek town of Atalanti, 150 kilometers (94 miles) northwest of Athens. The dig began after the farmer found

the torso of an ancient kouros (young man) and immediately alerted the authorities.

The ministry said Saturday that a total of four large fragments of life-size limestone statues of young men have been found, along with a triangular statue base. All include torsos, with the largest fragment including a head. Deeper down, seven graves with several unspecified findings have been unearthed, likely part of a larger cemetery.



**ROUND THE GLOBE**

**Anjar**

Founded during the Umayyad period under Caliph Walid Ibn Abd Al-Malak (705-715), the city of Anjar, bears outstanding witness to the Umayyad civilization.

Anjar, located in modern Lebanon, is an example of an inland commercial center, at the crossroads of two important routes: one leading from Beirut to Damascus and the other crossing the Bekaa and leading from Homs to Tiberiade.

The site of this ancient city was only discovered by archaeologists at the end of the 1940s. Excavations revealed a fortified city surrounded by walls and flanked by forty towers,



a rectangular area (385 x 350 m).

Dominated by gates flanked by porticos, an important North-South axis and a lesser East-West axis, superposed above the main collectors for sewers, divide the city into four equal quadrants.

Public and private buildings are laid out according to a strict plan: the great palace of the Caliph and the Mosque in the South-East quarter occupies the highest part of the site, while the small palaces (harems) and the baths are located in the North-East quarter to facilitate the functioning and evacuation of waste waters.

Anjar was never completed, enjoying only a brief existence. In 744, Caliph Ibrahim, son of Walid, was defeated and afterwards the partially destroyed city was abandoned. Vestiges of the city of Anjar therefore constitute a unique example of 8th century town planning.

(Source: UNESCO)

# Climate change could mean rat boom, scientists warn

Scientists are warning that rising temperatures caused by climate change will turn cities worldwide into ideal rat breeding grounds.

Several U.S. cities including New York, Chicago, and Boston pump millions of dollars each year into their respective battles against a rat population explosion.

But scientists predict that a global warming of "2 degrees" Celsius, or 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit, will occur across the globe by the end of this century. This increase of warmer winters and hotter summers provides the most fertile breeding ground for rats to reproduce at staggering rates.

Bobby Corrigan, a "rat czar" from Cornell University, explained to several news outlets last year that the rodents have a gestation period of 14 days. And as Bloomberg noted this week, rat babies can start reproducing after just one month of life, meaning one pregnant rat can lead to 15,000 to 18,000 new rats in under one year.

## Rat infested breeding ground

Scientists are warning that rising temperatures caused by climate change will turn cities worldwide into rat infested breeding grounds.

A board of health director for a Boston suburb claimed to have "reports of 25 to 30 rats playing in puddles." The Boston Globe reported last month. In New York, tenants in public housing communities told the Daily News "They're getting bigger and bigger. They're in apartments."

A 43-year-old Marcy projects tenant told the newspaper that the rats don't even scurry away when approached by humans because they feel so comfortable in some parts of the buildings.

"They don't even run," Lenore told the newspaper in October. "They just sit there."



It's crazy, they're not afraid of people."

According to the National Pest Management Association, the cities of Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco-Oakland and Washington D.C. make the top five most rodent-filled urban areas in the country.

This is not the first warning that members of the science community ranging from rodentologists to biologists have given about warmer weather causing a rodent surge. The New Republic noted last year that the problem is expected to worsen as 70 percent of the world's population

is expected to live within cities by 2050.

## Orkin pest control

According to a 2016 USA Today report, calls to the Orkin pest control service, were "up 61 percent in Chicago; 67 percent in Boston; 174 percent in San Francisco; 129 percent in New York City; and 57 percent in Washington, D.C."

The rat reproduction phenomenon has had effects worldwide, with several New Zealand cities providing fertile breeding grounds for rats as they experienced one of the hottest summers on record.

"In some places we're looking at a ten-fold increase in the rodent population," said Dr. Graeme Elliott, in an interview with The Guardian. The newspaper used a blaring headline warning of a coming "ratpocalypse."

"We've had experience where we've had bird populations completely wiped out from high rat numbers, so horrible things can happen and we will probably see the worst of it next spring when birds are nesting again."

(Source: Newsweek)

**Scientists are warning that rising temperatures caused by climate change will turn cities worldwide into rat infested breeding grounds.**

## Floating solar is more than panels on a platform — it's hydroelectric's symbiont

A total of 1.1 gigawatts (GW) of solar have been installed around the world as of September, according to a new report by the World Bank (PDF). That's similar to the amount of traditional solar panel capacity that had been installed around the world in the year 2000, the report says.

The World Bank expects that, like traditional solar 18 years ago, we're likely to see an explosion of floating solar over the next two decades.

That's because floating solar is not simply "solar panels on water." Solar panels prevent algae growth in dammed areas, and they inhibit evaporation from occurring in hotter climates.

(According to Yale's School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, major lakes in the southwestern U.S. like Lake Mead and Lake Powell can lose more than 800,000 acre-feet of water to evaporation per year, and the adorably-described "floatovoltaics" could prevent up to 90 percent of that evaporation.)

### Floating solar

Additionally, floating solar avoids taking up space on land that is priced at a premium. In Northern California, for example, a floating solar installation was added to a nearby reservoir because the land around it was better used for growing grapes.

Another benefit of floating solar is that ground doesn't have to be leveled before the plant is installed. Usually,

fixed-tilt panels are attached to a floating platform that's moored to the bottom of the reservoir. Most systems send electricity through floating inverters, although in some smaller installations the inverters are situated on land.

The downside is, of course, cost. Floating platforms and water-resistant wiring are more expensive for water-dwelling panels than for their land-based counterparts. As solar PV panel prices have been falling, however, the extra cost to make a floating system might save it from being considered too expensive.

The World Bank contends that the real value of floating solar is going to become obvious as more and more panels are paired with hydroelectric systems.

Floating solar and hydroelectric dams actually work in a pretty nice symbiosis. In some areas, hydroelectric dams produce energy in an extremely predictable manner. In these cases, the electricity can be used to augment the more variable solar energy coming from the panels.

