



**Rouhani underlines need for hope in society** **2**



**Pirouz Hanachi elected Tehran mayor** **12**



**Iran could host 2022 World Cup teams, but no decision taken yet** **15**



**Photos, docs display 73 years of ties between Iran, UN** **16**

# France trying to cover up the Khashoggi murder

See page 13



## Claim that medicine not sanctioned is a 'big lie': Iran

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — An official from Iran's Food and Drug Administration has repudiated as a "big clear lie" the claim by Washington that medicine is exempted from sanctions.

Sanctions include food and medicine and the only point is that these two items have not been mentioned in the sanctions list announced

by the Trump administration, Kianoush Jahanpour, spokesman for Food and Drug Administration, told ISNA in an interview published on Tuesday.

In a tweet on Monday, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo claimed that "the U.S. does not, and never did, sanction food and medicine. They are exempt from sanctions." **→2**

## Zarif: Pompeo must admit responsibility for his words

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on Monday said U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo must take responsibility for his own words by announcing that the U.S. is seeking to starve Iranians through sanctions.

The remarks by Zarif came after Pompeo made a sharp attack on Newsweek magazine that published his words to starve the Iranian people.

Pompeo "should either own what he says, or disown what U.S. does. Can't have it both ways," Zarif said in a post on his twitter account.

Zarif advised Pompeo not to attack media for "reporting his own words".

Angry over quoting him to starve Iranians, Pompeo, in a tweet, made a sharp attack on the U.S. magazine, calling it "fake Newsweek". Pompeo's boss Donald Trump also has a long record of attacking media. **→2**

## 'Diabetes costs Iran \$4b a year'

**HEALTH** **TEHRAN** — Diabetes has direct and indirect costs for Iran to the tune of \$4 billion per year, said Afshin Ostovar, the Health Ministry's director for non-communicable diseases.

Ostovar made the remarks on Saturday in a press conference for National Diabetes Week, IRNA reported.

In Iran, National Diabetes Week is an annual event which starts from November

14 and is aimed at raising concerns for Diabetes and enhancing public knowledge about the disease.

The direct costs cover the treatment and indirect costs are paid for the disease's side effects and other consequences, such as leaving work, Ostovar further explained.

Diabetes also incur incredible costs on the patients' families and the health system, he added. **→9**



**EDITORIAL**  
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## Macron has augmented French isolation

French President Emmanuel Macron has recently criticized the unilateral pullout of the U.S. from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) but at the same time expressed pleasure that Washington has allowed France and the other JCPOA signatories to stay in the Iran nuclear deal.

In an exclusive interview with the CNN, Macron said that he has "a very direct relationship" with Trump. "Trump is a person who has tried to fulfill his electoral promises, as I also try to fulfill my promises, and I respect the action that Trump made in this regard. But I think we can follow things better, due to our personal relationship and talks. For instance, Trump has decided to withdraw from the Iran pact, but at the end, he showed respect for the signatories' decision to remain in the JCPOA."

There are some key points in Macron's remarks:

First, in 2017, the French were the first of the European signatories to try to change the JCPOA. They tried to force Iran to accept the following conditions: Inspection of military sites, application of the overtime limitation on nuclear activities, limiting regional activities, including missile capabilities in the framework of the JCPOA.

Macron had already made commitments to President Trump and Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to push Iran to accept the additional protocols to the deal, and he pushed to make it happen before Trump left the JCPOA.

Second, after the U.S. withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal, although France expressed regret, they had secret negotiations with U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo over the JCPOA.

The result of the undisclosed talks was deliberate delay on the part of the European authorities in providing a final package to keep the Iran deal alive. In other words, after the U.S. unilaterally left the JCPOA, the French have been sloppy and maybe somewhat insincere about making the practical moves to ensure it would be saved.

Third, France has emphasized the need to strengthen their multilateralism in the international system and has become one of the pieces of the puzzle that completes the strategic posture of the Trump Administration in the West Asia region. **→13**

## Korea wants to set a successful example of aid to refugees: ambassador

**EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW**  
**By M.A.Saki**

**TEHRAN** — Ryu Jung-hyun, the ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Iran, says his country wants to set a successful example of humanitarian aid to refugees.

The comments by Ambassador Ryu follows contributions - \$2.2 million in August and \$6 million in October - to Afghan refugees in Iran.

Seoul's top diplomat to Tehran also says the Republic of Korea has turned from a recipient country during the 1950-53 Korean War to a donor country in the present day.

"I think Korea is a very typical case and good example to become a donor country from a re-

cipient country," Ryu tells the Tehran Times.

Following is the text of the interview:

Question: The Republic of Korea made a \$2.2 million multi-year contribution to the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) to support 30,000 of the most vulnerable Afghan refugees [as1] in Iran in late August. Also on October 15, Korea made another \$6m help to the UNHCR. What's the motivation behind the generous contribution to the refugees in Iran?

Answer: Recently we made that contribution to UNHCR, one of the leading humanitarian organizations in the world, and also previously we made the similar contribution to the World Food Programme. Those two contributions are related to Afghan refugees in Iran.

## U.S. new sanctions will impact Iranians: Dorsey

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

**TEHRAN** — James M. Dorsey, a senior fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies at Singapore's Nanyang Technological University, says the new U.S. sanctions will affect the lives of the Iranian people.

Dorsey also says, "Iran would retain the moral high ground by remaining committed to the JCPOA."

Following is the text of the interview:

■ The U.S. has returned all sanctions against Iran. Do you think that the sanctions will meet the U.S. national interest in the long term?

A: The proof will be in the pudding. In the short term certainly not. However, longer term much will depend on developments in Iran itself.



■ U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin has announced that Washington wants the world-wide payment network to cut off its services to the entities that were affected by the Iran sanctions otherwise SWIFT might be

sanctioned as well. Can the U.S. do it?

A: The U.S. could but it would escalate disagreements with Europe to accelerate efforts to transact in currencies other than the U.S. dollar.

■ If Iran cannot export oil or banned from SWIFT, then what that means for the JCPOA? I mean in that case is it rational for Iran to stay in the JCPOA?

A: Iran would retain the moral high ground by remaining committed to the JCPOA.

■ Some argue that these new sanctions will not affect the Iranian people. What do you think?

A: There is no doubt that they will.

■ Do you think that the system called the "Special Purpose Vehicle" will fulfill Iran's trade with other countries?

A: It won't be perfect but it could help alleviate some of the impact of the U.S. sanctions.



**ARTICLE**  
**Ramin Hossein Abadian**  
Mehr News Agency  
Journalist

## MBS and his move towards realization of a nuclear dream

Saudi Arabia intends to announce a final deal for the establishment of nuclear power plants while the U.S. government faces a dilemma. On the one hand, Washington wants to create a multibillion dollar deal for American companies, and on the other it pushes for the Non-Nuclear Proliferation Treaty.

There are different views on what kind of model the U.S. would eventually fall back on for a Saudi nuclear deal. For example, Paul Pillar, former head of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Operations Analysis Division and Georgetown University professor, told the Mehr News Agency (MNA) in an interview recently that the Saudi nuclear deal will be a copy from any stock agreement. The Saudis will seek to gain the concessions that Iran has achieved in the end, including enriched uranium.

Other experts have also expressed their views. For example, Professor Arshin Adib Moghaddam, head of the Center for Iranian Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London, has told the MNA that Saudi Arabia would probably prefer the United Arab Emirates (UAE) model. "Iran's nuclear deal will have significant and long-term constraints on nuclear research and industry, while the UAE model will give the Saudis more freedom to act on."

U.S. veteran diplomat Richard Murphy, with 34 years of experience in the Middle East and Arab countries under his belt, also confirmed professor Moghaddam's statement and told the MNA that the U.S. agreement model with Saudi Arabia would be of that with the UAE.

Meanwhile, Saudi crown prince Mohamed bin Salman (MBS), in line with his policy of nuclear energy, recently launched seven strategic projects in King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology in Riyadh in the area of ??renewable energy, atomic energy, water desalination, medical genetics, and airplane industry. The two most important projects are the construction of a nuclear reactor R & D center for the aviation development. **→7**

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MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Rouhani underlines need for hope in society

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — President Rouhani on Tuesday underlined the importance of promoting hope in the society and providing people with peace and security, Mehr reported.

“All state bodies, especially the Interior Ministry, should work harder to address people’s concerns about social harms, as instructed by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution,” Rouhani said.

However, the president described as “promising” the work done in addressing social harms in recent years.

“New technologies and scientific achievements... can facilitate people’s lives and promote peace and calm for families,” he remarked.



Dutch official meets Zarif in Tehran

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif held talks with Andre Haspels, the director general for political affairs at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Tehran on Tuesday.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed the latest developments in bilateral relations, including the expansion of economic cooperation, and regional developments, particularly the situation in Syria and Yemen, the Foreign Ministry’s website reported.

Earlier the day, Haspels met Abbas Araqchi, Zarif’s deputy for political affairs. Araqchi welcomed the Netherlands’ support for preservation and implementation of the Iran nuclear deal.

Haspels, for his part, mentioned that his country pursues the implementation of a banking mechanism with Iran in order to provide the Islamic Republic with the benefits of the nuclear agreement.



Syrian parliamentary meets Larijani

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Syrian MP Mohammad Hussein Raqib al-Hussein, who heads the parliamentary friendship group with Iran, on Tuesday met with Iran’s Majlis speaker Ali Larijani in Tehran.

He thanked Iran for standing by the Syrian nation as the country came under attack by terrorists over the past years, ICANA reported.

The MP also highlighted the reconstruction era, welcoming Iran as a friendly country in rebuilding his war-torn country.

Larijani, for his part, emphasized the significance of resistance in the post-war Syria where military hardships are being replaced by political ones.

He also stressed that Iran backs the involvement of its private sector in reconstructing Syria.



Tehran to host biggest gathering of Islamic scholars

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — The 32nd International Islamic Unity Conference, the world’s baggiest gathering of Islamic scholars, is planned to be held in Tehran later this month, Tasnim reported.

Organized by the World Forum for Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought (WFPIST), the conference is slated to be held in Tehran on November 24-26 with representatives from more than 80 countries in attendance.

High-ranking officials and religious figures, including 10 ministers and 40 muftis, plan to participate in the international event. President Rouhani and Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani will deliver speeches at the conference.



Qatar not willing to act against Tehran: FT

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — It is not clear that the Qataris would be willing to play any active role against Tehran even if the U.S. forces the Saudis to end the blockade against Doha, according to the Financial Times.

In an article, Nick Butler wrote, “Doha must be well aware of the risks of Iranian retaliation if it joins the U.S. campaign against it. Old disputes about the division and development of the North Field/South Pars reserves could be reopened.”

“In extreme circumstances, Iran could block current development of the field and interfere with Qatar’s existing LNG exports,” he added.



‘Iran to seek other means if EU doesn’t take speedy steps’

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Should Tehran come to the conclusion that Europe’s delay in creating a financial channel with Iran is undue, it will pursue other means to reach its goals, says Ali-Akbar Farazi, the former ambassador to Romania.

European countries’ will to protect their interests has been evident since the beginning, but “we have witnessed that the capabilities and power of the Europeans to make things happen are limited,” Farazi said, Mehr reported on Tuesday.

He also added that European countries fear that their insistence on creating a new financial mechanism would bring about U.S. sanctions against them.

# Zarif: U.S. cannot stop Iranian flights, tankers

Foreign minister says sanctions have an economic impact but “they will not affect our policies”

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — The Americans cannot stop Iranian flights or block the movement of Iranian tankers at sea, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif says.

In an interview with The New Arab published on Monday, Zarif said, “We have many ways to ensure our flights continue operating and we intend to use them. We have tried and tested them before and we will use them again.”

He said the U.S. sanctions on Iran, the second round of which were put into force on November 4, have an economic impact but “they will not affect our policies.”

“We have started feeling the effects in the past six months after the U.S. withdrew from the nuclear deal, in fact since economic actors felt Mr. Trump was going to pull out [of the nuclear deal] following his remarks about a new ‘Iran strategy’ last year,” he explained.

The foreign minister further said the Iranian people are the target of U.S. sanctions because the U.S. hopes the embargo would prompt the Iranians to put pressure on the government to change its policies, or even threaten the entire system.

On the EU’s efforts to establish trade vehicles with Iran, Zarif said, “We are aware that the European governments are still unprepared to deliver on their political pledges, concurrently, and incur an economic cost as a result, believing they can safeguard the gains without having to pay any price.”

Nevertheless, he continued, Iran is in constant contact with all of its partners in Europe, China and Russia, to find ways to confront the sanctions and mitigate their impact.

■ **Zarif says reducing Iranian oil exports to zero ended in failure**

Asked about U.S. waivers to eight nations to purchase Iranian oil, he said, “We have stated before that the U.S. cannot bring Iranian oil exports down to zero and this was proven right.”



**“We are aware that the European governments are still unprepared to deliver on their political pledges, concurrently, and incur an economic cost as a result, believing they can safeguard the gains without having to pay any price.”**

The U.S. will not be able to bring down exports dramatically either, because Iran has the ability to export its oil and the global market needs it, Zarif asserted. He also predicted Iran will prove to everyone that it will remain strongly present in this market in the future.

■ **‘Timing of anti-Iran accusations by European states is interesting’**  
In recent months, European governments

have accused Iran of seeking to target dissidents abroad, but the chief Iranian diplomat thinks “The timing of these accusations is important and interesting.”

He said, “Accusing Iran of planning to bomb an opposition conference in Paris coincided with a visit by the Iranian president to Switzerland and Austria. Indeed, on 29 October, the same day the European SPV mechanism was to be declared, a suspect

was arrested on charges of planning attacks against Ahvazi (Ahwazi) dissidents.”

He emphasized that Individuals who live in Denmark have claimed responsibility for the attack that took place in Ahvaz through a London-based television station and others living in France have claimed responsibility for attacks that killed people in Iran in the past.

“Therefore, it is these European countries who are abetting terrorists [and] allow [them] to reside in their territories,” Zarif said, reiterating that Iran “does not want Europe to be subjected to any security threats, and we have informed both France and Denmark that we remain prepared to cooperate and provide information on these individuals.”

■ **Zarif to regional countries: Security cannot be bought**

On regional tensions and the U.S. role in the Middle East, the foreign minister said, “Unfortunately, some countries want to purchase their security. For our part, we believe security cannot be bought.”

“We are also convinced the U.S. wants to plunder the resources of the region, by pursuing subversive policies that the countries of the region themselves pay the price for,” he further added.

Zarif also said Tehran has no problem with restoring relations with Saudi Arabia, “but this depends on Riyadh and its decisions and conduct, which it must reconsider in order to reduce regional tensions.”

“The policies against Iran, Syria, Iraq, Qatar and Yemen all originate in Saudi Arabia and not on our side,” he stated.

Zarif also voiced Iran’s willingness to resolve the conflict in Yemen, saying since the Saudi-led coalition began bombing Yemen, Iran said that military solution will not produce any results there.

Riyadh thought it could settle the issue of Yemen in a matter of weeks, but years have passed without any result, the minister remarked.

## Iran, Europe to continue nuclear cooperation

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Behrooz Kamalvandi, spokesman for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), has said that Iran and Europe will continue their nuclear cooperation in the next two years.

“Iran and the European Union have had cooperation in various spheres, especially in the area of nuclear safety, within the framework of the JCPOA (the official name for the 2015 nuclear deal),” Kamalvandi told ISNA in an interview published on Tuesday.

He said, “A center of nuclear safety is to be built in Iran. And I think the process of Iran-Europe cooperation will continue in the next two years.”

He also said that the third conference of Iran-EU cooperation is scheduled to be held on November 26-27 in Brussels.

Ali Akbar Salehi, director of the AEOI, and European Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy Miguel Arias Canete will attend the conference, he added.

The first Iran-Europe cooperation conference was held three years ago in Vienna. The second conference was held in June 2018 in Brussels.

■ **‘Iran to counter sanctions’**  
Kamalvandi also said that Iran will counter the U.S. sanctions which have more psychological effects than practical ones.

“We will counter the sanctions through mechanisms that have been designed by the country and also the mechanisms



that will be designed by Europe, China and Russia,” he said.

In May, U.S. President Donald Trump officially withdrew Washington from the 2015 nuclear deal 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.

France, Germany, Britain and the European Union issued a joint statement on November 2 condemning the U.S. move in reimposing sanctions on Iran and vowed to protect European companies doing “legitimate” business with Tehran.

The statement read that Europe will also seek to “maintain financial channels operational with Iran and to ensure the continuation of Iranian oil and gas exports”.

## Zarif says Pompeo must admit responsibility for his own words to starve Iranians

➔ In an interview with BBC Persian on Wednesday, Pompeo also said Iranian officials must listen to Washington “if they want their people to eat”.

According to Press TV, Pompeo’s attack on the Newsweek came after Zarif said the U.S. secretary of state’s open threat to starve the Iranian nation was “a crime

against humanity” and “a desperate attempt to impose U.S. whims on Iran.”

On November 4, the Donald Trump administration declared the reimposition of the “toughest” sanctions ever against Iran’s banking and energy sectors with the aim of cutting off its oil sales and crucial exports.

The sanctions had been lifted under the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The first round of U.S. sanctions took effect in August, targeting Iran’s access to the U.S. dollar, metals trading, coal, industrial software, and auto sector.

## Defense chief: Iran to give crushing response to any aggression

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Defense Minister Amir Hatami said on Tuesday that Iran will give crushing response to any act of aggression.

“Today, area of space is not monopolized by the enemies. Iran has reached the power to give response that makes any aggressor regretful,” he said during a meeting with military personnel in Tehran.

He added sanctions and pressures by the enemies are primarily aimed to weaken and overthrow the Islamic republic system.

“The hegemonic system headed by the U.S. seeks to cause disappointment by showing that the Islamic government and system is inefficient. It has also formed

a coalition with certain regional countries in the world to undermine the Islamic Republic of Iran. However, by the grace of God, the country has got more united and integrated,” he explained.

Hatami said that the U.S. will face defeat in its confrontational policies against Iran.

In spite of sanctions, Iran has turned into a great power in terms of defense capabilities.

The defense minister added, “Some problems in the area of economy have been mainly caused by failure to use domestic resources and capacities properly. However, we will pass this stage through planning.”

## Claim that medicine not sanctioned is a ‘big lie’: Iran

➔ In response, Jahanpour said, “Pompeo’s remarks are clear lies. In the issue of medicine, it is not just the raw material that matters, money transfer is also very important.”

Limits on financial transactions cause problems in the process of buying and producing medicine, Jahanpour lamented.

He said even in the most optimistic situation the delivery of medicine and raw materials for producing medicine is being delayed and this has caused a lot of problems for the people.

In an interview with the BBC Persian on November 7, Pompeo said Iranian officials must listen to Washington “if

they want their people to eat.”

In response Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said the U.S. sanctions against Tehran which ban Iranians’ access to financial services to buy food and medicine are “crimes against humanity”.

While humanitarian goods, like medicine, are indeed officially exempt from sanctions, international banks and businesses are hesitant about trading with Iran altogether, even when it comes to food and medicine, out of fear that they will face punishment should they run afoul — even accidentally — of those sanctions.





# Recording links Saudi crown prince to Khashoggi assassination: report

## Erdogan: Khashoggi recordings shocked Saudi Intel.

By staff & agencies

A phone call recording collected by the Turkish intelligence links the brutal murder of Saudi dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi to the House of Saud regime's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, known as MBS, The New York Times reports.

Citing three people familiar with the recording, The Times on Monday reported a secret phone conversation made by Maher Abdulaziz Mutreb, a member of the 15-man Saudi regime hit squad that killed Khashoggi, to a superior believed to be bin Salman's aide.

In the phone call, which came shortly after Khashoggi's murder on October 2 inside the Saudi regime consulate in Istanbul, Mutreb instructed his superior in Arabic to "tell your boss" that the murder mission had been accomplished.

American intelligence officials said "your boss" was a reference to MbS.

Meanwhile, Turkish intelligence officers told American officials they believed that Mutreb was speaking to bin Salman's aide. Mutreb himself is a security officer who has frequently traveled with the Saudi regime crown prince.

According to the report, intelligence officials view the recording as "some of the strongest evidence" linking bin Salman to the murder of his outspoken critic.

"A phone call like that is about as close to a smoking gun as you are going to get," said former CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) officer Bruce O. Riedel. "It is pretty incriminating evidence."

Saudi regime officials, however, denied that the crown prince "had any knowledge whatsoever" of Khashoggi's killing.

Riyadh finally acknowledged that Khashoggi had been murdered in a "premeditated" operation, after weeks of denials of any involvement in his disappearance.

Turkey's chief prosecutor said the Washington Post columnist had been strangled upon arrival at the Saudi consulate and then dismembered.

A source at Turkish attorney general's office said Saudi regime authorities had used acid and other chemicals to dispose of the body.