In other cases, hydroelectric energy wanes in times of drought, and solar energy can be used to augment hydroelectric power when water levels are low.

"Floating solar may therefore be of particular interest where grids are weak, such as in Sub-Saharan Africa and parts of developing Asia," the World Bank writes. (Source: arstechnica.com)

## Researchers see cognitive changes in offspring of heavy cannabis-using rats

Washington State University researchers have seen cognitive changes in the offspring of rats exposed to heavy amounts of cannabis. Their work is one of the rare studies to look at the effects of cannabis during pregnancy. The drug is the most commonly used illicit substance among pregnant women.

Ryan McLaughlin, an assistant professor of Integrative Physiology and Neuroscience, exposed pregnant rats to various concentrations of cannabis vapor and documented how the offspring of those exposed to high amounts had trouble adjusting their strategy to get sugar rewards.

"Prenatal exposure to cannabis may cause meaningful changes in brain development that can negatively impact cognitive functioning into adulthood," McLaughlin and his colleagues wrote in a summary for a presentation Sunday at the Society for Neuroscience's annual meeting, Neuroscience 2018, in San Diego.

### New model of exposure

The researchers used a new model of exposure, vaporizing cannabis extracts to recreate the way humans most often use the drug. Pregnant rats, or dams, received various amounts of vapor. Controls received none, while others got cannabis-free vapor, or vapor with low or high amounts of cannabis. The smoke, administered in atmospherically controlled cages over two hour-long sessions per day from before pregnancy through gestation, raised the THC levels in the blood to that of a person

who has had a few puffs.

About 60 offspring were submitted to a task similar to the Wisconsin Card Sorting Test, an 80-year-old method of testing a human's flexibility when the conditions of positive reinforcement change. Rats were first trained to press one of two levers, learning that they got sugar when they pressed the lever near a light. The next day, they got a sugar reward when they pressed the left or right lever, regardless of the light.

Rats exposed to cannabis in utero learned the first rule easily enough. But rats exposed to a high concentration of cannabis, "showed marked deficits in their ability to shift strategies when the new rule was implemented," the researchers wrote.

Rats from dams exposed to high levels of cannabis often appeared to learn the new reward strategy, hitting the correct lever several times in a row. But they would not keep to the strategy long enough to strike the right lever ten times, like the offspring of dams exposed to less or no cannabis.

The "general take-home message is that we see deficits, particularly in the domain of cognitive flexibility, in rats prenatally exposed to high doses of cannabis vapor," McLaughlin said. "The impairment is not a general learning deficit, as they can learn the initial rule just fine. The deficit only emerges when the learned strategy is no longer resulting in reward delivery."

(Source: phys.org)

## New CERN gravity experiments aim to get to the bottom of the matter

Physics tells us that a hammer and a feather, dropped in a vacuum, will fall at the same rate — as famously demonstrated by an Apollo 15 astronaut on the Moon. Now, CERN scientists are preparing to put a spooky new spin on that experiment, by dropping antimatter in a vacuum chamber to see if gravity affects it the same way it does matter — or if antimatter falls upwards instead.

For every particle of matter there's a corresponding antimatter particle, which is identical in every way except that it has the opposite charge. That means that if matter and antimatter touch, they annihilate each other in a flash of energy — which understandably makes it tricky to study. Scientists at CERN first managed to trap and study the stuff back in 2010, albeit only for a fraction of a second. The following year that time was increased to a more useful 16 minutes.

Predictions say that antimatter particles should mostly follow the same rules as their normal counterparts, but it's worth double-checking to be sure — after all, any other differences could bring into question the entire Standard Model of particle physics. A few years ago, the CERN team trapped and studied the optical spectrum of antihydrogen for the first time and, breathing a big sigh of relief, found that it was identical to that of hydrogen.



### Reacting to gravity

Another fundamental question is whether antimatter reacts to gravity the same way. Again, predictions say it should fall like regular matter, but there's about a one-in-a-million chance that it actually falls up instead. So far, antimatter has only been studied while suspended in an electromagnetic trap, since letting it fall to the bottom (or top?) of any normal container will destroy it.

Two new experiments at CERN are ready to test out the problem. In both cases, after the antimatter is created, the scientists will switch off the electromagnetic traps holding it, then examine where in the tube the annihilations occur. That will allow them to measure the effects of gravity on antiatoms, and see if there are any discrepancies.

The main difference between the two experiments is how they go about creating

the stuff, and getting it ready for the drop. The first, known as ALPHA-g, is based on the existing ALPHA equipment that allows scientists to create and trap antimatter, but turns it vertically.

### Neutral antihydrogen

Antiprotons are collected from the Antiproton Decelerator (AD) and bound to positrons (or anti-electrons) to create neutral antihydrogen atoms. That neutrality is important, since carrying a charge could have an effect on the results and obscure the influence of gravity.

The second experiment, known as GBAR, gets its antiprotons from the ELENA deceleration ring, and combines them with positrons from a small linear accelerator. Together, that makes antihydrogen ions, which are then ultracooled to 10 microkelvin and made neutral by stripping them of a positron by hitting them with a laser. The resulting neutral antihydrogen is then subjected to the drop test.

Unfortunately, both experiments are racing the clock. In a few weeks' time, CERN's accelerators are due to be shut down for two years as the facility undergoes an intensive upgrade known as the High-Luminosity Large Hadron Collider (HL-LHC). Ideally, one or both will be able to be conducted before that happens.

(Source: New Atlas)

## Scientists are one step closer to complex quantum teleportation

For future technologies such as quantum computers and quantum encryption, the experimental mastery of complex quantum systems is inevitable. Scientists from the University of Vienna and the Austrian Academy of Sciences have succeeded in making another leap.

While physicists around the world are trying to increase the number of two-dimensional systems, so-called qubits, researchers around Anton Zeilinger are breaking new ground. They pursue the idea to use more complex quantum systems as qubits and thus can increase the information capacity with the same number of particles. The developed methods and technologies could in the future enable the teleportation of complex quantum systems. The results of their work "Experimental Greenberger-Horne-Zeilinger Entanglement Beyond Qubits" is published recently in the renowned journal Nature Photonics.

Similar to bits in conventional computers, Qubits are the smallest unit of information in quantum systems. Big companies like Google and IBM are competing with research institutes around the world to produce an increasing number of entangled Qubits.

The clear motivation is to develop a functioning quantum computer. A research group at the University of Vienna and the Austrian Academy of Sciences, however, is pursuing a new path to increase the information capacity of complex quantum systems.

The idea behind it is simple: instead of just increasing the number of particles involved, the complexity of each system is increased.

The "special thing about our experiment is that for the first time it entangles three photons beyond the conventional two-dimensional nature," explains Manuel Erhard, first author of the study. For this purpose, the Viennese physicists use quantum systems which have more than two possible states — in this particular case, the angular momentum of individual light particles.

(Source: eurekalert.org)

## Astronomers have detected one of the oldest stars in the entire universe

Whenever we hear of stars discovered that formed just after the Big Bang, they're very far away, in the far reaches of the visible Universe. But now astronomers have spotted something new: a star that's around 13.5 billion years old, right here in our own Milky Way galaxy.

The smoking gun is its metal content. In the very early Universe, there were no metals. They were forged in the hearts of the first generations of stars, which spewed them forth into space upon their violent messy deaths.

This material was then mixed up in the formation of new stars, with each subsequent generation growing richer and richer in metals. The younger the star, the greater the metal content, or metallicity.

2MASS J18082002–5104378 B has the lowest metallicity of any star ever discovered — only about 10 percent of the metallicity of Earth. Its discovery could mean that the star-dense disc of our galaxy is much older than the 8-10 billion years previously estimated.

And it's tiny — only about 10 percent of the mass of the Sun, right on the edge of the lower limit for hydrogen burning.

"We've never discovered a star so low mass and made of so few grams of metals," astrophysicist Andrew Casey of Monash University in Australia told sciencealert.com.

"This discovery tells us that the very first stars in the Universe didn't have to all be massive stars that died long ago. These ancient stars could form from very small amounts of material, which means some of those relics from soon after the Big Bang could still exist today.

Its incredibly small size is how 2MASS J18082002–5104378 B managed to remain undetected for so long, even though it's right here in the Milky Way: it's incredibly faint.

(Source: sciencealert.com)

## Researchers test 'LarvalBot' drone that can help rehabilitate coral reefs

The Queensland University of Technology has developed "LarvalBot," an underwater drone that might be the key to saving the world's coral reefs.

The negative effects of global warming are already vastly felt by creatures that thrive within the world's oceans. In the past couple of years, coral reefs, including the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, have seen a massive coral bleaching caused by unusually warm water.

Scientists fear that repeated coral bleaching events will kill corals that took years to grow. LarvalBot will aid in conserving these corals.

The process starts with scientists collecting coral spawns in which hundreds of millions of sperms and eggs released onto the water. The spawns are next reared into baby coral larvae inside controlled floating enclosures on the reef. Once developed, LarvalBot will deliver tiny baby coral larvae onto damaged reefs.

"We concentrate the larvae and put some of these into LarvalBot to gently squirt the larvae onto dead reef areas allowing it to settle and transform into coral polyps or baby corals," explained Matthew Dumbabin, from the Institute for Future Environments.

Scientists plan to use LarvalBot on the damaged parts of the Great Barrier Reef. Later this month, the world's largest coral reef system will be spawning and scientists believe that the drone will help speed up the recovery of affected ecosystems.

If successful, the surviving corals will grow and form new colonies. In about three years, the new corals will be able to reproduce by themselves.

Scientists estimate that with the help of LarvalBot, the new technique is up to 100 times better than previous methods. They aim to use three to four drones this month that will carry about 200,000 coral larvae each.

(Source: Techtimes.com)

### Court issues injunction allowing hijab at school

The Songkhla Administrative Court has issued an injunction allowing Muslim students at a kindergarten in this southern province to wear headscarves, or "hijab", to school without being punished.



A student wears hijab at Pattani Kindergarten at Wat Noppawongsaram. (Photo by Abdulloh Benjakat)

The injunction suspended until further court decisions the enforcement of the dressing code of Pattani Kindergarten Wat Noppawongsaram on 20 students whose parents filed the petition with the court.

The move came after the Buddhist school prohibited the students to wear hijab, saying it violated the school's rules.

The parents of the students insisted on dressing their children according to tradition, citing the constitution.

The parent of at least one of the students received a letter from the school's administration saying it would punish her daughter for violating the school rules by issuing a written warning.

(Source: Bangkok Post)

### Persimmon bars

"Persimmon bars as done by my husband's grandmother for years. A family holiday favorite. Sweet frosting tops these delicious cakes."

#### Ingredients:



- 1 cup persimmon pulp
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 egg, beaten
1 cup white sugar
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1 cup raisins
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1 cup chopped walnuts
1 cup confectioners' sugar
2 tablespoons lemon

#### Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Lightly grease a 10x15 inch jelly roll pan.

In a small bowl, stir together persimmon pulp and baking soda; set aside. In a separate bowl, mix together egg, white sugar, vegetable oil and raisins.

In a large bowl, stir together flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt and cloves. Stir persimmon mixture and egg mixture into the dry ingredients. Fold in walnuts. Spread batter into prepared pan.

Bake in preheated oven for 20 minutes. Meanwhile, combine confectioners' sugar and lemon juice. Stir until sugar is dissolved. Remove bars from oven and spread with glaze.

## LEARN ENGLISH

### Bowling

A: Alright, so the first thing that you need to know about bowling is that you should never cross that line where the lane begins.

B: Why not?

A: Because they polish and oil it to make the ball slide down. If you step there you will slip and fall.

A: OK, so I got my bowling shoes, my ball, and our names on the scorecard, so now, how the heck do I play this?