Separately on Tuesday, Turkey's Daily Sabah daily released X-ray pictures of the Saudi hit squad's luggage taken at airport security checks.

The photos showed a large scissor, scalpel and an electroshock device.

The latest revelations could deal another blow to Saudi attempts to distance bin Salman from the gruesome murder, which has drawn an international outcry.

The call was part of a recording that the Turks played for CIA chief Gina Haspel during her visit to Ankara last month.

Turkey said it had shared the audio re-



cordings with several countries, including Saudi Arabia and the U.S.

It is not clear how many recordings the Turkish intelligence is in possession of. Reuters cited two sources with knowledge of the issue as saying that Ankara has several of them.

On Monday, Canada – which is involved in its own diplomatic row with the House of Saud regime over the kingdom's human rights violations -- confirmed that it had been "fully briefed on what Turkey had to share."

"Canada's intelligence agencies have been working very closely on this issue with Turkish intelligence," Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said. "We continue to be engaged with our allies on the investigation into accountability for the murder of Jamal Khashoggi and we are in discussions with our like-minded allies as to the next steps toward Saudi Arabia."

■ **Erdogan: Khashoggi recordings shocked Saudi intelligence**

Meantime, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Tuesday described the audio recordings Ankara has shared with Western states as "appalling."

"We played the recordings regarding this murder to everyone who wanted them from us. Our intelligence organization did not hide anything. We played them to all who wanted

them including the Saudis, the USA, France, Canada, Germany, Britain," he said.

"The recordings are really appalling. Indeed when the Saudi intelligence officer listened to the recordings he was so shocked he said: 'This one must have taken heroin, only someone who takes heroin would do this'," he added.

Erdogan said it was clear the murder had been planned, and that the order came from the top level of Saudi regime authorities, but that he could not think such a thing of King Salman.

"The crown prince says 'I will clarify the matter, I will do what is necessary.' We are waiting patiently," Erdogan said.

The perpetrators were among 18 suspects detained in Saudi Arabia, said the Turkish president. "It must be revealed who gave them the order to murder."

Meanwhile, the United States Representative Adam B. Schiff told The New York Times that investigators were unlikely to collect a piece of evidence that incontrovertibly links bin Salman to Khashoggi's death.

"You are not going to have any of the people who carried out the murder speak openly about who they got their orders from or who is in the loop on it," Schiff said. "That is not realistic to expect."

Schiff further vowed to probe Khashoggi's killing and examine Saudi Arabia's actions in the Middle East, including its military campaign in Yemen, when he takes charge of the House Intelligence Committee.

"We need to do our own due diligence, we need to make sure we are getting good intelligence, and we need to make sure the administration doesn't misrepresent to the country what foreign actors are doing," he added.

Khashoggi - a Saudi writer, the U.S. resident and Washington Post columnist - entered the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on October 2 to obtain documentation certifying he divorced his ex-wife so he could remarry. He never came out.

The whereabouts of Khashoggi's body are still unknown.

Khashoggi's killing has caused global outrage but little concrete action has been taken by world powers against Saudi Arabia.

The House of Saud regime has changed its narrative about the murder several times amid international outcry and intensifying skepticism over its account.

After more than two weeks of denial, Riyadh conceded Khashoggi was killed in a premeditated murder, but that the murder was an unplanned "rogue operation".

## South Korea rejects report on North's 'undeclared missile sites'

South Korea has dismissed a new report by a United States-based think tank that accused North Korea of being engaged in "deception" based on purported commercial satellite images that it said showed a number of "undeclared missile operating bases" inside the country.

The Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) claimed in a report on Monday that it had identified at least 13 of an estimated 20 undeclared missile operating bases according to new commercial satellite images.

"These missile operating bases, which can be used for all classes of ballistic missile from short-range ballistic missile (SRBM) up to and including intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), would presumably have to be subject to declaration, verification, and dismantlement in any final and fully verifiable denuclearization deal," the report said.

The images focused on the purported Sakkanmol missile base, which "currently houses a unit equipped with short-range ballistic missiles but could easily accommodate more capable medium-range ballistic warheads," the CSIS asserted.

On Tuesday, however, South Korea's presidential office dismissed the CSIS's account.

A spokesman for the South's presidential office, Kim Eui-kyeom, said the CSIS report had gone too far to accuse Pyongyang of "great deception," since the North has not made a specific agreement to dismantle or disclose the facilities mentioned in the report.

The South Korean official also rejected the analysis of the Sakkanmol missile site, saying, "The intelligence authorities of South Korea and the U.S. have far more detailed information from military satellites and are closely monitoring"



the facility.

He said Pyongyang had not made any promise to shut down that base.

The spokesmen also explained that the existence of such a missile site was an indication of the need for talks with North Korea to halt its nuclear activities.

North Korea has been involved in rigorous diplomacy with the South. The U.S. President Donald Trump — who met with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un in July — has also claimed that his country's diplomacy with Pyongyang has eliminated a purported threat posed by North Korea to the U.S.'s national security.

Some entities in the U.S., however, claim that Trump's assertion is not supported by facts.

One of the authors of the CSIS report, Lisa Collins, said, "It has been pretty clear that the North has not been willing

to give up its entire nuclear program."

"The dispersed deployment of these bases and distinctive tactics employed by ballistic missile units are combined with decades of extensive camouflage, concealment and deception practices to maximize the survival of its missile units from pre-emptive strikes and during wartime operations," the report said.

Follow-up diplomacy between the U.S. and North Korea have borne little fruit. But South Korea has significantly advanced in its diplomatic engagement of its long-time rival, the North.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in says the leader of neighboring North will "soon" visit Seoul.

In their June summit in Singapore, Trump and Kim agreed to work toward denuclearization. But that agreement, made in a written document, was broadly-worded.

Still, the North has taken several steps toward that goal: it has suspended missile and nuclear testing, demolished at least one nuclear test site, and agreed to allow international inspectors into a missile engine test facility and another nuclear testing site.

In return, Pyongyang is seeking relief from harsh international sanctions — mostly spearheaded by the U.S. — imposed on the country over its nuclear and missile programs. The U.S., however, has not offered any such relief, hence the slowdown in further diplomacy.

Last week, Pyongyang called off a meeting between North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho and the U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in New York after the U.S. resumed joint military drills with South Korea.

(Source: Press TV)

## Trump set to remove Kirstjen Nielsen as Homeland Security secretary

The United States President Donald Trump is prepared to remove Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen as early as this week, according to a report.

Citing several current and former White House officials, The Washington Post reported on Monday that President Trump has planned to oust Nielsen as soon as possible over her "lackluster performance" on immigration enforcement.

The officials told the Post that White House Chief of Staff John Kelly is struggling to keep Nielsen on her post and attempting to post-

pone Trump's decision. Kelly has reportedly defended her for months.

According to the officials, this week Trump canceled a scheduled trip with the Homeland Security secretary to visit American troops at the border and said that he wants to get rid of her. Trump has complained for months about what her job performance and is reportedly looking for a person who will implement his controversial immigration policy.

During cabinet meetings, Trump has often criticized her harshly and mocked her in conversations with other White House

officials, the Post reported.

Trump has reportedly grown frustrated with her after she told him that some of his hard-line immigration policy ideas like building a wall on the border with Mexico were not feasible. Trump has called the Central American migrants a security threat, ordering the deployment of thousands of troops to the Mexican border to contain them.

More than 7,000 active duty troops have been deployed to the U.S. states of Texas, Arizona, and California.

The U.S. president has also suggested that

the U.S. troopers deployed to the southwest borders can shoot at migrants if the latter threw stones or rocks at them.

He has announced plans to revoke the right to citizenship for babies born to non-U.S. citizens on American soil and erect massive "tent cities" to detain migrants.

Trump has made his hardline stance on immigration an integral part of his presidency and has promised to build a wall along the U.S.-Mexican border to curb the flow of migrants from Mexico and Central America.

(Source: agencies)

## Trump criticizes Macron again over European defense remarks



U.S. President Donald Trump Tuesday launched another attack against Emmanuel Macron over the French president's call for a European army.

"Emmanuel Macron suggests building its own army to protect Europe against the U.S., China and Russia. But it was Germany in World Wars One & Two – How did that work out for France?" Trump tweeted. "They were starting to learn German in Paris before the U.S. came along. Pay for NATO or not!"

Over the weekend, Macron angered Trump by saying Europe needed its own army and listing the U.S. along with Russia and China as a threat to European security.

(source: AFP)

## U.S.-led coalition strikes kill several Syrian civilians in Dayr al-Zawr

Over 60 civilians have lost their lives or sustained injuries when the United States-led coalition purportedly fighting the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) Takfiri terrorist group carried out a number of aerial attacks in Syria's troubled eastern province of Dayr al-Zawr.

Syria's official news agency SANA, citing local sources, said that the airstrikes targeted the village of al-Sha'afa in eastern Dayr al-Zawr on Monday. The air raids came three days after another coalition airstrike on the city of Hajin in the province killed 26 civilians, including 14 children. The U.S.-led jets had earlier this month attacked Hija, killing 15 civilians, mostly women and children, and wounding an unspecified number of people.

The military alliance has repeatedly been accused of targeting and killing civilians. It has also been largely incapable of achieving its declared goal of destroying ISIL.

The so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said on October 23 that as many as 3,222 civilians had been killed ever since the U.S.-led coalition launched its aerial bombardment campaign in Syria more than four years ago.

The Syrian government has repeatedly asked the United Nations to conduct an investigation into the bloody massacre being committed by the U.S.-led coalition against Syrian people.

The Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, in two letters to the UN on Saturday, called on the Security Council to shoulder its responsibilities, and propose an independent and international mechanism to help stop the coalition's atrocities, investigate the crimes and punish the perpetrators.

(Source: Press TV)

## 'Profoundly dismayed': Amnesty strips Suu Kyi of top honor

Amnesty International has stripped Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi of its highest honor over her "indifference" to the atrocities committed by the country's military against the Muslim-majority Rohingya. The Britain-based human rights group on Monday said it was revoking the Ambassador of Conscience Award it gave Aung San Suu Kyi in 2009 during her 15-year house arrest.

"Today, we are profoundly dismayed that you no longer represent a symbol of hope, courage, and the undying defense of human rights," Amnesty chief Kumi Naidoo said in a letter to Aung San Suu Kyi released by the group.

"Amnesty International cannot justify your continued status as a recipient of the Ambassador of Conscience award and so, with great sadness, we are hereby withdrawing it from you."

The group said it informed Myanmar's leader of the decision on Sunday. She has so far issued no public response.

Once hailed as a champion in the fight for democracy, Aung San Suu Kyi has been stripped of a series of international honors over a Rohingya exodus that began in August 2017.

More than 720,000 Rohingya fled the Buddhist majority's western Rakhine State in a military crackdown since August last year, with most seeking refuge in neighboring Bangladesh.

Many are believed to have been either murdered or tortured and raped. Aung San Suu Kyi and her National League for Democracy (NLD) party swept to power in 2015 in a landslide victory ending decades of military rule in the southeast Asian country of around 50 million.

But her tenure has been marred by a failure to speak up for Rohingya, who were driven out of the country by the army in what the United Nations has called an ethnic cleansing campaign.

Aung San Suu Kyi's administration rejected the UN findings as one-sided, and said the military action was engaged in a legitimate operation against armed rebels.

Last month, the 73-year-old was stripped of her honorary Canadian citizenship over her failure to speak up for the Rohingya.

In March, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum rescinded its top award while other honors, including the freedom of the cities of Dublin and Oxford, England, were also withdrawn.

She has also lost numerous smaller awards from individual universities and local and regional governments.

In 1991, she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, which many of her critics have also called to be withdrawn. The Swedish foundation that oversees the award has refused.

(Source: agencies)



STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	183212.2
IFX	1993.75

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	48,494 rials
GBP	55,053 rials
AED	11,379 rials

Source: iribnews.ir

COMMODITIES

WTI	\$58.60/b
Brent	\$68.54/b
OPEC Basket	\$68.89/b
Gold	\$1,202.65/oz
Silver	\$14.07/oz
Platinum	\$846.65/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

NEWS IN BRIEF



Tax income increases 16% in 6 months

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — According to the country's budget performance report, the government's tax income during the first half of the present Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22, 2018) has surpassed 500 trillion rials (about \$11.9 billion), registering a 16.8 percent increase compared to the same time in the preceding year, Tasnim news agency reported on Tuesday.

President Hassan Rouhani's economic strategy is to significantly reduce the government's dependency on oil and instead collect tax more systematically.



Iran's H1 oil revenues up 76% on year

**ENERGY** **TEHRAN** — Iran's oil incomes during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22) reached 5.2 squadron rials (about \$12.38 billion) to register a 76-percent rise compared to the figure for last year's same period.

The government's incomes from capital assets have also risen 40 percent to exceed 6.3 quadrillion rials (\$15 billion), 40 percent more than that of last year's H1, Tasnim news agency reported on Tuesday citing a budget performance report.

According to the report, however, the country's revenues from oil products and gas condensate fell 40 percent to settle at 45 trillion rials (about \$1.07 billion).

Banking consolidation in Europe is 'inevitable,' UBS chief Ermotti says

The European banking system needs consolidation and "as time goes by, it will become more and more inevitable," the head of one of the largest banks in Europe told CNBC on Tuesday.

Often investors, policy-makers and other industry experts refer to fragmentation as one of the biggest hurdles to profitability in European banks. UBS chief Sergio Ermotti told CNBC in an exclusive interview at the UBS European Conference that the issue is "not sustainable."

"That's something that as time goes by will become more and more inevitable, is part of the solutions. For sure consolidation needs to happen, in particular in Europe, where we see a lot of fragmentation that it is not sustainable," Ermotti told CNBC's Joumanna Bercetche.

He further added that technology will make the sector more "effective and more efficient."

European banks have suffered from a trust deficit and have struggled to convince investors, since the global financial crisis. Since the start of the year, the European banking index is down about 20 percent.

Going forward it is hard to predict how investors will see European banks, Ermotti told CNBC.

"Difficult to predict sentiment and investors' approach. I think it is quite clear that investors are very reluctant to invest in our sector," he said. "I do respect the merits and a more balanced approach to valuations in our industry but we have to recognize this is a very challenging moment," he added.

Banks have had to deal with several crisis-legacy issues, such as bad loans, amid a low-interest rate environment and tougher regulations.

Largest global growth slowdown since 2012

Earlier on Tuesday, the bank's chief economist told CNBC that "we are getting very close to pre-crisis levels on a whole range of economic variables."

According to UBS forecast global growth in 2018 is tracking just below 3 percent, from 4.5 percent late last year. Arend Kapteyn, chief economist at UBS Investment Bank described the situation as the "largest slowdown in global growth since basically 2012 – the euro zone crisis."

"We attribute most of it to the slowdown in global trade cycle – sort of pre-dating the tariff tension. But we are also seeing some signs of late cycle dynamic, some capacity constraints, confidence going down because of the tariffs, so it is a little bit unclear what to pin it down to exactly," he said.

(Source: CNBC)

Kish Island to host Iran's intl. maritime exhibit in mid-Dec.

By Mahnaz Abdi

**TEHRAN** — Iran's 20th International Maritime and Offshore Technologies Exhibition (IRANIMEX 2018) is planned to be held on Kish Island in south of the country from December 17 to 19.

Ali-Akbar Marzban, the chairman of headquarters for holding the exhibition, expounded upon this year's edition of the event in a press conference held at the place of Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) on Tuesday.

He said this exhibit aims to gather maritime organizations and companies together and provide them an opportunity to showcase their products and present their capabilities.

It will also provide a platform for them for negotiations and find some partners; it will be definitely a valuable opportunity for domestic companies to find appropriate foreign companies to cooperate with, he added.

Marzban, who is also the person in charge of the secretariat for making coordination among the maritime organizations of the country, further said: "Our main policy is to hold a unique and integrated exhibition with the highest level of quality."

"It is very important for us that this exhibition can provide the ground for the attrac-



tion of foreign investment to the country's maritime sector", the official spotlighted.

He said some specialized workshops (at least six ones) and meetings are also planned to be held on the sidelines of the exhibition.

Some ambassadors of other countries have been invited to the exhibition and some chambers of commerce will visit the event as well, Marzban stated.

The official further put the number of Iranian companies to be participating in the event at 230.

IRANIMEX a large gathering of Iranian maritime organizations

This exhibition can be a large gathering of Iranian maritime organizations given the proper potentials available in Kish Island, Majid Izadkhah, the CEO of Karafarinan Tose'e Pooya (KTP) Group which is the organizer of event, said in the same press conference.

He said 18 companies from seven countries including Germany, the Netherlands, France, Greece, Oman, China and Taiwan will showcase their latest products and achieve-

Brazil calls for expansion of trade ties with Iran

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Fernando Affonso Collor de Mello, the former Brazilian president and the chairman of the Brazilian Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee, voiced his country's interest for expansion of ties with Iran in various areas especially trade, transportation, banking, agriculture and environment.

The official made the remarks in a meeting with Iranian Economy Minister Farhad Dejjasand in Tehran on Monday, IRNA reported.

During the meeting, the two sides agreed on holding a joint economic committee meeting in late March 2019.

According to de Mello, Brazil has great potentials for economic cooperation with Iran and the two countries should use these potentials.

Dejjasand for his part expressed the need for boosting the level of trade between the two countries saying, "Increasing trade exchange would be an indication of deeper economic ties."

The Iranian minister further stressed the importance of regular joint economic committee meetings and noted that these meetings would be a starting point for development of sustainable and long-term economic cooperation.

According to the head of Iran-Brazil parliamentary friendship group, Brazil exported over \$2 billion worth of goods to Iran during 2017 and considering the great potentials of the two sides this figure could reach \$5 billion in the future.



*Iranian Economy Minister Farhad Dejjasand (R) held talks with Fernando Affonso Collor de Mello, the former Brazilian president and the chairman of the Brazilian Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee (L) in Tehran on Monday.*

Trump's steel tariffs create big profits but few new jobs

Nucor Corp, America's largest steelmaker, planned a new plant in Sedalia, Missouri, long before U.S. President Donald Trump imposed tariffs to protect the industry – and it does not need them to make money.

Although the firm helped lead the lobbying push for tariffs on imports, executives say they invested in Sedalia and two other sites to capitalize on an already profitable strategy that doesn't depend on government help.

While Trump has played up the narrative of downtrodden steel workers losing jobs to unscrupulous foreign competitors, most of the benefit from his 25 percent tariffs are flowing to the already strong bottom lines of Nucor and other modernized and globally competitive U.S. steel firms, according to interviews with industry executives, experts and a Reuters review of company earnings.

Even if tariffs prompt such firms to expand, they are not likely to add large numbers of factory jobs because they have stayed competitive by slashing the amount of labor required to make steel.

The Commerce Department said in a statement to Reuters that tariffs will help the Sedalia plant and 12 other steel projects create about 3,405 jobs. That's a 2.4 percent gain industrywide, according to the American Iron and Steel Institute.

About 1,400 of those jobs at six projects, including the three Nucor sites, were planned before tariffs or do not rely on them, according to some of the firms and a Reuters review of company documents. In addition, two other projects by Republic Steel, which would create 690 jobs by restarting previously idled operations, are not certain to go forward, the company said.

A Commerce Department spokesman did not comment on whether all the projects on the administration's list depended on tariffs but pointed out that steel imports have declined recently and domestic production has increased. The department said broad tariffs on imports were needed because of rampant "chicanery" by foreign producers who evaded existing countervailing and anti-dumping duties, which are applied narrowly to specific products.

Nucor has led the sector's transformation to labor-saving plants since the 1970s, replacing older blast furnaces with more efficient modern electric arc furnaces.

Trump's tariffs may prove pivotal in extending the life of older, less efficient plants such as U.S. Steel's Granite City plant near St. Louis, where the president held an event in July to tout tariffs. The company credits tariffs for its decision to add 800 jobs by restarting two blast furnaces it had idled in 2015. A total of 1,500 workers will now work in a factory where sparks fly and molten steel is still poured from giant ladles in a labor-intensive, multi-



step process.

At Nucor's plant in Sedalia, by contrast, 225 people will make steel with a high-tech furnace that shoots electricity through scrap metal to melt it into new products. That technology is now used to produce nearly 70 percent of U.S. steel - with a third less labor and energy, according to Charles Bradford, president of Bradford Research Inc.

Nucor CEO John Ferriola testified in Washington last year that tariffs would encourage steel-sector investment, but he emphasized in a statement to Reuters that the company's own capital projects are "designed to be competitive even without tariffs."

Although Nucor's expansions don't depend on protectionist policy, a company spokesperson said, tariffs make such investments easier by limiting the dumping of artificially low-priced steel on the U.S. market.

Nucor announced last month that it had nearly tripled its third-quarter profits, to \$676.66 million, compared to a year ago. Earnings for steel companies in the S&P's steel index soared more than 75 percent in the first half of 2018 and are expected to jump 166 percent in the second half, according to I/B/E/S data from Refinitiv.