A: You throw the ball down the lane and try to knock down all the pins. If you do, that is called a strike. If you don't knock them all down on the first try, then you get a chance to get the spare. After ten frames, we add up the points and see who has the most. Three hundred is a perfect score, but very hard to get.

B: Got it! OK, I'm gonna give it a go. Oh no! My ball went in the gutter!

A: I told you, it's harder than you think. Now let a pro show you how it's done.

#### Key vocabulary

bowling: a game where you try to knock pins down with a ball

polish: to make smooth and glossy, esp. by rubbing or friction

lane: any narrow or well-defined passage, track, channel, or course

knock: to strike in collision

gutter: a sunken channel on each side of the lane

pro: an expert player

#### Supplementary vocabulary

split: separate or apart

perfect game: a game in bowling of 12 consecutive strikes.

pin: a small, slender, often pointed piece of wood, metal

strike: to hit, collide

gutter ball: A ball that goes into the gutter

(Source: irlanguage.com)



Without water, everything withers

# Ebtekar paving way for women's presence at stadiums

WOMEN TEHRAN — The Iranian vice president for women's and family affairs, Masoumeh Ebtekar, is to spectate the football match between Iran's Persepolis and Japan's Kashima Antlers at Tehran's Azadi Stadium to pave the ground for women's presence at stadiums.

On Saturday, Persepolis will host the Japanese team at the second leg of the 2018 AFC Champions League.

Certainly but gradually the ground will be paved for Iranian women's presence at Stadiums to watch sports events, IRNA quoted the female vice president as saying.

Women who were present at stadiums for watching previous events were mainly the sportswomen who were allowed at stadiums following their own requests, said Ebtekar.

I do not promise hundred percent, but I try my best to solve this problem, said Ebtekar expressing optimism for increasing the number of women watching sports events at stadiums day by day.

A ban on women attending men's football matches in Iran has existed since 1981, but earlier on June 2018 female fans were allowed to attend live screenings of Iran's first two games at the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia, at the Azadi Stadium in Tehran.

On June 26, Ebtekar tweeted a video of women at the screening, saying it has created «a new ray of hope» and optimism that the ban may be formally overturned.



## Children of Iranian mothers, foreign fathers to get Iranian citizenship

WOMEN TEHRAN — The cabinet of ministers chaired by President Hassan Rouhani approved on Sunday a bill, according to which, children born to Iranian mothers and foreign fathers are permitted to receive Iranian citizenship.

They are also allowed to get ID cards based on mother's request before the age of 18 and their own request after the age of 18, IRNA reported.

A campaign was launched a few years ago to change

the law, under which only Iranian men could pass their nationality to spouses or children.

In recent years, the campaign to abolish the law was given an unexpected boost following the death of Maryam Mirzakhani, an award-winning Tehran-born mathematician who died of cancer in the United States on July 14, 2017. Mirzakhani's only daughter, Anahita, has a Czech father and was thus ineligible for Iranian citizenship.



## 600,000 women enjoy recreational facilities of Tehran Municipality

WOMEN TEHRAN — A total number of 600,000 women from the capital city of Tehran enjoyed the cultural, training and sports facilities provided by the municipality during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year, beginning on March 21.

The facilities are provided at Shahrbanoo complexes built in 22 districts of

Tehran. Fatemeh Rakei, head of women's affairs department of Tehran Municipality said here on Sunday, focusing on physical and psychological health of women as the pivots of the families.

Accordingly, improving women's social and cultural level has been on the agenda of city management, Mehr quoted her as saying.

Shahrbanoo complexes are working as women-only centers to create a safe and secure environment to meet the essential cultural, social, entertainment and sports needs of women, she explained.

The complexes aim at enriching the leisure time of women, creating happiness and joy for women, increasing women's empowerment and social interactions.



## Women's suffrage UK centenary to be marked by female politicians

100 female parliamentarians from around the world are to sit in House of Commons

A young Bosnian MP who denounced her uncle's war crimes, a member of the Syrian opposition and a Gambian women's rights campaigner are among the female parliamentarians who will sit in the House of Commons chamber this week.

A landmark event on Thursday will celebrate the centenary of women's suffrage in the UK, involving more than 100 female politicians from around the world, from Afghanistan to the Vatican.

Among those will be a young Bosnia and Herzegovina MP, Lana Prlji, who came to national prominence for supporting her uncle's sentence for war crimes against Bosnian Muslims.

Prlji, who was elected last month and serves as vice-president of the country's Social Democratic party, has campaigned against nationalism and ethnic segregation, which she experienced growing up in Mostar.

After her uncle Jadranko Prli's indictment, she issued a press statement calling for the court's decision to be respected and upheld, prompting anger from some nationalists. Prli said the conference was a chance for her as a new female MP to share examples of good practice.

"I was raised by a single mom, and through my life I saw [from] that example how women can be strong, doing at the same time visible and invisible jobs for the society, for the community, for family," Prli said. "When one woman stands up for herself, she stands up for all women, and we as MPs must stand for all women, for all of us."

Another attendee is Ya Kumba Jaiteh, a leader of the Gambia's female lawyers' association, who also chairs the country's trade committee. Jaiteh will bring her infant daughter to the conference, the Department for International Development said.

The Gambian MP said she was pushing for 50% female representation in both parliament and the cabinet.

"Men will never empower women willingly but 'unpower them' in the name of tradition and religion," she said. "The conference will provide me the opportunity to learn from MPs from countries with high representation of women in parliament, [about] how this was achieved."

Others slated to attend include the first female speaker of the Bangladeshi parliament, Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, and Bassma Kodmani, a prominent member of the Syrian opposition.

The international development secretary, Penny Mordaunt, who will make a speech to open the event on Thursday, said the women gathering from around the world had the same ambition: "to make women's empowerment a global priority".

She said many of the women who would attend the event had made history in their countries by increasing female representation.

"Now it's up to us to advocate for vulnerable women around the world and give them a voice to fight for their rights and overcome violence, discrimination and repression," she said.

"Unless every woman can thrive and reach her full potential our nations and humanity will not reach its."

It will be co-hosted by Labor's former deputy leader Harriet Harman, who as the longest-serving female MP is "mother of the house".

Ministers attending include Mordaunt; the leader of the Commons, Andrea Leadsom; the shadow home secretary, Diane Abbott; and the shadow equalities minister, Dawn Butler.

Working groups will look at different issues facing women parliamentarians around the world, including bullying, harassment and empowering women once they become MPs. Downing Street has not yet confirmed whether the prime minister will attend.

Later, the women will have an afternoon policy session looking at women's economic empowerment, ending violence against women and girls, family planning and breaking the barriers to girls' education.

The event was almost scuppered after the Conservative MP Christopher Chope shouted "object" when the motion to host the gathering was put to the Commons this year, but it was later passed after an intervention by Mordaunt.

Chope had previously been the subject of a separate row after he objected to another private member's bill to make "upskirting" a specific criminal offence.

(Source: The Guardian)

### ENGLISH IN USE

#### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## Retirees' recruitment ban applies to Tehran mayor, says councilor

Tehran Mayor Mohammad Ali Afshani is subjected to the newly adopted law banning the retired to be employed once again, councilor Elham Fakhari said on Monday.

The law to ban employment of the retired was passed in mid-September by the Majlis [Iranian parliament] and it will be implemented by November 15. "Afshani is retired and as per the law he should resign," Tasnim news agency quoted Fakhari as saying.

The vice president for legal affairs [Laya Joneidi] has also said that all mayors, including Tehran mayor are subjected to the law, she said.

## شهردار تهران مشمول قانون منع به کارگیری بازنشستگان می شود

افشانی تا ۲۴ آبان شهرداری تهران را ترک می کند الهام فخاری عضو شورای اسلامی شهر تهران با اشاره به قانون منع به کارگیری بازنشستگان گفت: محمد علی افشانی شهردار تهران بازنشسته است.

فخاری در گفتگو با خبرگزاری تسنیم گفت: افشانی بازنشسته است و مطابق قانون باید در مهلت قانونی از خدمت کناره گیری کند. وی ادامه داد: معاون حقوقی رئیس جمهور لعیا جنیدی هم اعلام کرد که شهرداران از جمله شهردار تهران مشمول قانون منع به کارگیری بازنشستگان می شود.

### PREFIX/SUFFIX

#### “-arium (orium)”

Meaning: a place for
For example: With their large mouths they are capable of swallowing smaller aquarium fishes.

### PHRASAL VERB

#### Shake somebody/something up

Meaning: to give someone a very unpleasant shock, so that they feel very upset and frightened
For example: She was badly shaken up by the accident.

### IDIOM

#### Spice things up

Explanation: to make them more interesting or exciting
For example: Instead of just buying Sam a birthday gift, let's spice things up by taking him out for dinner.





# Iran insists Kashima would face FIFA fine after pitch invader ran onto the field

**S P O R T S** TEHRAN — The first leg of the 2018 AFC Champions League final between Kashima Antlers of Japan and Iran's Persepolis was briefly suspended at the Kashima Stadium after an Iranian pitch invader ran onto the field on Saturday.



CCTV footage shows a man walking onto the pitch with a flag in hand representing a political message while the stewards deliberately ignoring him.

FIFA's disciplinary code prohibits "political slogans in any form" with "anyone who provokes the general public during a match" facing fine.

The Japanese side will be penalized if they are found in breach of FIFA's rules on allowing the pitch invader in the Saturday's match in Ibaraki.

Kashima Antlers defeated Persepolis 2-0, thanks to goals from Brazilians Leo Silva and Serginho.

In return, Persepolis will host the Japanese outfit in Tehran's 80,000-seater Azadi Stadium on November 10.

## Mensha: We've beaten better teams than Kashima



Godwin Mensha has spoken of Persepolis' belief ahead of the second leg of the 2018 AFC Champions League final by insisting the Iranian team have defeated better sides than Kashima Antlers in the tournament, as the pair prepare to clash at Azadi Stadium on Saturday.

Persepolis started well in the first leg at Kashima Soccer Stadium, but faded in the second half as the hosts took control. Goals from Brazilian duo Leo Silva and Serginho ultimately secured a 2-0 victory for Kashima and gave the Tehran side a mountain to climb in the return meeting. But Persepolis have twice recovered from first-leg deficits in the knockout rounds, eliminating the United Arab Emirates' Al Jazira and Qatar's Al Duhail in dramatic fashion at Azadi Stadium, and the Japanese team will know the job is only half done ahead of what is sure to be an enthralling clash.

"We have not lost at home in the AFC Champions League, which is a very good point, so the most important thing is to try and score some goals," said the Nigerian striker.

"[As the forwards], I hope me and [Ali] Alipour can help bring us back into the game. That is really important for the team because they really need us to work hard to score.

"We have played against many good teams who are better than Kashima. I

think that Al Sadd were much better, but it's just that we conceded cheap goals. We will work very hard and try to finish everything at home."

After losing the first leg of the last 16 3-2 against Al Jazira — a game in which both Mensha and Alipour scored — Persepolis recovered to win 2-1 at home and advance on away goals.

A similar situation occurred in the quarter-finals as the Tehran side lost 1-0 away at Al Duhail before Mensha scored the decisive goal in a 3-1 home victory that secured a second successive semi-final appearance.

Now, for a third time, Branko Ivankovic's side will have to come from behind and face their toughest test yet as they go into the match two goals down and without an away goal.

"When we arrived [at Kashima Soccer Stadium] we felt their fans, but they now need to come and see what we have in Tehran; we expect our fans to support us in the final," added Mensha, whose side have been inspired by capacity crowds at Azadi Stadium.

"It was a difficult result because we were trying to take a good result back home. We worked hard for the win but now I think it will be very hard because it's the AFC Champions League final. (Source: the-afc)"

## Tight schedule not an issue for Kashima



A tight schedule, Kashima Antlers coach Go Oiwa is confident, will not stop the Japanese side from giving their best when they face Persepolis in the second leg of the 2018 AFC Champions League final on Saturday.