Transformative jobs

Nucor has led the way in slashing labor costs with modern factories, a trend driving industry job loss as the hours of labor needed to produce a ton of steel has been cut from nearly 10 to two since 1980, according to the American Iron and Steel Institute.

Nucor selected Sedalia because of its location on a main rail line, near ample scrap metal sources and major construction markets needing the plant's steel rebar.

Although the plant will create few jobs compared to steel factories of the past, the positions – with salaries averaging \$65,000 - are highly coveted in Sedalia, where home values average \$86,000 and

15 percent of adults have a college degree, according to U.S. census data.

The desirability of the jobs underscores a political dynamic often lost in the debate over Trump's trade policy. In places like Sedalia, where 70 percent of residents of the surrounding county voted for Trump, steel jobs are prized over other blue-collar work.

Sedalia assigned a team of 10 people to court Nucor for a year, and the state provided tax incentives that could total nearly \$27.3 million over 15 years. Local economic development director Jessica Craig called the jobs "transformative."

Death by China

Nucor gets a warm reception in Washington, too, where it's the biggest spender on lobbying among steel firms, laying out \$1.25 million so far this year, down from a peak of \$2.71 million in 2015, according to Nucor disclosures compiled by the Center for Responsive Politics.

Nucor's political spending, which also includes millions of dollars in donations to political candidates, started under former CEO Dan DiMicco, who started in 2000 and stepped down in 2012. DiMicco went on to advise Trump on manufacturing during the presidential transition and is now a member of his Advisory Committee for Trade Policy Negotiations, a key venue for business leaders to influence U.S. trade negotiators.

Nucor also gave \$1 million to a San Diego nonprofit in 2011, which was used by Peter Navarro - now a top Trump trade adviser - to make a film called "Death by China." At one point, the film depicts a knife emblazoned with "made in China" plunging into an American flag as a voice-over intones: "China is the only major nation in the world that is preparing to kill Americans."

DiMicco said his experience running Nucor shaped his views.

"My customers came to me and said, 'China is killing us,'" he said in an inter-

ments in the event.

The foreign exhibitors are active in areas such as wires and cables applied in maritime operations, semi-floating docks, dredging, marine grade steel and etc, he added.

He said that his group is the agent of the world's four large exhibition organizers including the Netherlands' Europort, Germany's SMS, Singapore's APM and the UK's Reed expo.

This international event witnessed many fruitful results after JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action: Iran's nuclear deal with the world powers which took effect in January 2016), as some 116 companies from 26 countries participated in the exhibition in the Iranian calendar year 1395 (March 2016-March 2017), Izadkhah further noted.

"Regarding the sanctions, we have already attracted foreign companies with no trade interests in the U.S. and they are very willing to work in Iran", the organizer of the event announced.

Elsewhere in his remark, he underlined that some recreational programs, such as competitions in the sea, are planned to be held on the sidelines of this edition of the exhibition which will make it different from its previous editions.

view, "so this turned into something much larger than the steel industry ... You may have to put tariffs on every product from China to change their behavior."

As they raise alarms about unfair competition, however, Nucor executives take pride in the company's performance despite such headwinds. Nucor has been profitable since 1968 in every year but one – 2009, amid a global financial crisis.

Nucor has also sought to block other companies' efforts to win exemptions from the tariffs through a Commerce Department process that awards them in cases where, for instance, a company can't find the type of steel it needs domestically. Nucor said it filed objections to about 10 percent of the more than 42,000 steel exemption requests received as of October 22.

They included those from companies such as NLMK Pennsylvania LLC, which sought exemptions for imported slabs it uses to make steel coils.

"They don't even make the kind of slabs we use," CEO Bob Miller said of Nucor, who he believes wants to compete with him in selling coils. "It's totally anti-competitive."

The tariffs are boosting capacity of the slabs NLMK needs, Nucor said in a statement, so there should be "plenty of slabs available domestically."

Lost profits, jobs

Tariff critics argue that rising profits for the steel industry come at the expense of its customers and their workers. Higher prices mean steel users - companies making everything from tractors to skyscrapers - could cut 16 jobs for every one added in steel manufacturing, according to the Trade Partnership Worldwide LLC, a pro-trade economic forecasting and consulting firm in Washington.

Tariff advocates call such worries overblown.

"What you see six months into the steel tariffs is that the manufacturing economy is strong," says Scott Paul, president of the Alliance for American Manufacturing.

Steel consumers say their cutbacks will come over time, as higher steel prices erode their competitiveness.

Major automakers including Ford, Honda, Fiat Chrysler and General Motors have said the steel tariffs will mean billions of dollars in new costs for the industry, and GM recently announced cuts to North American white collar staff.

The impact reaches far beyond auto factories to anyone who uses steel. Joe Pecoraro, a project executive at Skender Construction, a Chicago builder, said the tariffs caused him to delay two projects that would have produced at least 130 construction jobs.

"The cost of everything made of steel," he said, "has gone through the roof this year."

(Source: Reuters)



# Oil falls more than 1% after Trump urges OPEC not to cut supply

Oil prices fell more than 1 percent on Tuesday, with benchmark Brent crude slipping below \$70 per barrel and U.S. crude under \$60, after U.S. President Donald Trump put pressure on OPEC not to cut supply to prop up the market.

The U.S.-dollar hovered near 16-month highs on Tuesday, making oil more expensive for importers using other currencies.

Brent crude oil futures was down \$1.03 at \$69.09 per barrel by 0900 GMT. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil futures was \$1.00 lower at \$58.93. Both benchmarks are down 20 percent since peaking at four-year highs in early October.

"Sky-high production in the U.S., coupled with incremental barrels coming from Saudi Arabia and Russia, is starting to impact oil market balances," Bank of America/Merrill Lynch analysts said in a note to clients, adding: "Crude oil inventories are starting to increase once again."

Trump has made it clear he wants oil prices to fall.

"Hopefully, Saudi Arabia and OPEC will not be cutting oil production. Oil



prices should be much lower based on supply!" the president said in a Twitter post on Monday.

That led to a sharp price drop on Monday and the sell-off continued into Tuesday.

"This tweet certainly did not help prices," ING commodities strategist Warren Patterson said.

Extraction from American shale fields over the last decade has propelled U.S. oil production to record highs this year with crude output now at 11.6 million barrels per day (bpd), helping make the United States self-sufficient in energy.

Merrill Lynch says U.S. crude production will break through 12 million bpd in

2019, supporting oil exports to the rest of the world.

Oil production is not just rising in the United States. Kazakhstan said on Tuesday its oil output rose 4.8 percent to 74.5 million tons in the first 10 months of 2018, equivalent to 1.82 million bpd.

Top crude exporter Saudi Arabia has watched with alarm how supply has started to outpace consumption, fearing a repeat of a glut that brought a price crash in 2014.

Saudi Energy Minister Khalid al-Falih said on Monday the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries agreed there was a need to cut oil supply next year by around 1 million bpd from October levels to prevent oversupply.

Dutch bank ING said an abundance of global supply as well as the threat of economic slowdown meant "cuts over 2019 are unavoidable."

"It is becoming clearer that as we move closer towards 2019, the market will see a sizeable surplus at least over the first half of 2019," ING said.

(Source: Reuters)

## India moves its SPR plan into top gear as oil prices bite



India is accelerating its plans to more than double its strategic petroleum reserves, a move that would help to cushion the impact of volatile world prices at a time when analysts are betting on a robust oil consumption outlook.

The move is also helping to deepen its relations with some Middle Eastern oil producers who are not only aiming to supply oil to the Asian consumer but are also looking to establish ground presence in the fast-growing South Asian market -- through various tie-ups and investment opportunities.

India, which imports more than 80 percent of its crude oil needs, is seeking to finance the second phase of SPRs -- partially through commercial agreements with foreign oil producers who can lease storage, as well as through partnership with private investors, government officials said.

"Building SPRs to ensure energy security is increasingly important to India as its oil demand continues to

grow amid supply uncertainty," said Lim Jit Yang, director for Asia-Pacific at S&P Global Platts Analytics.

"India is still behind as far as SPRs is concerned, compared to major consuming countries, such as China and the US. But it is moving in the right direction," he added.

According to Platts Analytics, India's oil products demand grew by 250,000 b/d over the first three quarters of this year, up from a growth of 130,000 b/d in 2017, as disruptions caused by demonetization and implementation of a good and services tax have eased.

It expects India's oil product demand growth to improve further in 2019 given expectations of robust economic growth.

"Both ADNOC and Saudi Aramco are increasingly looking to expand their global footprint through partnerships. India is a prime target given its dependency on imported crude oil," said Senthil Kumar, consultant for oil markets at Facts Global Energy.

(Source: Platts)

## Gazprom says Swiss court blocks Nord Stream payments



A Swiss court has issued an injunction barring the operators of the Nord Stream gas pipeline from making payments to Gazprom (GAZP.MM) as part of a legal dispute between the Russian gas producer and Ukraine's Naftogaz, Gazprom said.

All payments from Nord Stream AG and Nord Stream 2 AG to Gazprom are to be directed to the Swiss bailiffs, Gazprom said in a program for a Eurobond issue dated Nov. 9.

Gazprom intends to challenge the injunction in court, TASS news agency quoted the company's chairman, Viktor Zubkov, as saying.

Nord Stream is a 1,224 km (760 mile) pipeline carrying gas from Russia to Europe. Another pipeline, Nord Stream 2, is under construction.

Zubkov was quoted as saying he hoped the injunction would not affect the completion of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline that would transport Russian gas to Germany.

In June 2014, Gazprom and Naftogaz lodged multi-billion-dollar claims against each other with the Stockholm arbitration

court, which resolves commercial disputes. Naftogaz says Gazprom owes it \$2.56 billion after a Stockholm court found in Naftogaz's favour following a lengthy legal battle.

A spokesman for the Nord Stream 2 consortium declined comment on the legal proceedings but said they had no impact on the implementation of the pipeline construction project.

In the prospectus for a possible Eurobond issue that was obtained by Reuters, Gazprom also said that on May 30, the District Court of Amsterdam provisionally seized Gazprom's shares in BSPC, the operator of the Blue Stream pipeline, and barred Gazprom's Dutch subsidiaries from making any payments to the Russian gas producer. Blue Stream carries gas from Russia to Turkey. Gazprom did not elaborate further.

In July, Washington repeated a warning to Western firms invested in the pipeline that they were at risk of sanctions, saying Moscow was using the project to divide Europe.

(Source: Reuters)

## Global oil demand under growing threat from electric cars, cleaner fuel

Electric vehicles and more efficient fuel technology will cut transportation demand for oil by 2040 more than previously expected, but the world may still face a supply crunch without enough investment in new production, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said on Tuesday.

Oil demand is not expected to peak before 2040, the Paris-based IEA said in its 2018 World Energy Outlook.

The IEA's central scenario is for demand to grow by around 1 million barrels per day (bpd) on average every year to 2025, before settling at a steadier rate of 250,000 bpd to 2040 when it will peak at 106.3 million bpd.

"In the New Policies Scenario, demand in 2040 has been revised up by more than 1 million bpd compared with last year's outlook largely because of faster near-term growth

and changes to fuel efficiency policies in the United States," the agency said.

The IEA believes there will be around 300 million electric vehicles on the road by 2040, no change on its estimate a year ago. But it now expects those vehicles will cut demand by 3.3 million bpd, up from a previous estimated loss of 2.5 million bpd in its last World Energy Outlook.

"... Efficiency measures are even more important to stem oil demand growth: improvements in the efficiency of the non-electric car fleet avoid over 9 million bpd of oil demand in 2040," the IEA said.

Oil demand for road transport is expected to reach 44.9 million bpd by 2040, up from 41.2 million bpd in 2017, while industrial and petrochemical demand is forecast to reach 23.3 million bpd by 2040, from 17.8

million bpd in 2017.

All global oil demand growth will stem from developing economies, led by China and India, while demand in advanced economies is expected to drop by more than 400,000 bpd on average each year to 2040, the IEA said.

The IEA, which advises Western governments on energy policy, maintained its forecast for the global car fleet to nearly double by 2040 from today, growing by 80 percent to 2 billion.

On the supply side, the United States, already the world's biggest producer, will dominate output growth to 2025, with an increase of 5.2 million bpd, from current levels around 11.6 million bpd.

From that point onwards, the IEA expects U.S. oil production to decline and the market share of the Organization of the Petroleum

Exporting Countries will climb to 45 percent by 2040, from closer to 30 percent today.

New sources of supply will be needed whether or not demand peaks, the agency said.

"The analysis shows oil consumption growing in coming decades, due to rising petrochemicals, trucking and aviation demand. But meeting this growth in the near term means that approvals of conventional oil projects need to double from their current low levels," IEA director Fatih Birol said.

"Without such a pick-up in investment, U.S. shale production, which has already been expanding at record pace, would have to add more than 10 million bpd from today to 2025, the equivalent of adding another Russia to global supply in seven years -- which would be an historically unprecedented feat."

(Source: Reuters)

## BP to spend \$2.8b in Abu Dhabi and Egypt to boost Middle East presence

Oil major BP aims to spend \$1.8 billion in Egypt next year and \$1 billion (bn) annually in Abu Dhabi as it looks to expand its operations in the Middle East on the back of new discoveries and licensing rounds, according to its chief executive.

BP, one of the world's largest oil companies and the earliest explorer for oil in the Middle East through the Anglo-Persian Oil Company in Iran, reported a second-quarter profit of \$2.8bn. It had \$12.4bn in cash flow, which it said more than covered its organic capital expenditure.

"We've spent in the last two years \$6.8bn in Egypt and it will be about \$1.8bn dollars next year. Khazzan is way out there in Oman and the Adco concession each year as well is well over a \$1bn of capital expenditure each year for Abu Dhabi, so it's a really important part of BP's world," Bob Dudley told The National in Abu Dhabi.

Khazzan refers to BP's huge gas development project in the Omani desert, which is expected to produce up to 1.5 billion cubic feet of gas per day by 2021. Adco is the former name for some of Abu Dhabi National Oil Company's off-shore concessions.

Dudley said discussions were under way to use capital in Adnoc's expanding Ruwais downstream facility, where the state producer is looking to invest \$45bn with partners over the next five years.

The downstream strategy was announced in May in the presence of Mr Dudley at an investment conference in Abu Dhabi and includes doubling refining and tripling chemicals capacities, with plans to build the world's largest integrated refinery.

"We've reviewed, and we're part of the process with Ruwais," he said. "We've been working with Egypt and the government there and are involved in the downstream there. We do a lot there," he said.

Dudley dismissed concerns that BP had withdrawn its interests in the Middle East, particularly in Abu Dhabi, where it has been a long-term partner on the Adma-Opco concessions, now renamed Adnoc Offshore.

"We have had to step back a bit because of the BHP [acquisition] but we've been increasing our budgets in Oman, in Egypt," he said.

BP concluded its purchase of global miner BHP Billiton for \$10.5bn earlier this year, as it looks to increase its presence in the US shale basins.

Dudley said BP was interested in Adnoc's licensing round and gas exploration, with talks under way with Adgas, the Abu Dhabi state producer's gas liquefaction arm.

"We're very interested in the Adnoc concessions. We'll be doing more in natural gas, with Adgas, I think so the commitment remains there. We're looking at exploration in Abu Dhabi, [with] the new blocks that were announced," said Dudley.

Abu Dhabi announced last week the discovery of 15 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, which would be a 7.1 per cent addition to existing reserves and could transform the country into a net exporter for the fuel.

Dudley said the company was also "growing very, very quickly" in Oman through the expansion of its Khazzan gas development and the refinery modernization with the Kuwait Petroleum Company, as well as in Egypt.

In the macro oil environment, he observed that oil had perhaps been "a little oversold". The major anticipated "a relatively firm market" through next year.

"It looked like it could be a shortage but stock levels came down to a reasonable level and now they're starting to build a little bit and the world wasn't quite sure what was going to happen with exemptions for Iran and then they were granted and the prices went down," the chief executive said.

(Source: thenational.ae)

## Big Oil sees 'huge potential' in LNG, but warns it is still too expensive for consumers

The liquefied natural gas (LNG) market has massive potential, leading energy executives said Monday, but warned the commodity is still too expensive for many consumers around the world.

Oil giants and energy companies are increasingly interested in LNG -- a form of natural gas chilled to liquid form -- as governments around the world mandate using cleaner fuel than coal.

It comes at a time when the race is on for LNG producers to build export terminals amid soaring demand for the commodity.

Speaking at an industry event at the ADIPEC oil summit in Abu Dhabi, Claudio Descalzi, CEO of Italian oil and gas giant Eni, said: "LNG has huge potential."

"But one of the problems with it, one of its fragile points, is the price. It is very expensive."

### ■ 'Famously' expensive

The global LNG market is currently going through of a flurry of fundamental changes, as demand continues to grow and market liquidity increases.

But, the demand for LNG is evident -- it is reportedly expected to nearly double to 550 million tonnes a year by 2030.

One of the key reasons for LNG's fast-growing demand, according to BP CEO Bob Dudley, is the U.S. sourcing an "abundance" of gas supplies in recent years.

Dudley also said he agreed with Eni's Descalzi regarding the cost of LNG too, saying it remained an issue for consumers worldwide.

"It has really become famous for how expensive it is" Dudley said Monday, adding companies had typically spent a lot of money on LNG investment projects without getting a great deal in return.

"One of the issues shaping the industry is some countries are going to have to choose between low price coal and low carbon LNG. That problem has not been solved," Dudley said.

Late last week, Michele Della Vigna, Head of EMEA Natural Resources Research at Goldman Sachs, told CNBC that "Big Oil" companies were starting to understand that if they wanted to be widely owned by investors, they needed to show that they were serious about minimizing the amount of carbon in the atmosphere.

In doing so, Della Vigna said European oil companies were generally handling the transition from "Big Oil" to "Big Energy" better than their U.S. rivals.

Petronas CEO Wan Zulkiflee said Monday that while clearly growth in the LNG market was an exciting prospect, highlighting the Malaysian oil company's long investment history in the commodity, he did not necessarily agree that it would prove to be the key driver of a so-called "energy transition."

(Source: CNBC)

## OPEC seeks to maintain oil market balance, not please Trump: UAE energy minister

OPEC will not respond to U.S. pressure to lower oil prices but will seek to maintain a balanced market, UAE energy minister Suhail al-Mazrouei said Tuesday, after President Donald Trump warned the organization on Twitter not to cut crude oil production.

"We are not going to respond to political needs," Mazrouei, who holds the rotating OPEC presidency this year, told S&P Global Platts. "We will do what is right for maintaining balance in supply and demand. Anything else is not our job. Our job is not to keep prices low or raise the prices, our job is to maintain balance in the market, but not be oversupplied or undersupplied."

OPEC and its allies are considering cutting output, with a key monitoring committee on Sunday saying a potentially weak market in early 2019 may require reversing a 1 million b/d production increase agreed in June. Saudi Arabia, a key U.S. ally, said it would cut its crude exports unilaterally by 500,000 b/d in December, ahead of any OPEC policy decision.

That drew a tweet from Trump late Monday: "Hopefully, Saudi Arabia and OPEC will not be cutting oil production.



Oil prices should be much lower based on supply!"

Trump has tweeted at OPEC several times over the past year to pump more crude, accusing the organization of manipulating its production to keep oil prices artificially high. But many OPEC officials have pointed to Trump's reinstatement of sanctions on Iranian crude sales for contributing to fears of a tight market ahead.

"Geopolitics don't help sometimes, but we cannot respond to heads of state comments on things that are outside our control," Mazrouei said.

OPEC's 15 members pumped 33.04 million b/d in October, according to the latest Platts OPEC production survey -- about one-third of global supply. For the last two years, the organization has teamed up with Russia and nine other non-OPEC producers to institute output cuts that are now being unwound.

Saudi energy minister Khalid al-Falih said demand for his country's crude oil has tapered off, amid growth in supplies from the U.S., Russia and other producers, as well as seasonal waning demand.

"Saudi Arabia does not arbitrarily cut," Falih said Monday at the ADIPEC oil conference in Abu Dhabi. "I think customers are stopping the need to build inventories. Their demand in December declined by over half a million [b/d] compared to November. We happily obliged because we don't want to see inventories build up."

(Source: Platts)



## Trump's diminishing power and rising rage

By Jeffrey D. Sachs

The coming months may be especially dangerous for America and the world. As U.S. President Donald Trump's political position weakens and the obstacles facing him grow, his mental instability will pose an ever-greater danger.

The drama of Donald Trump's presidency has centered around whether an extremist president would be able to carry out an extremist policy agenda against the will of the majority of Americans. So far the answer has been no, and the midterm elections make it far less likely. Yet Trump's rising frustrations could push him over the edge psychologically, with potentially harrowing consequences for American democracy and the world.

None of Trump's extremist policy ideas has received public support. The public opposed last year's Republican-backed corporate tax cut, Trump's effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare), his proposed border wall with Mexico, the decision to withdraw from the Iran nuclear agreement, and the imposition of tariff increases on China, Europe, and others. At the same time, contrary to Trump's relentless promotion of fossil fuels (coal, oil, and gas), the public favors investments in renewable energy and remaining in the Paris climate agreement.

Trump has tried to implement his radical agenda using three approaches. The first has been to rely on the Republican majorities in the two houses of Congress to pass legislation in the face of strong popular opposition. That approach succeeded once, with the 2017 corporate tax cut, because big Republican donors insisted on the measure, but it failed with Trump's attempt to repeal Obamacare, as three Republican senators balked.

The second approach has been to use executive orders to circumvent Congress. Here the courts have repeatedly intervened, most recently within days of the election, when a federal district court halted work on the Keystone XL Pipeline, a project strongly opposed by environmentalists, on the grounds that the Trump administration had failed to present a "reasoned explanation" for its actions. Trump repeatedly and dangerously oversteps his authority, and the courts keep pushing back.

Trump's third tactic has been to rally public opinion to his side. Yet, despite his frequent rallies, or perhaps because of them and their incendiary vulgarity, Trump's disapproval rating has exceeded his approval rating since the earliest days of his administration. His current overall disapproval rating is 54%, versus 40% approval, with strong approval from around 25% of the public. There has been no sustained move in Trump's direction.

In the midterm elections, which Trump himself described as a referendum on his presidency, the Democratic candidates for both the House and Senate vastly outpolled their Republican opponents. In the House races, Democrats received 53,314,159 votes nationally, compared with 48,439,810 for Republicans. In the Senate races, Democrats outpolled Republicans by 47,537,699 votes to 34,280,990.

Summing up votes by party for the three recent election cycles (2014, 2016, and 2018), Democratic Senate candidates outpolled Republican candidates by roughly 120 million to 100 million. Nonetheless, the Republicans hold a slight majority in the Senate, where each state is represented by two senators, regardless of the size of its population, because they tend to win their seats in less populous states, whereas Democrats prevail in the major coastal and Midwestern states. Wyoming, for example, elects two Republican senators to represent its nearly 580,000 residents, while California's more than 39 million residents elect two Democratic senators. Democrats win more votes, but Republicans win more seats.

Without control of the House, however, Trump will no longer be able to enact any unpopular legislation. Only policies with bipartisan support will have a chance of passing both chambers.

On the economic front, Trump's trade policies will become even less popular in the months ahead as the American economy cools from the "sugar high" of the corporate tax cut, as growing uncertainty about global trade policy hamstrings business investment, and as both the budget deficit and interest rates rise. Trump's phony national-security justifications for raising tariffs will also be challenged politically and perhaps in the courts.

True, Trump will be able to continue appointing conservative federal judges and most likely win their confirmation in the Republican-majority Senate. And on issues of war and peace, Trump will operate with terrifyingly little oversight by Congress or the public, an affliction of the U.S. political system since World War II. Trump, like his recent predecessors, will most likely keep America mired in wars in the Middle East and Africa, despite the lack of significant public understanding or support.

Nonetheless, there are three further reasons to believe that Trump's hold on power will weaken significantly in the coming months. First, Special Counsel Robert Mueller may very well document serious malfeasance by Trump, his family members, and/or his close advisers. Mueller kept a low profile in the run-up to the election. We will most likely hear from him soon.

Second, the House Democrats will begin to investigate Trump's taxes and personal business dealings, including through congressional subpoenas. There are strong reasons to believe that Trump has committed serious tax evasion (as the New York Times recently outlined) and has illegally enriched his family as president (a lawsuit that the courts have allowed to proceed alleges violations of the emoluments clause of the Constitution). Trump is likely to ignore or fight the subpoenas, setting the stage for a major political crisis.

Third, and most important, Trump is not merely an extremist politician. He suffers from what author Ian Hughes has recently called "a disordered mind," filled with hate, paranoia, and narcissism. According to two close observers of Trump, the president's grip on reality "will likely continue to diminish" in the face of growing political obstacles, investigations into his taxes and business dealings, Mueller's findings, and an energized political opposition. We may already be seeing that in Trump's erratic and aggressive behavior since the election.

The coming months may be especially dangerous for America and the world. As Trump's political position weakens and the obstacles facing him grow, his mental instability will pose an ever-greater danger. He could explode in rage, fire Mueller, and perhaps try to launch a war or claim emergency powers in order to restore his authority. We have not yet seen Trump in full fury, but may do so soon, as his room for maneuver continues to narrow. In that case, much will depend on the performance of America's constitutional order.

(Source: Project Syndicate)

# Saudi royals rally support at home as pressure mounts

By Bruce Riedel

Under siege by Turkey, Saudi King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saud and his son Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman are trying to ensure their base at home. An unprecedented royal tour, pardons and bonuses for workers are parts of a program to protect the embattled crown prince from the fallout from the Istanbul caper. The United States, especially when it comes to Congress, is a wild card in the still-evolving situation.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan seems determined to pursue those responsible for the premeditated murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul on Oct. 2. Erdogan has allowed a steady drip of leaks about the Saudi hit team that flew in to Istanbul to commit the murder and its gruesome actions. Occasionally Erdogan publicly discusses the case to confirm key pieces of evidence such as the existence of an audio recording of the murder. It's hypocritical, of course, for Erdogan to be defending journalists, but he has other motives involving his ambitions to be the pre-eminent Muslim leader of his time.

Erdogan has consistently said he is confident the king is innocent, thereby implicitly suggesting that the crown prince is the mastermind of the murder. Does Erdogan have the evidence to prove it? The pro-government Turkish press reported last month that the leader of the hit team in the consulate made four calls to Riyadh during the day of the murder. The calls reportedly were to Bader al-Asakar, the crown prince's chief of staff. If these calls happened, did Turkish authorities monitor them? Do they have tapes? Is this a smoking gun? Erdogan knows. He probably has other evidence, including forensics that are damning and revealing. The Turkish press is saying that it will soon publish more details about how the body was disposed of. Erdogan seems to be in no hurry to get the truth out; he is enjoying watching the Saudis squirm.

The Saudis also know the truth. Their flimsy cover story about a rogue operation simply is not credible. It is undermined by the very nature of the crown prince's track record for reckless micromanagement.

The Saudis are in damage control. The king last week embarked on his first-ever tour



## The Saudis are in damage control. The king last week embarked on his first-ever tour of the kingdom to rally support behind the monarchy and his son.

of the kingdom to rally support behind the monarchy and his son. He began in Qassim province, the heartland of Wahhabi conservatives. He issued pardons for prisoners and payments to some of them as compensation. New projects were opened across the province worth \$4 billion.

The Saudis also announced that public sector workers, including the military, will get bonuses in January. Salman extended extensive bonuses to public sector workers when he ascended to the throne in 2015 but has cut back on them since to cut government expenses in line with his son's Saudi Vision 2030 program. The 2030 plan called for future bonuses to be tied to performance in an attempt to get away from handouts. But last week the palace said the bonuses would be distributed in the old way, untied to performance.

The king's generosity is clearly designed

to ensure that the kingdom is still behind its leadership. King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saudi did the same thing when the Arab Spring began in 2011, funding a massive spending bribe to keep the contagion of the Arab Spring from spreading to the kingdom. The choice of Qassim suggests that there may be special concerns about the conservative base of the monarchy.

The Saudis have been confident that the U.S. administration is still in the crown prince's pocket due to his close ties to Jared Kushner, President Donald Trump's son-in-law. The president still defends the Saudis but his administration has pushed for the kingdom to end the war in Yemen, the signature foreign policy initiative of the crown prince. The war is a catastrophe for the people of Yemen. Under intense pressure from Congress, the Pentagon last week halted air-to-air refueling for Saudi and coalition

airstrikes. It's a mostly symbolic move but it is the first tangible American break from the war in two administrations. On Nov. 11, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo phoned the crown prince and called for a cessation of hostilities.

Congress is likely to press for more action to bring Khashoggi's case to closure and the end of the Saudi war in Yemen. The Israelis are urging its supporters not to go after the crown prince, a stance that does not help him in Qassim. It's a fluid game in which the revelation of potentially incriminating new evidence will play the crucial role.

A century ago the Saudis played a modest role in ousting the Ottoman Empire from the Arab world. It's very ironic that a hundred years later a Turkish president who openly admires the Ottomans may have the destiny of a Saudi prince in his hands.

(Source: Al Monitor)

# World War I may have ended a century ago - but not for the Middle East

By Ibrahim Al-Marashi

One hundred years ago on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918, World War One came to an end. The last member of the British imperial military to die was Canadian Private George Lawrence Price, killed in Belgium by a German sniper's bullet at 10:58am. Two minutes later the guns fell silent, to be replaced by cheers among soldiers and civilians on both sides of the front lines.

But while the war saw its final casualties amid the trenches of Europe, thousands of kilometres away on the Mesopotamian front in Iraq, the British military was still advancing into the Ottoman province of Mosul, which it captured on 14 November.

While 11 November 1918 is celebrated as the end of the Great War, this unfinished but largely forgotten episode of the conflict demonstrates that not only did fighting continue after the armistice, but that the consequences of "the Great War" are still being felt in the region to the present day.

### ■ Shifting identities

A century after the guns fell "silent", this day invites a reappraisal of the shifts of identity that ensued after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the role of Arabs in the Arab Revolt, and finally how the British violation of its armistice with the Ottomans influenced the evolution of Iraq.

The secret Sykes-Picot Treaty, sealed in May 1916, has been blamed for drawing up the "artificial" borders of the Middle East, Iraq in particular. Actually the borders of the Middle East would be formalized more than a year after the Armistice in the San Remo Treaty of 1920.

In reality what 11/11/1918 meant for Middle Easterners was that each individual's borders of belonging would be reconfigured, since the empire that had ruled them and their ancestors since they could remember had collapsed. For many Arabs a search for identity would ensue, once a search for survival had been satiated, having endured famines and dislocations from Lebanon to Iraq during the conflict.

One example of these shifting identities would be my grandfather's. As of 11 November 1918 he would have thought of himself as a Muslim from Najaf who happened to be a subject of the Ottoman Empire. He did not resent the Ottomans because they were Turks and he was an Arab. The latter described "ethnic" differences – a newly minted word he had not heard in the Arabic language in those days. Nonetheless, by the end of the war, the Ottoman Empire, which he belonged to, had relinquished its claims to the lands in which he lived.

My grandfather would have lived in a territory that was in limbo, waiting to see what fate the British occupiers had in mind.

When the British declared the formation of the Iraq Mandate in 1920, my grandfather picked up a rifle and joined the 1920 Iraqi Revolt, launched by a growing number of "Iraqis" disenchanted with the occupation after the armistice and willing to sacrifice their lives to expel the British. It was opposition to British rule that made him an Iraqi.

### ■ The Arab revolt

Having lived as an Arab in Turkey, I had often heard the



The Arab delegation to the Paris Peace Conference in early 1919 included Emir Faisal Hussein, later the British-backed king of Iraq, and TE Lawrence, third from left.

## Thanks to the actions of the British, the consequences of the Great War are still being felt in the Middle East region today.

phrase that "the Arabs stabbed the Turks in the back" during World War I, referring to the Arab Revolt of Lawrence of Arabia. Popular historical memory traces the beginning of Arab nationalism to the revolt. Both of these assumptions are shrouded in myth, challenged recently by Turkish and Arab historians.

For example, Arab soldiers fought tenaciously on behalf of the empire during the Battle of Gallipoli. In 1916, 102 out of 132 of Ottoman prisoners of Arab origin refused to make a deal with their British captors to join the Arab Revolt, perhaps out of loyalty to the Ottoman Empire, or just weariness with the fighting.

Most Arab officers of the Ottoman military stayed loyal to the empire throughout the war, yet were jobless as of 11 November 1918. During the British mandate of Iraq, the new state had a pool of around 600 former Ottoman officers available to join the new army. Of this number 450 served in the Ottoman military throughout the duration of the 1914-18 war, while 190 defected to serve in the anti-Ottoman Army of the Arab revolt.

Some of these officers who joined the Iraqi army were discontented with British control of the institution and threatened to join the army of the newly formed Republic of Turkey, indicating that their identities in this early stage were fluid, and still bore some allegiance to the successor state of the former Ottoman Empire.

British violations of the armistice in Iraq and its seizure of Mosul led to the incorporation of the Kurdish regions around Erbil and Sulaymaniyya, as well as the lucrative oil fields around Kirkuk, into Iraq's borders, embedding two unstable currents in Iraq's state-building process under the

British Mandate as of 1920.

Had the British not seized the Ottoman Mosul province, in theory the Kurds of this region would have become inhabitants of a future Turkey or perhaps been given their own state.

Nonetheless, a Kurdish revolt became a constant factor in Iraq's history from the 1920s, providing cover for the government in Baghdad to devote precious resources to weaponry to use against its own citizens, culminating in the chemical weapons attack on the Iraqi Kurdish town of Halabja in 1988, which killed close to 5,000 in a single morning.

The creation of a single Iraqi Mandate made it easier for the newly created British-controlled Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) to exploit the oil fields from Kirkuk in the north to Basra in the south within a single political entity. This control provided a rallying point for Iraqi nationalists as another symbol of British control over the nation's sovereignty.

Bequeathing so much oil to Iraq also made it a victim of the resource curse, and when the IPC was nationalized in 1972, the windfall led to an arms buildup that allowed for the disastrous invasion of Iran in 1980, leading to the longest inter-state war of the 20th century.

Retrospective pieces on this anniversary have neglected the Middle Eastern front during the Great War, harking back to sentiments a century ago that the Ottoman front was "a sideshow of a sideshow". Yet it gave birth to a slew of conflicts, such as the enduring Palestine-Israel one, to the Islamic State group (ISIS)'s rallying cry of demolishing the Sykes-Picot border. This "sideshow" was anything but.

(Source: Middle East Eye)



# Korea wants to set a successful example of aid to refugees: ambassador

**1 →** After that we developed rapidly through the assistance from the global community, and now Korea is the 11th largest economy in the world and we never forget what we received from our neighbors, and this time we want to repay to the people in need together with some of the host countries like the Iranian government. So, I hope, as the ambassador of Korea, to help people together with Iranian government.

■ What is your suggestions to other countries in helping Iran to cope with the refugees?

A: Iran has been doing a great job. As I understand every country has some kind of domestic problems and external problems. Iran has been suffering from those problems too, but the Iranian government has adopted very generous policies towards refugees from the neighboring countries.

Through the generosity of the Iranian government, the regional situation became much better, and, as I mentioned before, those issues are not the problem of a certain country; they are definitely the matter of the region and the world. The whole world should be responsible for them. To my knowledge, not only Korea but also some other rich countries including Japan, some European countries and the U.S. are contributing and donating for people in need, but I think Korea is a very typical case and good example to become a donor country from a recipient country.



**“Iran has been doing a great job (in hosting refugees)... Iran has been suffering from its own problems, but it has adopted very generous policies towards refugees from the neighboring countries.”**

We understand better than any other countries how the international countries' assistance is critical for the refugees and the people in need, so maybe Korea is not a big country but we want to be a good example to show a successful story to the other countries and we will continue and I will once again express our government's commitment to continue our contribution to refugees.

■ Can Korea provide vocational training to Afghan refugees to make them financially independent?

I'm not an expert in the kind of refugees' issues but on the basis of my job I was once assigned to Geneva at the time I was in charge of the UNHCR refugee issues as well as other humanitarian organizations. At the first stage what is important is providing food and shelter for the refugees but maybe after settling down the second phase is to provide the ability to continue their lives. So for this purpose we provide them with vocational trainings and job skills which are really important for them to make a living independently.

So maybe through the KOIKA [Korea International Cooperation Agency] and other ODA [Official development assistance] organizations the Korean government is providing some programs one of them is a vocational training program and also some schooling and other capacity building programs.

## Syria conflict to end militarily: UK expert

**TEHRAN (Tasnim)** — A political analyst based in London said despite peaceful efforts to resolve the protracted war in Syria, the conflict in the Arab country will be brought to an end on the battlefield not through any peace summit.

“Despite Moscow's strenuous efforts to achieve peace in Idlib, my view remains unchanged: that the conflict in Syria will be brought to an end on the battlefield,” Marcus Papadopoulos said in an interview with the Tasnim News Agency.

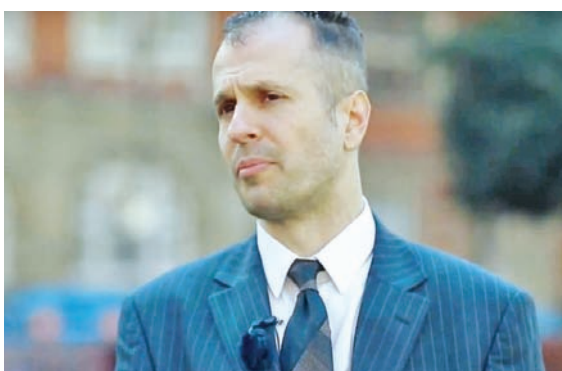
“But there is no real alternative because the backers of the terrorist groups in Syria are still aiding these rancid organizations, albeit not to the same level as in previous years because they know that it is but a matter of time until the Syrian military achieves a complete victory,” he said, adding, “So Idlib will be free again but only as a result of the Syrian military (s victory against terrorists), and not through any peace summit.”

Papadopoulos is a political expert and the publisher and editor of Politics First, a non-partisan publication for the UK Parliament. He earned his MA in Modern History and his Ph.D. in Russian history from Royal Holloway, University of London. His comments and interviews have appeared in various news outlets, including RT, Al Jazeera, Rossiya 24, TASS and RIA Novosti.

The following is the full text of the interview:

■ Turkey recently rejected Syrian government accusations that it is not meeting its obligations under an agreement to create a demilitarized zone around the insurgent-held Idlib region, saying the deal was being implemented as planned. Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Muallem had said that Turkey appeared unwilling to implement the deal. What is your opinion about the comments and the future of the Idlib province, which with adjacent areas is the last stronghold of insurgents?

A: Whilst Russia is able to exert considerable leverage over Turkey (stemming from the serious error that Ankara made when it shot down a Russian SU-24 close to the Syrian-Turkish border, in November 2015), the Turks are playing a duplicitous role regarding the demilitarized zone in Idlib. Firstly, Turkey has no intention of allowing the Idlib region to be liberated by the Syrian military because Ankara has plans of its own for the region; namely, carving out what would be a Turkish protectorate in Idlib, similar to what the Turks have established in the north of Cyprus. Turkey, under Erdogan, although it should be said under any leader, has an incessant craving for a Greater Turkey hence all eyes in Ankara are now on Idlib. And secondly, Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), an Al-Qaeda affiliated terrorist group which is indistinguishable from ISIS (Daesh) in



depravity and barbarism, is largely, if not solely, under the control of Turkey, with the consent of America. HTS is, by far, the most powerful terrorist group in the Idlib region and is the weapon that the Turks are employing to try and forge a Turkish protectorate in the north-west of Syria. Alas, Turkey will not order HTS to withdraw itself from the demilitarized zone in Idlib because this would undermine its own ambitions in north-west Syria. However, I am of the opinion that Turkey will not be able to prevent Idlib from being liberated by the Syrian military. That is partly on account of Russia having said, unequivocally, that the Syrian state will remain as one, governed by the only legitimate political authority in Syria - the Syrian Government. Russia is, of course, the dominant power in the Syrian peace talks with Turkey - and Ankara knows this. But also, the men and women of the Syrian military - and the Syrian people as a whole - will not rest until every inch of their country is freed from terrorists, militants and foreign armies. Nothing can hold back the Syrian people, whose morale and self-belief is now at its pinnacle.

■ A four-way summit on Syria recently ended in Turkey's Istanbul without any major breakthrough. In a joint communique following their meeting, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President Emmanuel Macron and Russian President Vladimir Putin called for “an inclusive, Syrian-led and Syrian-owned political process” and said conditions needed to be created for the safe and voluntary return of refugees. The comments came as the summit was not attended by any Syrian groups. What do you think about the summit?

A: Russia is going to great lengths to achieve peace in Syria, even with governments which have played an im-

mense role in fomenting the bloodshed there. The Kremlin is trying to save civilian lives in Idlib by resolving the situation there peacefully. Compare and contrast Russia's efforts with the actions of the United States, Turkey and Saudi Arabia, for instance, who have the blood of the Syrian people on their hands through having armed, trained and financed all of the terrorist groups in Syria, including ISIS and Al-Qaeda, and facilitated their arrival into the country. May the governments in Washington, Ankara and Riyadh be damned for eternity for the mass murder of Syrians that they orchestrated.