Kashima, who will take a 2-0 lead into the return leg at the Azadi Stadium, will first have to play Kashiwa Reysol in the J League on Tuesday, meaning the Persepolis tie on Saturday will be their fourth match in 11 days, having played Cerezo Osaka on October 31.

Fatigue is a genuine concern for Kashima's fans, who desperately want to see their team lift the AFC Champions League title for the first time.

Oiwa, however, isn't concerned about his team's mental and physical state.

"We have been dealing with a tight schedule since the start of the season and I don't think we should start using this as an excuse now. We are 90 minutes away from winning the AFC Champions League and I believe the players will be up for it," said Oiwa.

Kashima are currently fourth in the J League standings and with just three matches remaining before the season ends, they need the points to get into the 2019 AFC Champions League playoff places. (Source: the-afc)"

"We have a good squad of players and those who were given a chance to play against Cerezo Osaka delivered as we won 1-0. I am sure that they will do the same if given the chance against Kashima," said Oiwa.

Oiwa is equally confident that his players will be mentally ready for the challenge Persepolis will surely pose in the return leg.

"The players may be physically and mentally tired now but after a couple of days of rest, they will be looking forward to the return leg.

"We know how supportive the Persepolis fans are but we have a great chance to win the AFC Champions League for the first time and my players will overcome their mental and physical fatigue and be ready for the return leg."

Kashima will have to be for Persepolis are unbeaten at home in the AFC Champions League this season, having also overcome first leg deficits in the Round of 16 and quarter-finals to advance.

"We know that we will be playing in a stadium filled to the brim in the return leg but I don't believe my players will be intimidated simply because we are focused on winning the AFC Champions League," said Oiwa. (Source: the-afc)"

## Esteghlal held by Machine Sazi: IPL

**S P O R T S** TEHRAN — Esteghlal football team were held to a goalless draw by Machine Sazi in Iran Professional League (IPL) on Monday.

Esteghlal, who are under pressure after being knocked out of Iran's Hazfi Cup, shared the spoils with the Tabriz based football team at the Bonyan Diesel Stadium.

"The draw in an away match is not so bad. Machine Sazi football team wanted to score on counter attacks and we had several chances but lacked the cutting edge," Winfried Schaefer said in the post-match news conference.

Esteghlal are sixth with 15 points after 11 matches, 11 points adrift of IPL leaders Padideh.

## Socceroos monitoring Arzani injury

Football Federation Australia (FFA) performance staff have been in contact with medical staff at Celtic FC, and with Daniel Arzani directly, to monitor his current injury situation.

Striker Arzani is due for further investigations and a review with a knee specialist in Europe early next week, which will determine the full extent of his injury and the prognosis moving forward.

Socceroos head coach Graham Arnold said: "We have great confidence in the staff at Celtic FC to manage Daniel's injury appropriately. FFA's performance team will continue to liaise closely with Celtic and Daniel to provide Daniel with whatever assistance he requires."

The 19-year-old, who turned heads at the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia, went down clutching his knee barely 20 minutes into his first game for Celtic against Dundee on Wednesday.

Arzani, who signed for English champions Manchester City before being sent on loan to Celtic, is set to miss Australia's friendlies against Korea Republic and Lebanon later this month.

The Socceroos, however, will be hoping the talented player will be fit for their defence of the AFC Asian Cup in the United Arab Emirates on January 5-February 1. (Source: AFP)"

## Iran to face the U.S. in Intercontinental Beach Soccer Cup opener

**TASNIM** — Iran will start the 8th edition of the Intercontinental Beach Soccer Cup with a match against the U.S. on Tuesday.

Team Melli, who have won the title once in the third edition in 2013, are in Group B along with three-time champions Russia, 2017 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup runners-up Tahiti and the U.S.

Marco Octavio's team will also play Tahiti and Russia in the following days.

Group A consists of the UAE (host), Brazil, Egypt and Spain. The tournament, which is organized by the Dubai Sports Council (DSC) and Beach Soccer Worldwide (BSWW), will be held in Dubai, the UAE from November 6 to 10.

## AFC officials to visit Tehran

**IRNA** — Manager of Club Competitions and Executive Director of Competitions Division of Asian Football Confederation will arrive in Tehran to attend the AFC Champions League (ACL) finals.

Pavel Luzanov and Shin Man Gil will arrive in the Iranian capital city of Tehran to prepare for the second leg of ACL finals.

Other AFC executives and the referees will arrive in the weekend. The AFC president Sheikh Salman Bin Ibrahim is also slated to attend the game and tour the sports facilities and complexes of Iran's national teams.

250 officials of AFC, UEFA, and FIFA are expected to come to Tehran to watch the game and hold meetings related to the ACL finals and future tournaments.

ACL finals will be held on November 10 between Iran's Persepolis and the Japanese representative Kashima Antlers in Tehran-based Azadi Stadium.

Kashima defeated Persepolis 2-0 in the first leg held on November 3.

## We come to Dubai to win the Intercontinental Beach Soccer Cup: Hosseini

The Iranian national team star Peyman Hosseini highlights the spirit of the Persian team ahead of the Huawei Intercontinental Cup Dubai 2018.

After finishing last year in second position, Iran are ready to take on the challenge of unseating Brazil as defending champions of the Intercontinental Beach Soccer Cup and seize back the crown they won in 2013.

Last year Iran made a great leap forward. Besides making it to the final of the Huawei Intercontinental Cup 2017, the Persians also finished in third position in the FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup, their highest finish ever. On top of that, many players collected individual awards over the season, confirming the growth of Iranian beach soccer.

One of those players accumulating international recognition was star goalkeeper Peyman Hosseini, awarded as the best goalkeeper in the world in the Beach Soccer Stars 2017.

Acknowledging that they have a real chance this year, Iran has been engaging in an intense training camp in Portugal over the past few weeks to get to the Huawei Intercontinental Cup in the best possible condition. And the team now feel more ready than ever: "We come to Dubai with one idea in mind: winning the Cup. We have one goal and we are focused to accomplish it", said Hosseini.