Despite Moscow's strenuous efforts to achieve peace in Idlib, my view remains unchanged: that the conflict in Syria will be brought to an end on the battlefield. I have held that conviction from day one of the Syrian conflict and it has held up so far, much to my sadness because so many Syrian lives have been lost in the fighting. But there is no real alternative because the backers of the terrorist groups in Syria are still aiding these rancid organizations, albeit not to the same level as in previous years because they know that it is but a matter of time until the Syrian military achieves a complete victory. So Idlib will be free again but only as a result of the Syrian military (s victory over terrorists), and not through any peace summit.

■ Iran, Russia, and Turkey - the three guarantor states of de-escalation zones in Syria - have held several rounds of peace talks in Kazakhstan's Astana and elsewhere to help end the conflict in the Arab country. The fourth round of those talks in May 2017 produced a memorandum of understanding on de-escalation zones in Syria, sharply reducing fighting in the country. What is your assessment of the parallel talks between the three countries on the Syrian crisis and Tehran's role in the peace process?

A: Like Russia, Iran has gone to great lengths to end the fighting in Syria by peaceful measures. Tehran knows the price of war, as evidenced by the tremendous suffering of the Iranian people following the Iraqi invasion of Iran in 1980. So the Iranian Government is working hard towards finding a peaceful solution to Idlib, in which the region will be freed from terrorists and militants and an end brought to the suffering of the civilian population there, especially ending the tyrannical and barbaric laws which the people of Idlib have been living under since the region fell into the hands of the terrorists. Through the conflict in Syria, Iran has demonstrated to the world its resolve in fighting terrorism and its unwavering support to the United Nations Charter and international law. I only wish that I could say the same about the American and British governments.

## MBS and his move towards realization of a nuclear dream

**1 →** By launching a research nuclear reactor, MBS pursues various goals and objectives, including boosting human resources, Saudi power in the field of research on nuclear sciences and nuclear power, power generation in the context of conducting a series of scientific research studies and ultimately strengthening the nuclear industry. In pursuit of its nuclear program, Saudi Arabia intends to transfer its technical knowledge to regional partners, with a view to generate more revenue for its allies.

From the technical perspective, the Saudi research nuclear reactor has been designed by the experts of King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology. International scientists and experts also had a hand in the launch of the research nuclear reactor in line with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) guideline and regulatory. The reactor contains uranium oxide fuel with a 2.1 percent enrichment rate and 100 kilowatts of electrical energy.

The Saudi research nuclear reactor, which is a pivotal step in the country's nuclear program, is now undergoing a construction phase, and according to plans, the project will end by 2019. In fact, Saudi officials consider this research reactor as a “cornerstone” for



their nuclear activities and, subsequently, the transfer of the know-how technology to other countries like their allies.

The launch of the first research reactor in Saudi Arabia by MBS happened when there was still no agreement between Washington and Riyadh about the nature of Saudi nuclear activities. Therefore, the Saudis, with the opening of the reactor, sent a message to

Washington that, regardless of any outcome that the negotiations between the two sides led to, they are dogged determined to implement their decision. This is while the White House strongly insists that Saudi Arabia purchase all of its nuclear technology from American companies.

The estimated cost of the nuclear project is around \$80 billion, and the Saudi officials

intend to open two more nuclear power plants in the near future. Saudi Arabia is planning to have 16 nuclear facilities in the coming decades and wants to reach 17.6 gigawatts of nuclear power by 2032.

Clearly, Saudi Arabia has moved towards realizing its nuclear dream. However, the talks between Riyadh and Washington have borne no fruit yet, since there are still disagreements over the issue of “uranium enrichment.”

The White House is concerned that the Saudis cross the line of enriching uranium and make nuclear weapons.

Saudi officials have reassured Washington that by launching a nuclear facility, they are seeking to achieve self-sufficiency in nuclear fuel and uranium, so that they will no longer have to buy it from other countries.

In a nutshell, Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil exporter, is after diversifying its energy sources through nuclear industry. Therefore, they don't mind increasing their oil export to acquire nuclear energy. If Riyadh reaches nuclear power, Saudi officials will no longer have to burn crude oil for electricity production, which translates to saving more oil resources.

## Washington boosts LNG with Iran in sanctions crosshairs

By Omid Shokri Kalehsar

The shale gas revolution has had a staggering effect on the world energy market, shifting many prior assumptions regarding the geopolitics of energy.

Whereas in 2000 and the first years of the new millennium, shale oil and gas accounted for just one percent of all fossil fuels produced in the United States, the country has now moved towards energy self-sufficiency and is taking on the role of an exporter.

Whereas the Obama administration was a major force in fostering this development as a means of freeing the country from foreign dependency through diversification, in tandem with increased green energy supplies, the Trump administration seems to have sought to focus on energy in a more traditional approach.

The shale gas revolution and consequent U.S. energy boom finally meant that a static fact of world energy geopolitics, - ie: that the U.S. was dependent on oil mainly imported from the Middle East - could be cast aside. The U.S. is now energy self-sufficient and free to export Liquefied Natural Gas to neighbours and allies around the world, and thus has added to Washington's political flexibility.

Not surprisingly, this turn of events is being monitored closely by other energy exporters.

The U.S. is already using its energy exports to reduce the EU's dependency on Russian gas, while exerting pressure on its allies to see it as an alternative to Iranian natural gas.

The uptick in gas production in the US has already decreased LNG prices in the EU and Asia and thus presents a challenge to the old energy order. In terms of U.S. national security then, the energy boom can be examined from two perspectives, first, its implications for U.S. energy security and second, its implications for the wider field of international relations and its geopolitics.

■ **U.S. withdrawal from the Iranian nuclear deal**

Iran's economy and energy sector has been devastated by the U.S. and EU sanctions brought against it due to Iran's former attempt to build a nuclear programme. Sanctions have not only scuppered Iran's chances of success in achieving its energy goals but also have forced Iran to become more proactive in consolidating regional relations.

Since Washington's departure from the JCPOA agreement, energy companies who had only just begun to consider re-entering Iran have withdrawn in anticipation of further sanctions. Few international banks or financial institutes are willing to participate in energy projects in Iran under such conditions.

The U.S. is interested in reducing Iran's role in regional and global energy markets, with Washington often declaring a wish to bring Iranian oil production down to zero. It is a fact that American sanctions against Iran's energy sector have vastly reduced the country's production capacity. U.S. sanctions have also wrought severe harm in terms of technology and finance.

The U.S. plans to increase LNG exports to countries which depend on Iranian hydrocarbons in an attempt to wean these countries off their reliance. But some analysts believe the U.S. oil and gas sector is unlikely to gain Iran's share of the market, as technically, Iran's export oil grades are heavier and sourer than the light, sweet crude exported from the U.S.

Energy exports play a key role in U.S. relations with its neighbours and allies, and are a key tool in fostering and furthering relations with others. Energy exports as a means of expanding relations and helping U.S. allies in South Asia and Europe are sure to lead to interesting geopolitical developments, and U.S. LNG exports are most likely to be effective in reducing Iranian oil exports to Japan and South Korea.

■ **Turkey and India**

Turkey is a major purchaser of Iranian natural gas. Turkey has huge investments in LNG storage facilities and plans to increase its share of LNG in the domestic energy market. In 2015, Turkey began to import LNG from the U.S., and is now the second-largest importer of US LNG in Europe.

An increase in U.S. and Qatari LNG - alongside new natural gas transit projects such as TANAP and the Turkish Stream - means that Iran may be largely sidelined by Turkey in the near future. Similarly, India has also signed a 20-year agreement to be supplied with U.S. LNG, also ensuring a reduction of Iranian supplies to the Indian energy market over a similar period.

■ **South Korea**

Seoul is one of the main customers of Iranian gas condensate. More than 55 percent of Iran's gas condensate is exported to South Korea. According to official statistics from the Ministry of Oil, Iranian gas condensate exports in 2017 numbered 428,000 barrels per day on average.

Since the U.S. withdrawal from the nuclear deal, major Korean companies importing Iranian oil and gas condensate have cut imports from Iran. In the first six months of 2018, the Hanwa Total Petrochemical Company, the largest importer of Iranian gas condensate, imported 15.92 million barrels from Iran, but since August has reduced its imports to one-third, in favour of supplies from Qatar and the United States.

■ **Japan**

Japan is another main consumer of Iranian oil in East Asia. According to the Japanese Petroleum Association, in 2017 the country imported 172,216 bpd of oil from Iran, down 24.2 percent from the previous year. Iran's oil accounted for 5.3 percent of total oil imports to Japan's refineries in 2017.

Following the U.S. withdrawal from the treaty, the country further cut imports of oil from Iran. Japan now imports 5.5 percent of its oil from Iran, according to the Japanese Ministry of Economy and Trade. In August, Japan was receiving 17,775 barrels per day and bought 3.39 million barrels of crude in one month.

Japan called for an exemption from the U.S. embargo on Iran, which was granted by the Trump administration - but only for six months. Part of Iran's share of oil is expected to fall victim to an influx of LNG exports and U.S. gas condensate onto Japan's market.

Sanctions against Iran's energy industry have not only reduced Iran's oil and gas production capacity, but also reduced Iran's share of the global energy market. The rising lack of investment in the Iranian oil and gas industry is one particularly immediate result of renewed sanctions. Reducing oil production capacity and, consequently, reducing Iran's oil export potential will force Iran to find loans and facilities from banks and global financial institutions in order to develop its facilities - yet it is clear that new U.S. sanctions will challenge Iran's ability to retain much of its oil production capacity regardless. Given the increase in natural gas producers and LNGs on the market, the U.S. energy boom provides a good opportunity for Iran's rivals - not least the U.S. itself - from moving in on Iran's share of the regional and global energy market.

The increase in U.S. oil and shale gas production has made Iran more pressured to find new markets, yet the country does not have the capacity to produce LNG, thus competing with the U.S., and it is unclear when the capital and technology needed to complete its LNG project units will be provided.

(Source: alaraby)



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# ‘Diabetes costs Iran \$4b a year’

**1 →** The health ministry, firstly, attempts to prevent and control the disease by raising public awareness about the disease's causes and risk factors; secondly, it aims to provide patients with proper treatment, he said.

The main causes of diabetes, he added, are obesity, lack of physical activity and unhealthy diet.

As families play a key role in control of diabetes, this year's National Diabetes Week is focused on the role of families in prevention of the disease, he said, adding that the family was the main subject in Diabetes Week for the past two years as well.

over the conference, Shahin Yarahmadi, the head of Endocrinology & Metabolic Department at Health Ministry, said only 25 percent of families have access to proper education about diabetes.

In collaboration with the Health Ministry, she added, media can contribute to the most to raising awareness about the disease.

**■ 11% of Iranians over 25 are diabetic**

Among Iranians over the age of 25, 11 percent suffer from diabetes type 2 and 18 percent are pre-diabetic, said Ostovar.

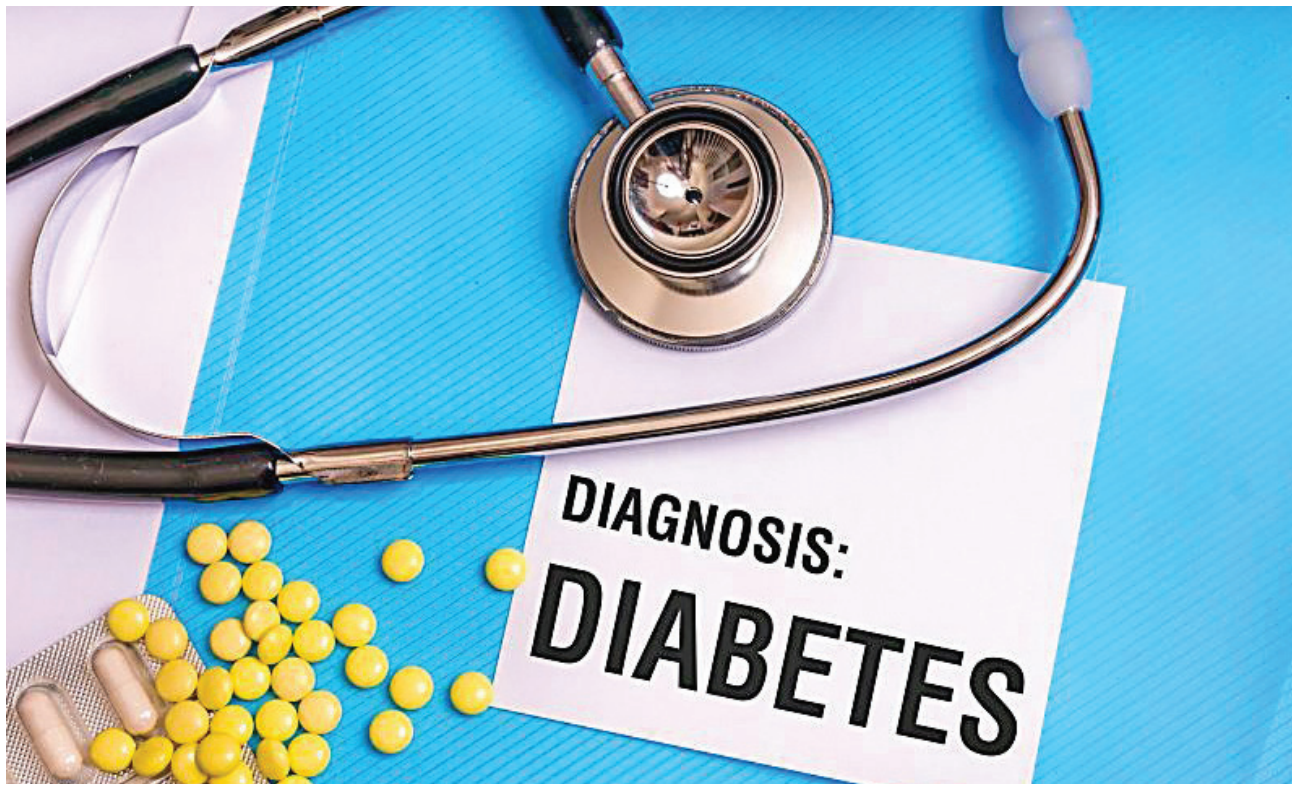
The pre-diabetics' blood glucose level is higher than normal, and they will get the disease unless they make drastic changes in their lifestyle, he said.

Together with Heart diseases, cancers and respiratory diseases, diabetes is among the top four non-communicable diseases that lead to death and disability, he said.

**■ Diabetic population grow 1% every year**

Annually, 1 percent is added to the population of diabetics in the country, said Alireza Mahdavi, the director of National Program for Prevention and Control of Diabetes while speaking at the press conference.

Currently, 5.3 million people suffer from diabetes and 5.8 million are pre-di-



**“Among Iranians over the age of 25, 11 percent suffer from diabetes type 2 and 18 percent are pre-diabetic. The pre-diabetics' blood glucose level is higher than normal, and they will get the disease unless they make drastic changes in their lifestyle.”**

abetic. However, increasing physical activities and lowering the body's weight can help the pre-diabetics to prevent the disease by 12 percent, he said.

The health ministry, he added, aims to stop the spread of diabetes by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 2025 – March 2026).

Diabetes is a chronic disease that occurs either when the pancreas does not produce enough insulin or when the

body cannot effectively use the insulin it produces. Insulin is a hormone that regulates blood sugar. Hyperglycaemia, or raised blood sugar, is a common effect of uncontrolled diabetes and over time leads to serious damage to many of the body's systems, especially the nerves and blood vessels.

According to the World Health Organization, the number of people with diabetes

has risen from 108 million in 1980 to 422 million in 2014. The global prevalence of diabetes among adults over 18 years of age has risen from 4.7% in 1980 to 8.5% in 2014. In 2015, diabetes was the direct cause of 1.6 million deaths and in 2012 high blood glucose was the cause of another 2.2 million deaths. Diabetes prevalence has been rising more rapidly in middle- and low-income countries.

## 480 social work clinics active in Iran: official

**HEALTH DESK** TEHRAN — Some 480 social work clinics are operating in the country, said Welfare Organization deputy director for social affairs.

Habibollah Masoudi made the remarks in the Social Work and Constant Development Convention on November 13, YJC reported on Tuesday.

He highlighted the need for establishing a variety of social work centers; noting that the Health Ministry can take the lead in opening special centers in hospitals.

He also mentioned NAMAD (Persian acronym for “social care system for students) scheme as a good example of doing

social work at schools.

NAMAD scheme which was first piloted in 130 schools in Nazarabad county, Alborz province, in the last Iranian calendar year (March 2017-March 2018).

The Organization is also going to conduct another pilot scheme called ‘social census’ to evaluate the social status of the population.

The scheme will be piloted in Islamshahr, southwestern Tehran, from the Iranian calendar month of Shahrivar (August 23-September 22) and will continue to the end of the current year (March 20, 2019).



## Govt. should pay special attention to MPS, SMA: deputy health minister

**HEALTH DESK** TEHRAN — Mucopolysaccharide (MPS) and spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) are special life-limiting diseases which require special attention from the government, the deputy health minister Qasem Janbabaie said.

MPS and related diseases are lysosomal storage diseases. These are rare, life-limiting, progressive, genetic conditions caused by the shortage of a particular enzyme.

Enzymes within lysosomes break down or digest particular nutrients, such as certain carbohydrates and fats. In individuals with MPS disorders, deficiency or malfunction of specific lysosomal enzymes leads to an abnormal accumulation of certain complex carbohydrates (mucopolysaccharides or glycosaminoglycans) in the arteries, skeleton, eyes, joints, ears, skin, and/or teeth.

These accumulations may also be found in the respiratory system, liver, spleen, central nervous system, blood, and bone marrow. This accumulation eventually causes progressive damage to cells, tissues, and various organ systems of the body.



Spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) is a rare neuromuscular disorder characterized by loss of motor neurons and progressive muscle wasting, often leading to early death. The disorder is caused by a genetic defect.

These patients life condition are much harder than many other patients suffering other kinds of diseases such as multiple sclerosis and the diseases incur hefty costs, Tasnim news agency quoted Janbabaie as saying on Monday.

“All patients with MPS as well as their parents will be tested genetically free of charge, so that we can prevent birth defects of the kind in their future children,” he added.

Elsewhere in his remarks he explained that most cases on thalassemia and hemophilia are in Sistan-Baluchestan and expressed hope that with timely genetic testing the number of patients with the aforesaid disease will be controlled in near future.

He made the remarks over a ceremony marking the inauguration of 83 “special diseases comprehensive centers network”.

The centers provide patients suffering rare disorders with dental, and rehabilitation services, he said, stating that one of the centers has bone densitometry which help doctors to diagnose osteoporosis as many of patients suffering such diseases may also suffer osteoporosis.

## Genetic link between obesity and depression uncovered, say scientists

Being overweight can cause depression, researchers say, with the effects thought to be largely psychological.

While previous studies have found that people who are obese are more likely to have depression, it has been unclear whether that is down to depression driving weight changes or the reverse.

Now, in the largest study of its kind, experts say having genetic variants linked to a high body mass index (BMI) can lead to depression, with a stronger effect in women than men. What's more, they say the research suggests the effect could be down to factors such as body image.

“People who are more overweight in a population are more depressed, and that is likely to be at least partly [a] causal effect of BMI [on] depression,” said Prof Tim Frayling, a co-author of the study, from the University of Exeter medical school.

Writing in the International Journal of Epidemiology, the researchers from the UK and Australia describe how they used data from the UK Biobank, a research endeavour involving 500,000 participants aged between 37 and 73 who were recruited in 2006-10.



The researchers looked at 73 genetic variants linked to a high BMI that are also associated with a higher risk of diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. They also looked at 14 genetic variants linked to a high percentage of body fat but which were associated with a lower risk of such health problems. While the former group could be linked to depression through biological or psychological mechanisms, the latter would only be expected to have a psychological effect.

The team then looked at participants' hospital data and answers from a host of questionnaires – including self-reports of seeing a GP or psychiatrist for anxiety

or depression. The team identified about 49,000 participants whom they were confident had depression.

Overall, the team found that people with a higher BMI were more likely to be depressed.

The researchers also found that being genetically predisposed to a higher BMI was linked to depression, with the effect stronger in women than in men. The results held even when they carried out additional tests, such as excluding individuals with a family history of depression, and when the analysis was repeated on data from a large international project called the Psychiatric Genomics Consortium.

Focusing on the 73 genetic variants, and taking into account factors including age and they found that for every 4.7-point increase in BMI, the odds of being depressed increased by 18% overall, and by 23% among women.

When the team pooled data from the different sources, they found the 14 genetic variants that increase body fat but are not linked to metabolic ill-health were also linked to an increased chance of having depression.

“It suggests the psychological component is just as strong as any physiological component, if [the latter] is there at all,” Frayling said, suggesting poor body image could be one mechanism at play.

The study has some limitations: it primarily looked at individuals with white European ancestry, and involved some self-reported data.

While the study does not show that weight gain for other reasons would increase the risk of depression, Frayling said it was likely. “It allows [one] to infer that bigger effects in BMI would have bigger effects on depression,” he said.

Naveed Sattar, a professor of metabolic medicine at the University of Glasgow, welcomed the research. “These new findings are perhaps the strongest so far to suggest higher weights may actually contribute to depression,” he said. “Of course, many other factors can cause depression, but, even so, weight loss might be helpful to improve mental health in some individuals, whereas keeping leaner in general should help lessen chances of depression.”

(Source: The Guardian)

## Saliva-based RNA panel distinguishes children on autism spectrum from non-autistic peers

Newly published research shows that a saliva-based biomarker panel and associated algorithm could improve the ability to accurately identify children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in its earliest stages, announced Quadrant Biosciences Inc. In a study of more than 450 children ages 18 months to 6 years, researchers demonstrated that a panel of 32 small RNAs could differentiate children with autism from children exhibiting typical development or non-ASD developmental delay with 85% accuracy. This test accuracy was achieved both during the model development and during validation of the test in a separate set of children.



The publication, entitled “Validation of a salivary RNA test for childhood autism spectrum disorder,” was published online in Frontiers in Genetics by researchers Steven Hicks, M.D., Ph.D., of the Pennsylvania State College of Medicine and Frank Middleton, Ph.D., of SUNY Upstate Medical University in collaboration with scientists from Quadrant Biosciences.

Following a pilot study demonstrating that many of these RNA elements could be detected in the saliva of children with ASD, the researchers determined that saliva-based testing could provide the means to broadly interrogate genomic, physiologic, microbiome, and environmental factors implicated in ASD in a single, non-invasive, high-throughput analysis.

“Growing evidence suggests that autism arises from interactions between a child's genes and the environment. This study measured factors that may control interactions between genes and the environment, especially the microbiome,” said Dr. Hicks. “Though children with autism have diverse genetic backgrounds, we found that a set of 32 RNA factors in their saliva could accurately distinguish them from peers without autism. Given this array of ASD risk factors, we believe a ‘poly-omics’ RNA-based approach that integrates genetic, epigenetic, and metagenomics methods would be well suited to the development of an objective biomarker-based test.”

**■ The Study**

The multi-center study included 456 children recruited during the past three years. The authors compared saliva samples from 238 children with ASD to 218 children without ASD (including 84 children with developmental delay and 134 with typical development). Levels of human and bacterial RNAs were measured in the saliva samples using comprehensive next-generation sequencing. The top RNAs were identified using robust machine-learning algorithms from the first 372 children and then validated in the remaining 84 samples that were not used in the machine learning. Notably, this validation set also included samples collected from children at the University of California, Irvine, to verify that the RNA algorithm performed accurately in samples from different geographic regions.

**■ Need for Earlier Autism Diagnosis**

Screening for autism typically relies on a parent-based questionnaire called the Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers Revised (MCHAT-R). Children with a positive MCHAT-R score are generally referred for diagnostic evaluation. However, due to the high number of false-positive results on the MCHAT-R, wait times for autism evaluation often exceed one year. While diagnosis is possible in children as young as 24 months, the average age of ASD diagnosis in the United States today is greater than 4 years. Early diagnosis is important because intensive behavioral therapy has been shown to improve the symptoms of autism, and children benefit more from such intervention the earlier it is started.

Daniel Coury, M.D., Professor of Clinical Pediatrics and Psychiatry at The Ohio State University College of Medicine and a member of the Section of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics at Nationwide Children's Hospital, sees the benefit of this RNA biomarker-based test in a clinical setting. “Often autism-specific interventions are delayed while awaiting a diagnosis. It frequently takes months to obtain an autism evaluation due to the large number of referrals, many of whom will not receive a diagnosis of autism,” he explained. “A test which can separate children who have screened M-CHAT-positive into high likelihood of autism or low likelihood of autism could help streamline waitlists and permit earlier diagnosis and enrollment in autism treatment.”

Dr. Middleton from SUNY Upstate Medical University agreed. “The ability to accurately discriminate between children with autism and their peers with non-ASD developmental delay is of paramount importance in the field. While the algorithm is not designed as a screening tool, it can provide valuable information in children with a positive MCHAT-R screen, over 80% of whom will not have ASD. In this way, it can be used to prioritize specialist referral or to provide an objective aid to an autism diagnosis.”

**■ About Quadrant Biosciences**

Quadrant Biosciences is a life science company involved in the development of functional assessments and epigenetic diagnostic solutions for large-scale health issues. The company has entered into collaborative research relationships with a number of institutions including SUNY Upstate Medical University and Penn State University to explore and develop novel biomarker technologies with a focus on Autism Spectrum Disorder, concussion, and Parkinson's Disease. Quadrant Biosciences also participates in the Start-up NY program, a New York State economic development program.

(Source: EurekAlert)



## ICT ministry plans to introduce parental control apps

**TECHNOLOGY** **TEHRAN** — The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Ministry plans to introduce parental control applications in the near future, the ICT minister Mohammad Javad Azari Jahromi announced, Mehr reported.

According to a survey conducted by the ICT ministry, only eight percent of Iranian parents monitor their children's online activity, the minister wrote on his Twitter account on Monday. Most of parents are unaware of control software and apps, he added.

The survey revealed that Iran is not very successful in content creation for children and to control children's online activity, he lamented.

According to the survey, most people believe that the non-Iranian companies were most successful in content creation for children in comparison to family, school, TV and radio, he announced.

"Although the ministry is not responsible for content creation, we are responsible for infrastructures of cyberspace and to make an attractive dynamic online environment for children," he said.

In such an environment, children can search, educate and interact with others under the control of their parents, he added.

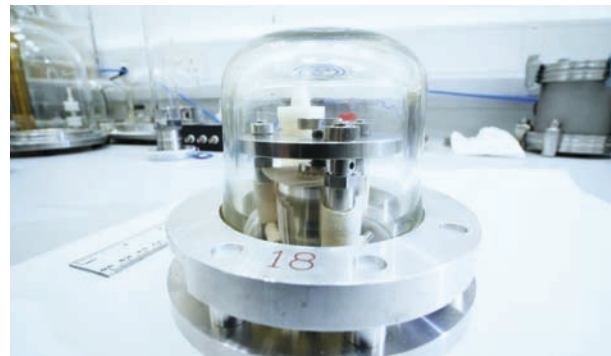
Parental controls fall into roughly four categories: content filters, which limit access to age inappropriate content; usage controls, which constrain the usage of these devices such as placing time-limits on usage or forbidding certain types of usage; computer usage management tools, which enforces the use of certain software; and monitoring, which can track location and activity when using the devices.

## Scientists weigh up major change as mother of all kilograms loses mass

British scientists devise a way of measuring a kilogram that does not rely on a physical object to match something against.

A quiet revolution could this week change the standard for weighing everything from drug doses to jumbo jet fuel.

Scientists from more than 60 countries will vote on Friday on whether a lump of metal held in a Parisian vault should continue to be the definition of a kilogram.



Le Grand K, a small cylinder of titanium alloy, has set the standard since 1889. All the scales in the world are ultimately calibrated against it, even those weighing in pounds and ounces.

It's so important to the global economy that three key-holders are needed to unlock the vault. When the Nazis occupied Paris they left untouched the building that houses "Le Grand K".

The problem, though, is that while the mother of all kilograms has only been taken out of its protective case four times in the last century, it has lost atoms and therefore mass.

It amounts to just 20 billionths of a gram, about the weight of an eyelash, but in a world that needs to weigh objects with ever greater accuracy, that's a big deal.

Work on a definition of a kilogram is taking place at the National Physical Laboratory

Image: Work on the definition of a kilogram is taking place at the National Physical Laboratory

Britain has a copy of Le Grand K called Kilo 18, which it won in a lottery in 1889, and is stored at the National Physical Laboratory (NPL) in West London.

Stuart Davidson, a metrologist or weight scientist at NPL, is one of the trusted guardians.

"Once you get up to a few tens of tonnes - things like filling an aircraft with fuel - everything needs to be traceable back to a standard," he told Sky News.

"The same is true when you get down to very small masses like a milligram - for example the active ingredients of pharmaceuticals.

"You like to know you are getting the right dose of drugs when you are given a prescription."

Scientists at the lab are now part of the global effort to devise a more accurate, immutable definition of a kilogram that is no longer dependent on a physical object.

They are using what is known as a Kibble Balance, named after the British physicist who first conceptualised it, to express the mass of a kilogram in terms of the amount of upward electromagnetic force is needed to balance the downward drag of gravity.

Then with some heavy-duty maths, they relate that to a fundamental physical law of nature.

By taking the answer - a number called Planck's Constant - they can reverse the process and calibrate scales with unprecedented accuracy.

Ian Robinson, a fellow at NPL, has been leading the work. He says labs around the world will be able to have a kibble balance, liberating the definition of a kilogram from its physical and geographical ties.

"You are not reliant on any one object anymore," he said.

"Effectively our mass scale is spread out and everyone can contribute. I see it as egalitarian - a form of democracy for mass."

(Source: news.sky.com)

# Intl. KANS Awards announces winners

**TECHNOLOGY** **TEHRAN** — The winners of the international Knowledge Application and Notion for Society (KANS) Awards announced during a ceremony in Tehran on Monday.

This competition has been staged with the aim of bouncing ideas around in academic community to address the problems of the Islamic world in areas of water and environment, energy, health, information technology, and economics.

The KANS secretariat received 152 works in the field of health, 136 works in the field of IT, 154 works in the field of water and environment, 35 works in the field of energy and 45 works in the field of energy and economics, the head of the jury Saeid Sohrabpour said during the closing ceremony, Mehr reported.

The submitted works, which is an academic achievement, should provide a solution for one of the problems the Islamic countries deal with, he explained.

A total of 36 works received from scholars from Oman, Malaysia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Palestine, Jordan, Tunisia, Indonesia, Nigeria, Egypt and Kazakhstan, he announced.

The 70 percent of participants were men in this edition, he added.

A total of 15 works in five fields were selected as the winners, he said.

Abdul Rahim Abdul Samad from the University Putra, Malaysia (economics); Mohammad Mehdi Kiani from Sharif University of Technology, Iran (IT); Sadeq Sadeqzadeh from Iran University of Science and Technology (water and environment), and Behnam Mohajeran from Isfahan University of Technology, Iran (Energy); won the first prizes in each field.

Students, researchers, and professors from universities and scientific centers



In an undated photo, the final jury selected the winners for the KANS scientific competition at the Mustafa Science and Technology Foundation, Tehran

(less than 45 years of age) all over the world can submitted their scientific-technological ideas and achievements to the secretariat in form of video clips or scientific papers.

This competition has been organized by Mustafa Science and Technology Foundation in 2017 at university level in order to use the capabilities possessed

by this expert community.

The Mustafa Prize is a science and technology award, granted to top researchers and scientists from the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member states, biennially.

It is a platform for top scientists and innovative engineers from OIC member states to present their achievements to

the world.

It aims to improve scientific relations between academics and researchers in order to facilitate the growth of science in OIC member states. OIC is the second largest intergovernmental organization after the United Nations with about sixty member countries over four continents.

## Selling crude medical herbs should be prevented: VP

**TECHNOLOGY** **TEHRAN** — Iran should prevent exporting medical herbs in crude shape just like [limiting] sales of crude oil, the vice president for science and technology Sourena Sattari said on Monday, Mehr reported.

"Through production of herbal medicine, herbal pesticides and fertilizer, we can create added value in this field in the country," he explained.

Sattari made the remarks during his visit to the 4th festival of medicinal herbs, natural products and traditional medicine, which is currently underway at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Mosalla.

Nothing including sanctions can stop Iranian young generation, he said.

The self-confident young human resource in Iran can add value in Iran's economy, he continued.

"We do hope that more innovative companies are created by the young entrepreneurs in the country," he said.

The human resource can have a great influence on economy, culture and industry, he said.

Sattari called the knowledge-based economy as one of



The 4th festival of medicinal herbs, natural products and traditional medicine is currently underway at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Mosalla

the most important priorities of the cabinet.

He stressed the need for development of knowledge-based companies through support of the private sector.

## Write it down, a habit that all startup people should have

A long long time ago, a wise man once said that the dimmest trace of pen is stronger than the best memories in the world, while I am not totally agree with this whole assumption, I got to say that this is true to some extent. We all have strong memories but sometimes we have to write things in order to make them more effective and make actions with stronger impact. Today we want to talk about the habit called write it down and we will give you some useful tips on how this approach can boost your team performance.

### ■ Why shall I write it down?

It's simple and easy to understand, there are many strong reasons showing that you have to write some things you need to focus on. First of all our mind is a very busy place and when we work in startup world then it's busier than ever. You may remember things very well but timing is essential and that's why if you don't write your key works of the day then you may remember them a little bit late.

On the other hand it is not only a personal thing and you should know that writing means commitment. There are people who won't remember some tasks given to them verbally and even some managers have such a busy mind that in some instances when they think that they assigned a task to someone, they assume that they did it without actually doing it. So if you write things down then it means that you are undertaking the responsibility to keep up to that written thing. It might be as simple as a phone call on 9 sharp but still writing it down can be extremely helpful to remember it in time.

### ■ From old school to modern

The oldest method to write things down is using pen and paper but it's not the case when you are in startup companies. We don't mean that this style should be totally out of order and you have to reject all the possibilities of using pen and paper but what we mean is that you should rely on all types of



written communications.

Outlook for example is a great way to manage your timing and your meeting. It is connected to your calendar and you can get a lot of things done in time because of these reminders. There are other digital tools as well such as Trello, Jira and etc. you can use these things to even share one written document or agenda with others in real time and that amazing if you think about it even for a minute. In the old school way, you can use post it sticky notes and other type of stuff. My work place monitor and table is usually full of these post it papers and each color represent some specific type of task for me. At the same time I'm using Sticky note on my windows based Pc so you can use all you want from old school to modern but the most important thing is just writing it down.

### ■ Sharing is not caring all the time

Well there are some things you should keep to yourself. There are notes for you and for you alone and you won't stick a big post it paper and write your onetime password to check a client account tomorrow. So sharing is not caring this time and you should know when you can share things with others and

when you have to write it down for yourself.

One of the easiest ways of stealing information in companies is social engineering. This method is as simple as looking at person's hand while entering password and listening to conversations and etc. so when it comes to sensitive information, try to write it in a way that no one can access them except you.

I use a method that I call it duality to address this problem. Duality means that I create a file with password access restriction and put important stuff there and then put a public note on checking this file in time. For example I had to check a client's system for a possible bug and I had to connect to his system using remote access. Unfortunately he was not available all day long and he gave me access code to remotely use his system the day after while he was away. I had to keep this code safe and at the same time I had to remember connecting too his system between 9:00 to 9:10 so I put his password in a file and locked it with a software and then put a trello reminder on connecting to his system. Anyone in the team could see that reminder but no one was able to open password file except me.

### ■ Track back to see the result

This is a simple thing to do, you should not discard any written note unless you are sure it is done or canceled. I have a small basket beside my table and it's not for garbage. Whenever I think I'm done with a post it note or any other written thing then I will put it in that basket and at the end of the day, I go to that basket and recheck them one by one to see if anything is still needs some attention.

Using this simple way, I won't miss anything by mistake when it comes to human mistakes. It will only take 15 minutes of my time but increases my accuracy a lot. In trello, I have a list called Daily done and it's the same as that basket in digital world so tracking back is not that hard for me.

There is no need to exactly follow my method and you can invent your own but my way is not a copy right protected or something and if you like please use it as you like but remember that tracking back for traces of possible mistakes is always essential.

Spread the habit & let them write it down too. It doesn't matter if you are a CEO or you are only employee, you can be the start of this approach. Never wait for the others, start by yourself and when you get enough success then others will follow you up and use the same approach.

You have to spread this habit in your company and it will help everyone in your team to achieve greater functionality and more accurate results. Human brain is strong but not immune to mistakes so what we can do is protect ourselves with the simplest tool that we have and use the most basic thing we all learned: writing. So go one and write it down from now on and you will see the result faster than you may guess.

Remember that things will always start with you so don't wait for the others to start and even if they didn't follow, you can use the advantages on your own work and life tasks.

(Source: startupik.com)



# Stanford researchers develop a rooftop device that can make solar power and cool buildings

Stanford electrical engineer Shanhui Fan wants to revolutionize energy-producing rooftop arrays.

Today, such arrays do one thing – they turn sunlight into electricity. But Fan's lab has built a device that could have a dual purpose – generating electricity and cooling buildings.

"We've built the first device that one day could make energy and save energy, in the same place and at the same time, by controlling two very different properties of light," said Fan, senior author of an article appearing Nov. 8 in *Joule*.

The sun-facing layer of the device is nothing new. It's made of the same semiconductor materials that have long adorned rooftops to convert visible light into electricity. The novelty lies in the device's bottom layer, which is based on materials that can beam heat away from the roof and into space through a process known as radiative cooling.

In radiative cooling, objects – including our own bodies – shed heat by radiating infrared light. That's the invisible light night-vision goggles detect. Normally this form of cooling doesn't work well for something like a building because Earth's atmosphere acts like a thick blanket and traps the majority of the heat near the building rather allowing it to escape, ultimately into the vast coldness of space.

## ■ Holes in the blanket

Fan's cooling technology takes advantage



of the fact that this thick atmospheric blanket essentially has holes in it that allow a particular wavelength of infrared light to pass directly into space. In previous

work, Fan had developed materials that can convert heat radiating off a building into the particular infrared wavelength that can pass directly through the atmosphere. These

**A new rooftop device under development will be able to produce electricity from sunlight while also beaming heat directly into space to cool buildings.**

materials release heat into space and could save energy that would have been needed to air-condition a building's interior. That same material is what Fan placed under the standard solar layer in his new device.

Zhen Chen, who led the experiments as a postdoctoral scholar in Fan's lab, said the researchers built a prototype about the diameter of a pie plate and mounted their device on the rooftop of a Stanford building. Then they compared the temperature of the ambient air on the rooftop with the temperatures of the top and bottom layers of the device. The top layer device was hotter than the rooftop air, which made sense because it was absorbing sunlight. But, as the researchers hoped, the bottom layer of the device was significant cooler than the air on the rooftop.

"This shows that heat radiated up from the bottom, through the top layer and into space," said Chen, who is now a professor at the Southeast University of China.

What they weren't able to test is whether the device also produced electricity. The upper layer in this experiment lacked the metal foil, normally found in solar cells, that would have blocked the infrared light from escaping. The team is now designing solar cells that work without metal liners to couple with the radiative cooling layer.

"We think we can build a practical device that does both things," Fan said.

(Source: *Stanford*)

## Mystery monkey: history of unique Xenothrix fossil revealed



A mysterious extinct monkey from Jamaica that is unlike any other in the fossil record has South American roots, according to new evidence.

DNA extracted from fossilized bones suggests the monkey first colonized the island 11 million years ago.

It had no predators there and it evolved strange features not seen in living monkeys today.

But the animal went extinct a few hundred years ago, likely due to hunting and habitat loss.

Scientists say the discovery highlights how vulnerable unique island animals are to extinction.

"It was a really weird animal indeed," Prof. Samuel Turvey from international conservation charity, Zoological Society of London (ZSL), told BBC News.

"Possibly with legs like a rodent; body maybe like a slow loris. Because it's so weird no-one's been able to agree what it was related to."

## ■ A xenothrix skull

The researchers extracted ancient DNA from the fossilised cave bones of the Jamaican monkey, *Xenothrix mcgregori*.

DNA evidence shows it was a type of titi monkey with some unusual morphological features, not a wholly distinct branch of evolution.

"Evolution can act in unexpected

ways in island environments, producing miniature elephants, gigantic birds, and sloth-like primates," said Dr Ross MacPhee of the American Museum of Natural History.

Titi monkeys are small tree-dwelling animals found across tropical South America, with long soft red, brown, grey or black fur.

They are active during the day, and very vocal, with an elaborate system of communication.

*Xenothrix*'s ancestors likely reached Jamaica from South America after being stranded on natural rafts of vegetation that were washed out of the mouths of rivers.

Other animals, such as large rodents called hutias, that still survive on some Caribbean islands, probably arrived in the same way.

The islands of the Caribbean have been home to some of the most unusual species to have ever walked the Earth.

The region has also experienced a very high rate of mammal extinction, likely caused by hunting and habitat loss by humans, and hunting by animals brought in by early settlers.

The research, published in the *PNAS* journal, also reveals that monkeys must have colonized the Caribbean islands more than once.

(Source: *BBC*)

## A 'Time Capsule' for scientists, courtesy of Peter the great



A Russian zoological museum filled with centuries-old specimens finds renewed relevance in the age of genetics.

Standing alone, a few minutes before the doors were to open at the Zoological Museum of the Zoological Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Alexei Tikhonov gazed at Masha, a 30,000-year-old baby mammoth that he brought here from a Siberian riverbank thirty years ago.

Masha, one of the museum's star attractions, rests with hundreds of other encased exhibits in one of the largest public collections of zoological specimens in the world. The cabinets, conceived in Frankfurt at the end of the 19th century, and the Czarist hunting trophies here exude an old-fashioned, even romantic air. But Dr. Tikhonov, director of the museum, is not too concerned.