Talking about how his team will perform, the Iranian star revealed that many new faces will make their international debut at the event: "The team will come to Dubai with many young players, but with the same experienced core and our experienced coach, Marco Octavio, that have



helped us achieve a new level in beach soccer".

Iran will face tough opposition, and both Hosseini and the rest of the team know that, but they firmly believe that if they keep doing things as they have been doing so far, the chances of success are high: "Iran has made significant growth in the last years. Now we have a much more professional approach, on all levels. Of course we respect all teams above all, but we also feel that we are ready to contest against anyone", he assured.

Iran will soon be put to the test in the competition, as they will be taking on USA, Tahiti and Russia in the group stage of the competition. They are regarded as one of the main favourites, but there is no room for error in such a terrifically competitive fight. And only the top two teams will progress to the semi-finals. (Source: beachsoccer)"

Second Announcement



N.I.S.O.C.

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AHVAZ-IRAN

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**INTERNATIONAL DAILY**  
www.tehrantimes.com

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» www.eshtarak.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



## Tehran digital art exhibit to open on Friday

**TEHRAN** — The 8th Tehran Annual Digital Art Exhibition (TADAEX) will open at three venues in the city on Friday, the organizers have announced.

Thirty Iranian and international artists will be attending the event with a number of performances, installations and video animations at Ava Center, Baam Platform and Mohsen Gallery.

Several workshops and sessions will also be organized on the sidelines of the exhibition. An electro-acoustic performance will close the event at Baam Platform and Mohsen Gallery on November 15.

Hyunjun Kim and Sabina Hyoju Ahn, both from South Korea, Michael Schiefel from Germany, and Hugo Arcier and Annabelle Playe, both from France, are among the participating foreign artists.

Among the Iranian artists are Vahid Qaderi, Hamed Heidari, Pedram Sadeqbeigi, Mohammad Nikpur and Arash Pandi.



A poster for the 8th Tehran Annual Digital Art Exhibition - TADAEX.

## Iranian troupe to perform 3 plays at French festival

**TEHRAN** — The Mehr Theater Group led by Iranian director Amir-Reza Kuestani plans to perform three plays at the Théâtre National de Bretagne in France's northwestern region of Brittany.



A poster for Mehr Theater Group's performances at the Théâtre National de Bretagne in France

"Timeless" will be staged on November 10, "Hearing" will be performed on November 15 and "Summerless" will go on stage on November 24, the organizers have announced.

The troupe has frequently performed the plays in Italy, Sweden and several other countries in Europe over the past few years.

## Russia halts release of Hollywood movie that shows Kremlin coup

**MOSCOW (Reuters)** — Russia blamed bureaucracy rather than censorship for a decision to halt the release of a Hollywood movie that tells the fictional story of U.S. troops rescuing a Russian president from a Kremlin coup.



A scene from "Hunter Killer"

The thriller "Hunter Killer" was due to hit screens in Russia on Nov. 1, but the release was pulled, prompting allegations from Kremlin critics that it was censored because its plot undermines President Vladimir Putin's strongman image.

Last year, Russia banned screenings of the dark comedy "The Death of Stalin" after officials said its portrayal of Kremlin infighting in the wake of the death of the Soviet leader was disrespectful toward victims of Stalin's purges.

The Culture Ministry was quoted by Russian media as saying "Hunter Killer" had not received authorization because a satisfactory copy of the film had not been submitted to Russia's state film archive in time. The ministry's press office did not answer calls on Friday seeking comment.

The film, starring Gerard Butler and Gary Oldman, features a plot in which Russia's president is taken hostage by his own defense minister.

# Hamid Sabzevari poems published in "Call of Freedom"

**TEHRAN** — Poems by Hamid Sabzevari, who was famous for his revolutionary works, have recently been published in a collection titled "This Is the Call of Freedom".

The collection composed of four volumes was unveiled during a ceremony at the Art Bureau in Tehran on Sunday, the bureau announced.

The ceremony was attended by a number of scholars, poets and his family members. "This Is the Call of Freedom" takes its name from one of Sabzevari's poem named "This Is the Call of Freedom from the Orient".

Published by Simorgh-e Honar Publications, the collection has been compiled by Reza Esmaeili, Zahra Mohaddasi Khorasani and Hossein Esrafilii.

In his brief speech made at the ceremony, Art Bureau director Mohsen Momeni-Sharif said that Sabzevari's poetry promotes the Islamic Revolution and the culture of resistance.

He called his poem "This Is the Call of Freedom from the Orient", the prism of the revolution since it touches upon all the goals of the revolution.

Vocalist Mohammad Golriz, who had performed "This Is the Call of Freedom from the Orient" in the early 1980s, performed the song once again for the participants.

Born as Hossein Aqa-Momtazani, Sabzevari died this year in June 2016 at the age of 91.

Sabzevari was mostly known for the works composed in the heat of the Islamic



Hassan, son of poet Hamid Sabzevari, speaks during the unveiling ceremony of his father's poem collection "This Is the Call of Freedom" at the Art Bureau in Tehran on November 4, 2018. (Mehr/Mohammad Mohsenifar)

Revolution. He was the composer of "Khomeini, Oh Imam!", which was recorded weeks before

the victory of the Islamic Revolution. He also composed "USA, USA, Shame on Your Deceits!", which was performed by a

chorus and solo tenor Esfandiar Qarabaghi after the occupation of the U.S. embassy in Tehran in 1979.

## "Donald Salman" comes to Tehran gallery



Cartoonist Masud Shojaei-Tabatabai talks to visitors during his exhibition "Donald Salman" at Abolfazl Aali Gallery in Tehran on November 4, 2018. (Tasnim)

**TEHRAN** — A cartoon exhibit entitled "Donald Salman" opened at the Abolfazl Aali Gallery of the Art Bureau in Tehran on Sunday.

Created by Masud Shojaei-Tabatabai, 85 cartoons that mock the foreign policy issues in the U.S. and Saudi Arabia have been showcased at the exhibition.