Sometimes he yearns for plasma panels and the modern gadgetry that many other museums use to inform visitors. But he has limited funds to modernize the museum, and prefers to spend that money buying new collections and supporting scientific fieldwork.

This collection, first formed from acquisitions made by Peter the Great three centuries ago, is nonetheless taking on a new, more vital role. As the animal

world becomes increasingly threatened, these exhibits are helping to unlock genetic information and precious clues to aid species survival.

The museum, like other great natural history museums, is "a time capsule for organisms," said Ross MacPhee, curator of mammals at the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

"For certain kinds of studies, such as species endangerment and the loss of genetic diversity, this is turning out to be increasingly important," he added. "Natural history museums are literally the only places where you will find good quality remains."

Down the hall from Masha, in a cabinet holding birds of prey, are two California condors. Probably the oldest specimens in the world, they were brought to St. Petersburg by a collector in 1851 from Fort Ross, originally a Russian outpost in California.

When researchers at Penn State began searching for genetic information on the scarce population of California condors in the United States – currently there are less than 500 birds – the university reached out to St. Petersburg for help. A few months later, a feather from each bird was dispatched to university scientists for study.

(Source: *The NYT*)

## Microplastics take flight in the bellies of mosquitoes

The pollution stays in these insects as they grow from larvae to adults, putting birds at risk.

Microplastics have become a common type of water pollutant. And these pollutants can now become airborne in the bellies of mosquitoes, a new study shows.

Researchers in the United Kingdom recently found that mosquito larvae can eat tiny bits of plastic from the water in which they're living. As the mosquitoes grow into adults, much of that plastic stays inside them. That means birds and bats that eat mosquitoes may be taking in a mouthful of plastic with every meal. And any other animal that eats those birds and bats is probably also getting a little microplastic with their meals.

"We don't yet know how harmful the microplastics will be," says Amanda Callaghan. However, she adds, "If we wait to find out, it may be too late to do anything about it." Callaghan is a zoologist who works at the University of Reading in England. Her team's new findings appeared in the September *Biology Letters*.



## ■ Munching on microplastics

Microplastics are any bits of plastic smaller than half a centimeter (0.2 inch) across. In recent years, scientists have been finding these plastic bits in water all over the world. They tend to enter rivers as wastewater pollutants. From those rivers, they can drain into lakes and the ocean. Affected water can include sites where mosquitoes lay their eggs.

To find out what effects this might have, a member of Callaghan's team, Rana Al-Jaibachi, fed microplastics to mosquito larvae in the lab. Larvae are the worm-like young of certain insects. Larvae often are adapted to survive very different environments than those they'll live in as adults. Adult mosquitoes live in the air, for instance. Their larvae, however, hang out in small pockets of still water. There they gobble up algae and bacteria that live on the water's surface.

In the lab, Al-Jaibachi put ground-up guinea pig food in the water where the larvae were growing. She added tiny beads of plastic. In total, she gave microplastic beads to 150 larvae.

To find out whether the larvae had gobbled up any microplastic, she randomly chose 15 larvae to examine. She selected 15 more mosquitoes after they'd grown into adults. Next she counted the number of beads in each insect.

"We counted the beads by grinding up the mosquito, filtering out the beads and looking down a microscope," explains Callaghan. The plastic particles were too small to be ground up along with the animals' tissue. And the beads were fluorescent, so they glowed green under blue light.

Microplastics showed up in all 30 mosquitoes, both larvae and adults. But the larvae hosted more of them. On average, each larva held more than 3,000 2-micrometer-wide beads. (A micrometer is one ten-thousandth of a centimeter.) The adults only had about 40 beads each. The researchers now suspect the mosquitoes may pee out some microplastics as they grow up.

Callaghan says the lesson from her team's study is that microplastics are everywhere. "They can even move up into the air if they are eaten by an animal that can fly," she concludes.

Marcus Eriksen is an environmental scientist at the 5 Gyres Institute in Los Angeles, Calif. There, he studies plastic pollution in oceans and lakes. And he would like to know how microplastics move through the environment outside of the lab.

The study by Callaghan's team is helpful, he says, because it shows microplastic can stay in the bodies of mosquitoes as they grow into adults. "Now it's time to move to a real population of mosquitoes in nature and real quantities of plastic in the environment," he says. "If we see an effect, then we've got something to act on."

(Source: *Sciencenews for Students*)

## One of Earth's shimmering dust clouds has been spotted at last

It's taken more than five decades for astronomers to confirm the clouds exist.

Meet the Kordylewski dust clouds, shimmering pseudo-satellites that orbit Earth near the moon. A team of Hungarian astronomers say they have spotted light scattered from one of these clouds, providing evidence that the clouds really exist after nearly 60 years of controversy.

The twin dust clouds gather at two of the points in space where the gravity of Earth and the moon cancel each other out. That gravitational stability makes these spots, called Lagrange points, good places to park spacecraft. They also could trap interplanetary debris.

No one had seen any dust clouds since 1961, when Polish astronomer Kazimierz Kordylewski reported the first sighting at two gravity holes, L4 and L5. Some astronomers thought that the sun's stronger gravity would periodically sweep dust out of L4 and L5, making it hard for the areas to support clouds.

Astronomers Judit Sliz-Balogh, András Barta and Gábor Horváth, all of Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, looked for the clouds using specially designed filters. These filters detect light that's been polarized, or had its electromagnetic waves aligned, by bouncing around the dust grains.

The team spent several months making observations in Sliz-Balogh's private observatory in the western Hungarian village of Badacsonytördemic. "It is hard to find moonless and cloudless good nights in Hungary," the astronomers write in a paper set to be published in January in the *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*. But the team finally spotted a telltale shimmer at L5. The physics of the Lagrange points suggests that, if one cloud exists, the other does, too. The trio still wants to search for the L4 cloud directly.

Computer simulations suggest L4 and L5 are only partially stable, the team reports in a paper in the Nov. 11 *MNRAS*. The clouds may hang around for years or decades, but the sun's gravity will eventually scatter them into space. That could explain the "now you see it, now you don't" results of past searches for the clouds, the team says.

(Source: *Sciencenews*)

## Scientists to swap dusty old kilogram for something more stable

After years of nursing a sometimes dusty cylinder of metal in a vault outside Paris as the global reference for modern mass, scientists are updating the definition of the kilogram.

Just as the redefinition of the second in 1967 helped to ease communication across the world via technologies like GPS and the internet, experts say the change in the kilogram will be better for technology, retail and health – though it probably won't change the price of fish much.

The kilogram has been defined since 1889 by a shiny piece of platinum-iridium held in Paris. All modern mass measurements are traceable back to it – from micrograms of pharmaceutical medicines to kilos of apples and pears and tonnes of steel or cement.

The problem is, the "international prototype kilogram" doesn't always weigh the same. Even inside its three glass bell jars, it gets dusty and dirty, and is affected by the atmosphere. Sometimes, it really needs a wash.

"We live in a modern world. There are pollutants in the atmosphere that can stick to the mass," said Ian Robinson, a specialist in the engineering, materials and electrical science department at Britain's National Physical Laboratory.

"So when you just get it out of the vault, it's slightly



dirty. But the whole process of cleaning or handling or using the mass can change its mass. So it's not the best way, perhaps, of defining mass."

What's needed is something more constant.

So, at the end of a week-long meeting in the Palace of Versailles, Paris, the world's leading measurement aficionados at the International Bureau of Weights and Measures will vote on Friday to make an "electronic

kilogram" the new baseline measure of mass.

Just as the meter – once the length of a bar of platinum-iridium, also kept in Paris – is now defined by the constant speed of light in a vacuum, so a kilogram will be defined by a tiny but immutable fundamental value called the "Planck constant".

The new definition involves an apparatus called the Kibble balance, which makes use of the constant to measure the mass of an object using a precisely measured electromagnetic force.

"In the present system, you have to relate small masses to large masses by subdivision. That's very difficult – and the uncertainties build up very, very quickly," Robinson said.

"One of the things this (new) technique allows us to do is to actually measure mass directly at whatever scale we like, and that's a big step forward."

He said it had taken years of work to fine-tune the new definition to ensure the switchover will be smooth.

But while the extra accuracy will be a boon to scientists, Robinson said that, for the average consumer buying flour or bananas, "there will be absolutely no change whatsoever".

(Source: *Reuters*)



## Specialized center for dialysis, thalassemia patients opens

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — A specialized medical center was inaugurated in Sirjan, southeastern province of Kerman, on Monday for dialysis patients as well as patients with thalassemia.

The center is stretching over 900 square meters land area, Sirjan Medical Sciences University chancellor has said, adding that 600 square meters of the center is allocated to dialysis patients and the rest is for patients with thalassemia.



Construction and equipping the medical center cost 50 billion rials (nearly \$1.2 million), IRNA quoted Masoud Mohammadi as saying.

The budget to build and equip the hospital was allotted by the government as well as philanthropists, Mohammadi added.

Moreover, he said, dental, physiotherapy, radiology, otolaryngology, urology, etc. services are provided to the patients at the center as well.

According to IRNA, there are some 450 patients suffering multiple sclerosis, thalassemia, hemophilia and dialysis patients in Sirjan.

## World has no capacity to absorb new fossil fuel plants, warns IEA

The International Energy Agency said almost all of the world's carbon budget up to 2040 – the amount that can be emitted without causing dangerous warming – would be eaten up by today's power stations, vehicles and industrial facilities.

Fatih Birol, the executive director of the Paris-based group, told the Guardian: "We have no room to build anything that emits CO2 emissions."

The economist said to limit temperature rises to 2C, let alone the 1.5C as scientists recommend, either all new energy projects would have to be low carbon, which was unlikely, or existing infrastructure would need to be cleaned up.

That could include incentives for dirty power plants to be retired early or installing carbon capture and storage technologies, Birol said.

"We are eating up 95% of the [carbon] budget, even if we don't do anything else. Which of course is impossible, not building any more trucks or power plants," Birol said.

In total, the IEA calculated that existing infrastructure would "lock in" 550 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide over the next 22 years. That leaves only 40 gigatonnes, or around a year's worth of emissions, of wriggle room if temperatures are not to overshoot the 2C threshold.

The group's annual World Energy Outlook, published on Tuesday, revised future CO2 emissions upwards on last year's report.

Global emissions from energy flatlined in 2014-16 after decades of increases but in 2017 and 2018 so far they have resumed their upward march. The IEA expects CO2 emissions to rise from 32.53 gigatonnes in 2017 to 36 gigatonnes by 2040.

Birol said that unfortunately the data suggested 2014-16 was a blip, rather than 2017-18. "There is a growing disconnect between the new international [climate] research and what is happening in the energy market," he said.

The report said that the world is "still a long way" from meeting its goals on climate change and air pollution.

However, the IEA is upbeat about how much greener the power market will become. Windfarms are expected to grow from 4% to 12% of global electricity generation by 2040, overtaking nuclear.

Solar is forecast to expand from 2% of generation today to nearly 10% by 2040 and is expected to outcompete new coal plants on cost "almost everywhere".

(Source: The Guardian)

## LEARN ENGLISH

### Talking About Skincare

A: You want to go get a **facial** with me today?

B: Dude, what are you talking about? Only girls do that.

A: Not at all, guys also get facials, **manicures** and **pedicures**. There is nothing wrong with looking after your skin and looking good.

B: True. So what do they do to you at your beauty **spa**?

A: Well, first they **exfoliate** my face, getting rid of all the dead skin. Then I get a face mask with nutrients that keep my skin healthy and young. Afterwards, they apply some moisturizer and you leave feeling like a million bucks.

B: That doesn't really sound like something I would be interested in. In any case, I just wash my face every night and use **sunscreen** during the day.

A: Well you should come with me one day, I'm sure you'll love it.

B: Uh... no.

#### ■ **Key vocabulary**

**facial:** a treatment to beautify the face.

**manicure:** a cosmetic treatment of the hands and fingernails, including trimming and polishing of the nails

**pedicure:** professional care and treatment of the feet

**spa:** a luxurious resort or resort hotel.

**exfoliate:** to remove the surface of...such as skin and dirt

**sunscreen:** a substance formulated to prevent sunburn, skin cancers, and other conditions caused by excessive exposure to the sun

#### ■ **Supplementary vocabulary**

**massage:** the act or art of treating the body by rubbing, kneading, patting

**tranquil:** free from commotion or tumult; peaceful; quiet

**sunburn:** inflammation of the skin caused by overexposure to the sun or a sunlamp.

**tan:** A brown color on the skin caused by the rays of the sun

(Source: irlanguage.com)

# Pirouz Hanachi elected as Tehran mayor

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — The Tehran city council elected Pirouz Hanachi as the city's new mayor, Mehr news agency reported.

Hanachi, 55, holds a PhD in urban development, and run for mayor post last year as well.

He has served as the deputy for architecture and urban development at the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development from 2001 to 2005.

Hanachi replaced Mohammad Ali Afshani, who was retired and had to give up office as per a newly adopted law which bans employment of the retired.

The law was passed in mid-September by the Majlis [Iranian parliament] and it will be implemented by November 15.

The fifth city council election was held simultaneously with the presidential election on May 19, 2017. Reformists managed to secure all 21 seats at the council. The first session of the fifth Tehran City Council was held on August 23, 2017.

Since then the council had to elect two mayors. First Mohammad Ali Najafi was named as the mayor who kept the post for almost 7 months and then resigned due to his deteriorating health caused by prostate cancer.

After Najafi, Samiollah Hosseini Makarem became the caretaker and finally a month later in mid-May Afshani secured the seat as the mayor.



## Iranian students finish first at IOAA 2018

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — Iranian students came in first by winning 9 gold and silver medals at the 2018 International Olympiad on Astronomy and Astrophysics (IOAA), Fars news agency reported on Tuesday.

Fatemeh Mohajerani, an official with the Ministry of Education, explained that 9 Iranian students in two teams vied against their contestants and managed to win 6 gold medals and 3 silver medals.

Teams from Russia and China ranked second and third respectively, she added.

IOAA is an annual astronomy and astrophysics competition for high school students. It is one of the international science Olympiads.

IOAA 2018 was held in Beijing, China from November 2-11, 2018.

The first IOAA was held in the city of Chiang Mai, Thailand, from November 30 to December 9 of 2007.

The third IOAA was held in 2009, October 17 to 27, in Tehran. The observational exam was held in the desert, in the Caravanserai of Deh Namak, Semnan Province.



20 countries participated the competition including the first time participation for Kazakhstan and Serbia.

According to its official website the main goal of IOAA is to promote the growing interest in Astronomy and related subjects, especially through the general education of young people, and enhancing the development of international contacts among different countries in promoting Astronomy and Astrophysics in schools. It is expected through the event like IOAA more bright high school students will be eager to study astronomy at the university level to become the next generation astronomers.

## ‘Living walls’ should be installed to help most polluted schools, campaigners say

Schools in polluted areas should have "living walls" installed to protect children from toxic substances in the air, campaigners have claimed.

Covering walls with plants could prove an effective strategy as they are able to absorb dangerous pollutants from the air, they said.

Two neighbouring west London schools are trying to raise thousands of pounds to help pay for these structures, hoping to protect their children from health problems linked with pollution.

It comes after reports of state school parents crowdfunding for air purifiers to alleviate the dangerous levels of air pollution found throughout London.

Mayor Sadiq Khan has pledged to tackle pollution in the capital, but Laurie Laybourn-Langton, from the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change, said more needs to be done to clean up the air.

"It's important that individuals, as well as the communities, businesses and schools in which they live and work, take measures to understand how air pollution impacts them and act to reduce their exposure, lowering the chance of harm," he told Sky News. "For schools, measures like living walls can help to improve the quality of air children breathe and therefore improve their health and well-being, enhance the look and feel of their environment and also educate them about air pollution and climate change.

"However the responsibility of cleaning up our air lies



with the government, which has the power, resources and duty to respond. Primarily, this requires the government to introduce new laws."

Andrea Carnevali, a parent at St Mary's Catholic School in Chiswick, set up the crowdfunding campaign in an attempt to raise money for both a living wall and air filters.

"We know that this is one of the top 50 schools in London and one of the most polluted schools in the country," he said.

He added that Mr Khan had pledged to contribute £32,000 if the community can raise the rest of the costs.

### ENGLISH IN USE

#### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

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## Over 1,000 hemodialysis machines to be distributed nationwide

Some 1,080 hemodialysis machines will be distributed throughout the country by the end of this year (falling on March 20, 2019), an official with the Ministry of Health has said.

"It is scheduled that 3,000 dialysis machines to be exploited in the country by the next three years," IRNA quoted Mahdi Shadnoosh as saying on Wednesday. Unfortunately, dialysis centers are currently working four shifts a day in some cities and even in provincial centers, he lamented.

### PREFIX/SUFFIX

#### “-ar”

■ **Meaning:** of or relating to, being

■ **For example:** Because ultraviolet radiation is a constant feature of **solar** radiation, the ozone layer is maintained.

### PHRASAL VERB

#### Close with somebody/ something

■ **Meaning:** to agree a business deal with someone

■ **For example:** It was such a good offer that I closed with him on the spot.

### IDIOM

#### Find (one’s) feet

■ **Explanation:** reach a level of comfort in a new situation

■ **For example:** It took a while, but I’ve finally found my feet in my job.

## Precipitation reaches record high in Tehran

**ENVIRONMENT** **TEHRAN** — Raining set a record high in Tehran on Monday, constituting 10 percent of the annual precipitation in the city, Tasnim news agency reported.

With 20 millimeters of rain on Monday, Tehran surpassed the northern raily city of Rasht in precipitation amount.

On Monday, cities of Bandar Anzali, Hamedan, Tehran and Rasht by receiving 37, 20.3, 20 and 17.7 millimeters of rain were among the regions with highest amount of precipitation.

In its latest report, Iran's Meteorological Organization (IMO) has forecast that precipitations will meet normal levels in the second half of the current Iranian calendar year, corresponding to autumn and winter.

The report explains that precipitation amounts will exceed normal levels in the first month of autumn, particularly in western and northwestern areas. Over the second month of autumn precipitation will remain at normal levels except for some areas in southwestern Iran where precipitation will be below the normal level.



Precipitations will also remain at normal levels in last month of autumn. Over the first month of winter precipitation levels will plummet in western areas and in the one but last month of winter, precipitations will reach normal levels again, the report stated.

However the report warned that, despite the projected rise in precipitation amount, the country is still facing water shortage and sustainable use of ground-water resources is a must

Eminent meteorologist professor Hossein Ardakani told Fars news agency that precipitation will be higher than normal in autumn and winter this year, but this doesn't necessarily mean that drought spells are over.



# Hamas releases video of guided-missile striking Israeli military bus

Hamas warns Israel it will extend range of rocket fire over raids

By staff & agencies

The Palestinian Hamas resistance movement has released a video of a guided-missile strike it has carried out against a bus carrying Israeli forces in retaliation for the regime's earlier incursion into the Gaza Strip.

The footage released on Tuesday shows the vehicle being hit by the missile and erupting into flames as it is moving in the city of Jabalia, north of Gaza City, Gaza Strip.

The group's military wing, Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades, said it had used a Kornet (Cornet) man-portable anti-tank missile to target the military bus, adding that all its occupants had died during the retaliatory attack.

The Qassam Brigades said in the statement that the counter-raid was in response to a Sunday Israeli attack that killed seven of its members. Reuters, however, cited the Israeli military as saying that only one "Israeli soldier was wounded in the incident."

Israeli media had earlier claimed that the bus was carrying Israeli settlers.

The Brigades said in the statement that the counter-raid was in response to an Israeli attack that killed seven of its members on Sunday.

The operation saw Israeli Special Forces infiltrate the Gaza Strip in a civilian car before killing senior Ezzedine al-Qassam commander Nour Baraka in a drive-by shooting near the city of Khan Yunis in southern Gaza.

Hamas started to retaliate as the Israeli forces were beating a retreat. Israeli aircraft covered the retreat from above, killing six more members of the Brigades, including another commander Mohammad al-Qarra.

The Israeli military's incursion promoted the worst exchange of fire between the Gaza-based resistance fighters and Israel since the regime's 2014 war on the blockaded coastal enclave.

The death toll from Israeli strikes on the Gaza Strip rose on Tuesday to six in less than 24 hours, Gaza's Health Ministry said.

The ministry identified the sixth Palestinian victim as Mossaab Hus, 20.

Earlier in the day, an Israeli raid killed a 26-year-old Palestinian youth, named as Khaled Riyadh, who was tending to his farm in the al-Salatin neighborhood in the enclave's north.

In retaliation, Palestinian resistance fighters have fired about 400 projectiles into the Israeli occupied territories amid the latest escalation in the conflict.

Reuters said the firefight has killed only one Israeli, while the armed wing of Hamas said two Israelis were killed and 19 more wounded in Ashkelon.