Shojaei-Tabatabai is the director of the Art Bureau's Visual Arts Office and the secretary of the International Holocaust Cartoons Contest in Tehran.

He also organized the International Trumpism Cartoon and Caricature Contest in Tehran. The exhibition will until November 14.

An article published by the Tasnim News

Agency on Monday criticized the Art Bureau for dedicating its gallery for a solo exhibition of one of its managers.

The article called the exhibition unbalanced and said that the organizers should use works by more cartoonists to enrich it.

Most of the cartoons were done years ago on the subject of the Afghanistan war, and were published in the book "Only for the USA Army" in 2016, the article said.

Only two cartoons of the exhibition focus on the killing of the Saudi Arabian dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

"Therefore the choice of the title 'Donald Salman' for the exhibition is also nonsense," the article stated.

## Camila Cabello comes out on top at MTV Europe Music Awards

**BILBAO, Spain (Reuters)** — Cuban-American singer Camila Cabello was the top winner at the MTV Europe Music awards on Sunday night, with "Best Song," "Best Artist," "Best Video" and "Best U.S. Act" in a show that featured a stellar performance from Janet Jackson.

Cabello, 21, who already led the pack at the MTV Video Music Awards in August, urged her fans in the United States to vote in the 2018 midterm elections as she walked the red carpet in the northern Spanish city of Bilbao.

The singer, who rose to fame as a member of the girl group "Fifth Harmony", formed on the U.S. edition of the X-Factor, said she relished being seen as a role model.

"I feel like the message for me has always been just like do what makes you happy, even if it's scary, it's worth it to take the risk because your happiness is your responsibility," Cabello said.

"That's always been my message and I talk about it a lot but I feel like it's a good message. And yes, very important, go vote!" she said.

Jackson, who received a "Global Icon" award, sang hits of her 40-year career over four stages and surrounded by African drummers, flame torches, firebreathers and more than 20 dancers.

The show took place at Bilbao's exhibition center and was hosted by Hailee Steinfeld,

who performed "Back to Life," a song that will feature on the soundtrack of her forthcoming movie Bumblebee.

One of the hits of the night was Spanish Flamenco-inspired artist Rosalia singing "Malamente" after rolling on stage in a gigantic truck.

Five-time winners of MTV Europe Music Awards, English rock band Muse also made a splash by performing "Pressure" from Bilbao's world-famous soccer stadium San Mames.

Other notable performances included Bebe Rexha singing "I'm a Mess" while in a bathtub surrounded by nurses and 100 dancers and Halsey performing "Without Me" surrounded by rainfall.

The show was opened by Nicki Minaj with her new hit "Good Form", followed by her collaboration with Little Mix "Woman Like Me." Minaj also received the awards for "Best Look" and "Best Hip-Hop."

American D.J. Marshmello, who won "Best Electronic", closed out the night alongside Anne-Marie with their hit "FRIENDS" and alongside Bastille with "Happier." The performance was also among the public as hundreds of Marshmello inflated balls flooded the venue for the finale.

Other winners included Dua Lipa, who took the "Best Pop", Shawn Mendes who won "Best Live" and 5 Seconds of Summer who received "Best Rock."

## Poupee Theater Group to perform "Flight No. 745" at Munich festival



A scene from "Flight No. 745", a puppet show by Marjan Purgholamosseini.

**TEHRAN** — Poupee Theater Group from Iran plans to perform "Flight No. 745", a puppet show by Marjan Purgholamosseini, at the international festival Theater Der Dinge in Munich, the organizers have announced.

Theater Der Dinge is one of the most important German festivals of contemporary figurative and objective theater, and the play will go on stage on Wednesday.

After spending years abroad, a woman returns to Tehran to sell her parents' house. As a child she left Iran with her family during Iran-Iraq war, leaving the street she grew up on and the people she

knew. In the plane, she tries to carefully reconstruct the memories that she feared she had already lost.

The director treats this re-appropriation of her own childhood with changing filmed miniature scenery - living tableaux of a vanished time.

"Lost Time" is the theme of the Theater Der Dinge festival, which will be held from November 9 to 15.

"Flight No. 745" is scheduled to be performed in two other German cities, namely Berlin and Bochum, in the near future.

The troupe had previously staged the puppet show at Bozar, a prestigious Belgian art center, in March.

## Murakami to donate personal archive to Tokyo alma mater

**TOKYO (Asahi Shimbun)** — Internationally acclaimed writer Haruki Murakami will donate his book drafts, documents and even his huge record collection to Waseda University in Tokyo, his alma mater, which plans to house the trove in a special facility.

Appearing at his first news conference in Japan in 37 years, the reclusive author said on Nov. 4 that he hoped the facility would serve as a forum for the international exchange of literature and culture.

"I personally have been helped by my translation work and developed through an exchange of languages," Murakami said at the Tokyo news conference. "I might have fallen into a state of asphyxiation if I had remained only within the realm of Japanese literature."

Waseda officials said the tentative name of the facility, to be constructed on campus, is "Murakami Library." They plan to turn it into a research center where scholars from Japan and abroad can delve into Murakami's materials.

Murakami, 69, said he began thinking about making the donation from about four or five years ago.

"Documents have piled up over the close to 40 years that I have written as a novelist," he said. "The floor of my home has become so warped that I can no longer keep all the documents there."



Haruki Murakami, right, attends his first news conference in Japan in 37 years alongside Waseda University President Kaoru Kamata. (Mariko Nakamura)

agreement had been reached on the donation of the trove as well as about 20,000 record albums.

"I have no children so I also felt it would be problematic if the materials became scattered after I am gone," he said.

Murakami, who graduated from Waseda in 1975, will donate letters and manuscripts as well as reviews of his works. He will also donate his own collection of books along with the records.

However, because he still listens to some of those records, the handing over will be done gradually starting from the next fiscal year.

With Murakami's works having been translated into about 50 languages, many foreign scholars have become interested in Japanese literature through their initial encounter with his novels.