**■ Hamas threatens to target 'millions' of Israelis as its TV station HQ in Gaza destroyed**

Meantime, the headquarters of Al-Aqsa TV station run by the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas was razed to the ground on Monday in Israeli airstrikes on Gaza amid a fresh round of violence in the besieged enclave, which the world blames on the Israeli forces.

The building of Al-Aqsa TV station



located in an-Nasr district, west of Gaza, was totally destroyed by the Israeli raids, footage of the attack shows.

Many local residents had reportedly fled after calls to evacuate, witnesses said. The TV station said it would resume broadcasts soon.

The raid was part of the fresh airstrikes and rocket attacks by Israeli warplanes and artillery which are targeting areas "throughout" the Gaza Strip and have so far killed several people, including a Hamas commander.

**■ Hezbollah, Ansarullah voice solidarity with Palestinians**

Elsewhere, Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement also condemned the Israeli regime's assassinations of Hamas figures as well as its continued acts of aggression against Gaza.

It further hailed the Palestinian resistance fighters for their heroic response to Israel's incursion and air raids.

Yemen's Ansarullah (Houthi) movement also voiced solidarity with the Palestinian people and resistance movement in the face of Israel's aggression.

"We express our absolute belief in the inevitability of the victory of the oppressed and in the forefront of them the conscious and resisting Palestinian people," it said in a statement.

**■ Global condemnation**

The developments followed as, Russia, Jordan and an Egyptian delegation all declared on Monday that Israel is responsible for the violence in Gaza.

The Russian condemnation came after an Egyptian delegation to Gaza, set up with the purpose of creating a ceasefire, placed the blame on Israel for starting the violence.

The European Union and the United Nations also urged the immediate end of rising tensions surrounding the Gaza Strip.

In a written statement, Maja Kocijancic, the spokeswoman for the EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini, said that "the escalation of violence in and around Gaza during the last hours is very alarming".

"The EU urges both parties to step back from the brink and avoid any further actions that would contribute to the

escalation, put civilians' lives at risk, and jeopardize recent efforts towards reducing tensions," she said.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called the situation in Gaza "an extremely worrying situation," stating that "the suffering of the people of Gaza is unimaginable". The UN chief said that the tensions in Gaza should be defused as soon as possible, warning that otherwise it could turn into a "massive tragedy".

"He (Guterres) urges all parties to exercise maximum restraint. The United Nations Special Coordinator, Nickolay Mladenov, is working closely with Egypt and all concerned parties to restore calm," Farhan Haq, the deputy spokesman for Guterres, said in a statement.

**■ Netanyahu holds emergency security meeting**

Separately, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu held an emergency security meeting with his minister of military forces and other senior Israeli military officials in Tel Aviv on Monday, a day after the Israeli raid on Gaza ignited new tensions in the region.

Tensions have been running high near the Gaza fence since March 30, which marked the start of a series of protests dubbed "The Great March of Return." The Palestinian protesters have been demanding the right to return for those driven out of their homeland by Israeli wars and other acts of aggression since 1948.

**■ Hamas warns Israel it will extend range of rocket fire over raids**

The armed wing of Hamas Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades has, meanwhile, released a statement in Hebrew, urging the settlers to move out of the city.

The Israeli regime has been using the city to "perpetrate crimes" against Palestinian civilians, it said, adding that the Brigades was forced to respond.

A spokesman of the Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas, said the Joint Operations room for Palestinian Resistance has vowed to expand the range of military strikes deeper into the occupied territories.

Ashkelon is just the beginning as a million Zionist colonists may enter the range of our rockets, Abu Obaydah said in his tweet.

The Qassam Brigades also said two Israelis were killed and 19 others were wounded in its counter-attacks against Ashkelon early on Tuesday.

The armed wing of Hamas says it will step up attacks and fire rockets at the Israeli towns of Ashdod and Beersheba if Israel continues to carry out air raids on civilian buildings in Gaza.

Hamas' warning that it would extend the range of its rocket fire was issued on Tuesday, hours after a rocket from Gaza killed an Israeli man in a direct hit on a residential building in the coastal town of Ashkelon.

The rocket was fired after an Israeli air raid destroyed Hamas' Al-Aqsa TV building in Gaza on Monday evening.

The spokesperson for the Hamas military wing said in a statement that Ashkelon "has entered the range of fire as a response to the bombing of civilian buildings in Gaza".

"Occupied al-Majdal (Ashkelon) is now in our cross hairs in response to the shelling that targeted civilian buildings in Gaza ... Ashdod and Beersheba are the next targets if the enemy continues to bombard civilian buildings," Abu Ubaidah said on Twitter.

Of the three cities, Ashkelon is closest to Gaza.

However, Israeli military spokesperson Jonathan Conricus said Israeli warplanes, tanks and naval vessels were involved in attacks against military compounds, observation posts and weapons facilities belonging to Hamas and the Islamic Jihad.

He said the Israeli military had enhanced its deployment along the border but has yet to mobilize its reserves.

He added that Gaza groups were believed to have an arsenal in excess of 20,000 rockets and mortars of different caliber and range.

In Gaza, schools and public institutions were closed on Tuesday as people ventured outside to inspect the damage after a long night of aerial raids.

Near the destroyed TV station, residents salvaged papers and belongings from their damaged homes. Debris was strewn across the streets and shattered window glass crunched under people's feet.

In Gaza City's Rimal neighborhood, a six-story residential building that also housed a kindergarten on its ground floor was destroyed.

Israel and Hamas have fought three wars since the group seized control of Gaza after it won elections in the enclave in 2006. In the most recent war, more than 2,200 Palestinians were killed, more than half of them civilians, and tens of thousands were left homeless. Seventy-three people, most of them soldiers, were killed on the Israeli side.

Israel and Egypt have maintained a blockade on Gaza since the Hamas takeover, a blockade that has devastated Gaza's economy.

## Trump alone as world leaders take aim at nationalism

For President Donald Trump in Paris, "America First" meant largely America alone. At a weekend commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I, the president who proudly declares himself a "nationalist" stood apart, even on a continent where his brand of populism is on the rise.

He began his visit with a tweet slamming the French president's call for a European defense force, arrived at events alone and spent much of his trip out of sight in the American ambassadors' residence in central Paris.

He listened Sunday as he was lectured on the dangers of nationalist isolation, and then he headed home just as the inaugural Paris Peace Summit was getting underway.

Back at the White House Monday, Trump tweeted that "much was accomplished" in his meetings, but voiced a familiar complaint about America's allies. He said the U.S. pays billions "protecting other countries, and we get nothing but Trade Deficits and Losses." He added: "It is time that these very rich countries either pay the United States for its great military protection, or protect themselves."

His France trip made clear that, nearly two years after taking office, Trump has dramatically upended decades of American foreign policy posture, shaking allies.

That includes French President Emmanuel Macron, who Sunday warned that the "ancient demons" that caused World War I and millions of deaths were once again making headway.

Macron, who has been urging a re-embrace of multinational organizations and cooperation that have been shunned by Trump, delivered a barely veiled rebuke of Trumpism at the weekend's centerpiece event: A gathering of dozens of leaders at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the base of the Arc de Triomphe to mark the passage of a century since the guns fell silent in a global war that killed millions.

Bells tolled across Europe's Western Front and fighter jets passed overhead to mark the exact moment the devastating war came to a close.

With Trump and other leaders looking on, Macron took on the rising tide of populism in the United States and Europe and urged leaders not to turn their backs by turning inward.

After Trump was gone, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who recently announced that she will not be seeking re-election, made an impassioned plea for global cooperation at the peace forum, saying World War I had "made clear what disastrous consequences a lack of compromise in politics and diplomacy can have."

Trump, who has made clear that he has limited patience for broad, multilateral agreements, sat mostly stone-faced as he listened to Macron, who sees himself as Europe's foil to the rising nationalist sentiment, which has taken hold in Hungary and Poland among other countries.

Trump did engage with his fellow leaders, attending a group welcome dinner hosted by Macron at the Musee d'Orsay Saturday night and a lunch Sunday. He also spent time with Macron Saturday, when the two stressed their shared desire for more burden-sharing during a quick availability with reporters.

But Trump was terse during some of his private conversations with world leaders, according to people with direct knowledge of his visit. One of the people described the president as "grumpy." They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss private conversations.

The symbolism during Trump's visit couldn't have been more stark.

Trump was missing from one of the weekend's most powerful images: A line of world leaders, walking shoulder-to-shoulder in a somber, rain-soaked procession as the bells marking the exact moment that fighting ended 11 a.m. on Nov. 11, 1918 finished tolling.

The president and first lady Melania Trump had traveled to the commemoration separately White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders cited security protocols from the other dignitaries, who had traveled together by bus from the Elysee Palace.

Also traveling on his own was Russian President Vladimir Putin, who shook Trump's hand, flashed him a thumbs-up sign and patted Trump's arm as he arrived. Trump responded with a wide smile.

National security adviser John Bolton had said at one point that Putin and Trump would meet in Paris, but they will instead hold a formal sit-down later this month at a world leaders' summit in Buenos Aires. A Kremlin official said later that U.S. and Russian officials decided to drop plans for the Paris meeting after French officials objected.

Trump, who ran on an "America First" platform, has jarred European allies with his actions. He has slapped tariffs on the European Union, pulled the U.S. out of the landmark Paris climate accord and the Iran nuclear deal and suggested he might be willing to pull the U.S. out of NATO if member counties don't significantly boost their defense spending. Trump's eagerness to get along with the Russian leader in spite of Russia's meddling in the 2016 election and numerous other aggressive moves in recent years has alarmed those who view Russia as a growing threat.

Trump has also repeatedly branded himself a "nationalist," despite criticism from some that the term has negative connotations.

At a news conference last week, Trump defended his use of the phrase. "You know what the word is? I love our country," he said, adding: "You have nationalists. You have globalists. I also love the world and I don't mind helping the world, but we have to straighten out our country first. We have a lot of problems."

But Trump did not broach the divide as he paid tribute Sunday to U.S. and allied soldiers killed in World War I during "a horrible, horrible war" that marked America's emergence as a world power.

"We are gathered together at this hallowed resting place to pay tribute to the brave Americans who gave their last breath in that mighty struggle," Trump said at the Suresnes American Cemetery and Memorial in the suburbs of Paris, where more than 1,500 Americans who died in the war are buried.

"It is our duty to preserve the civilization they defended and to protect the peace they so nobly gave their lives to secure one century ago," he said after spending a moment, standing alone amid the cemetery's white crosses, holding a black umbrella.

(Source: AP)

## Macron has augmented French isolation

➡ Obviously, French double standards have irritated European politicians, many of whom have disagreed with the contradictory games of French authorities towards the U.S. and issues of multilateralism in the international community. Also, France's isolation and its strategic leverage in the political arena has grown since the days of Sarkozy and Hollande. Some analysts thought that Macron and fresh policies would stop this trend, but it has not occurred.

## France trying to cover up the Khashoggi murder

Turkey reacted with fury after French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said President Tayyip Erdogan was playing a political game over sharing intelligence about the killing of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

Le Drian had questioned remarks by Erdogan at the weekend in which he said Turkey gave tapes relating to Khashoggi's killing to the United States, Saudi Arabia, Germany, France and Britain, Reuters reported.

Le Drian said he was not aware that France had any tapes. Asked if Erdogan was lying, he said: "He has a political game to play in these circumstances".

That prompted a furious response from Ankara, which insisted it had shared evidence with Paris and said Le Drian's comments were unacceptable.

"Our intelligence shared information with them on Oct 24, including the voice recordings," Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said. "It is very impudent for them to accuse our president of playing political games."

"What's behind the remarks of the French foreign minister? I wonder if they are trying to cover up the murder," he added.

The furious Turkish remarks towards France were the most direct public expression yet of a concern in Ankara that Western countries with close commercial relations with Riyadh might soft-pedal their response to the Khashoggi killing.

Seeking to clarify Le Drian's comments, a senior French diplomat later said the minister never commented on intelligence shared between countries and that he was neither confirming nor denying French officials having listened to recordings.

"What counts for us is to establish the complete truth ... whatever one may think of the recordings the entire truth can't be based on the Turkish recordings. We are still waiting for elements from the Saudis," the diplomat said.

The dispute between Ankara and Paris may hinge on Erdogan's account that Turkey "gave" recordings to the other countries. Turkish officials said instead that France had been allowed to hear a recording, and blamed France for the misunderstanding.

"If there is miscommunication between the French government's various agencies, it is up to the French authorities

— not Turkey — to take care of that problem," Erdogan's communications director Fahrettin Altun said.

Khashoggi, a critic of de facto Saudi ruler Prince Mohammed bin Salman, was killed in Saudi Arabia's Istanbul consulate last month in what Erdogan calls a murder ordered at the "highest levels" of the Saudi government. Saudi authorities have acknowledged that the killing was premeditated.

CIA director Gina Haspel heard an audio recording of Khashoggi's death when she visited Istanbul, two sources told Reuters last month. U.S. President Donald Trump and Erdogan have discussed how to respond to the killing.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said on Monday Canadian intelligence officers have also listened to recordings of what happened to Khashoggi.

"We are in discussions with our like-minded allies as to the next steps with regard to Saudi Arabia," Trudeau said.

Khashoggi's murder provoked international outrage but so far little concrete action by world powers against Saudi Arabia.

(Source: agencies)

## Russia is Afghanistan broker due to U.S. failure: envoy

A senior Russian diplomat said Monday that Moscow is trying to be an Afghan peace broker because it considers the U.S. has failed in Afghanistan. Zamir Kabulov, Russia's presidential envoy for Afghanistan, said a Moscow conference on Afghanistan Friday that brought together representatives of the Afghan authorities and the Taliban marked an attempt to "take a modest first step toward full-fledged peace talks."

Kabulov said Monday that Russia's efforts to help an Afghan peace settlement have been driven not by a desire to undercut the U.S. efforts, but by security concerns. He emphasized that the continuing fighting in Afghanistan threatens the interests of Russia and its allies in Central Asia.

"Afghanistan is close to our underbelly so national interests of Russia and its allies

are at stake," Kabulov said at a briefing. "We can't just sit back and watch impassively what's going on, and we have let the U.S. know that it doesn't appear to be successful in settlement efforts."

Kabulov charged that "the presence of the U.S. and NATO hasn't only failed to solve the problem but exacerbated it," noting that the Taliban has expanded its foothold.

"The West has lost the war in Afghanistan, and it's reluctant to acknowledge that obvious fact," Kabulov said. "If they continue to rely on force, it would only lead to thousands more victims and further ravage the country." He noted that regional powers, including Russia, China, Pakistan and Iran have a strong interest in ending the conflict and should play a more active role.

(Source: AFP)



## Former England and Chelsea midfielder Joe Cole retires



Former England and Chelsea midfielder Joe Cole has retired at the age of 37.

Cole, who came through West Ham’s youth system before spells at Liverpool, Lille, Aston Villa and Coventry City, has played for United Soccer League side Tampa Bay Rowdies since 2016.

He scored 10 goals in 56 games for England between 2001 and 2010. “It has been a dream come true. All of it,” said Cole. “I hope the next two decades are as special as my last 20 years as a professional have been.”

Cole made his West Ham debut aged 17 and became captain four years later. In 2003, he joined Chelsea, with whom he won three Premier League titles and two FA Cups and reached the 2007-08 Champions League final.

He spent seven seasons at Stamford Bridge, playing more than 280 games in all competitions.

“Winning trophies at Chelsea was particularly special for me,” said Cole. “Those memories will live with me forever.”

Cole also won the League Cup and Community Shield with Chelsea. He played at the 2002, 2006 and 2010 World Cups, making his final England appearance at the latter tournament in South Africa. “There are key moments in every professional’s career. One of mine came when I was a young West Ham player,” Cole said. “A senior pro, who was nearing his own retirement, said to me, ‘Enjoy every game, young man. It goes by in the blink of an eye and you’ll miss it badly after it’s gone’.

“He was right. Those words resonate even more now than they did back then. I tried to play and live by his advice every single day because being a professional footballer is an absolute honor.”

(Source: BBC)

## Spurs defender Trippier withdraws from England squad with injury

Tottenham Hotspur full back Kieran Trippier has withdrawn from the England squad for matches against the United States and Croatia due to a groin injury, the Football Association said on Tuesday. Trippier, who scored England’s only goal in the World Cup semi-final defeat by Croatia, picked up the injury in the first half of Tottenham’s 1-0 win over Crystal Palace in the Premier League on Saturday.

The 28-year-old reported for international duty at England’s St. George’s Park facility on Monday but has been sent back to Spurs to continue rehabilitation. England host the U.S. in a friendly on Thursday and Croatia in the Nations League on Sunday.

(Source: Reuters)

## Former Egypt forward Aboutrika handed jail sentence for tax evasion - report

Former Egypt forward Mohamed Aboutrika, one of the country’s most famous sportsmen, has been sentenced to a year in jail on charges of tax evasion, local media reported on Tuesday.

A commercial and financial crimes court in Cairo passed the sentence against Aboutrika in absentia on Monday, the state-run al-Ahram newspaper reported. The court found Aboutrika guilty of evading taxes on earnings of 710,000 Egyptian pounds (\$40,000) for doing advertisements for a soft drinks and a telecoms firm.

The paper said the court ordered the former player who now lives in Qatar to pay 20,000 pounds as a bond to turn the prison term into a suspended sentence.

Aboutrika, 40, played 100 times for Egypt from 2001-13, scoring 38 goals and helping his country win the African Nations Cup in 2006 and 2008.

(Source: Eurosport)

## English FA to cut foreign players in Premier League

In a bid to deal with Brexit and boost the number of homegrown players, the English Football Association (FA) is planning to reduce the number of overseas players in Premier League squads to 12 from 17, the Times newspaper reported on Tuesday.

The proposal, to be put to the clubs this week, would mean significant changes to a number of sides. Thirteen clubs have more than 12 overseas players in their first team squads this season.

The FA did not immediately respond to Reuters’ request for comment. The FA would in return agree to give a governing body endorsement, usually issued for a non-EU/European Economic Area elite player to help the development of football in England, for a work permit for every foreign player who gets a contract with a Premier League club, the report said.

If the clubs fail to reach agreement with the FA on Brexit, they could face a “no-deal” scenario where all EU players would have to fulfill the same criteria that non-EU players do now to get a work permit, the report added.

British Prime Minister Theresa May said on Monday that there were still considerable unresolved issues with the European Union over Brexit as the two sides approached the “endgame” in negotiations for departure from the bloc.

(Source: Mirror)

# Death of Thai boy inflames debate on Muay Thai’s young dreamers

The death of a 13-year-old boy, knocked out during a Thai boxing match, has inflamed debate about whether children should be allowed to take part in a dangerous sport that many of them see as their only chance of escaping poverty.

Anucha Kochana was pronounced dead from a brain haemorrhage on Monday after he was knocked out in a match on the outskirts of Bangkok on Sunday evening.

Thai boxing, or Muay Thai as it is known, is a passion in Thailand with millions of boys dreaming of glory in the ring, and a life of riches, for them and their families, that success can bring.

But the sport is governed by few rules - children of any age can box in an organised match - leaving them at risk of severe injury, or worse, as Anucha’s case has sadly shown.

The boy’s grieving relatives told media they would not press charges over his death.

But legislators appointed by a military government have already been looking to tighten regulations to ban children under the age of 12 from professional bouts.

But the effort is opposed by many in the boxing community. “Those aged 12 to 15 will need to be registered, have the permission of their parents and wear protective gear for professional fights,” General Adulyadej Inthapong, the vice chairman of the National Legislative Assembly’s committee on sports, told Reuters, referring to the proposed law.

Footage of Anucha’s last fight posted on social media shows the boy, without any protective gear, getting punched repeatedly in the head before falling down and banging his head on the mat. Somchart Charoenwatcharawit, president of the Professional Boxing Association of Thailand, said the proposed changes would hurt the livelihood of an estimated 300,000 child boxers under the age of 15.

“The new rule ... will hurt the children and their parents who earn tens of thousands of baht from boxing in what is a national sport,” Somchart said.

He said the referee on Sunday should have stopped the



fight when Anucha looked groggy and the match did not meet his association’s standards.

The association thinks the minimum age for boys taking part in organized bouts should be 10, he said.

Jiraporn Laothamatas, a neuroradiologist and director of the Advanced Diagnostic Imaging Center, has studied the damage that boxing can inflict.

Her research has fuelled the push for change but she says even the proposed minimum age of 12 for competition is a compromise that she disagrees with.

“If I had my way, the minimum age would be 18,” she said, while acknowledging that Muay Thai is an important source of income for many, as well as being culturally important.

(Source: Reuters)

## Serena Williams named GQ Woman of the Year -- but cover sparks controversy



Tennis great Serena Williams has been named GQ’s Woman of the Year -- but the magazine’s cover has caused a stir on social media with many questioning why “Woman” was in quotes.

The 37-year-old, called “The Champion” by the magazine, features in one of four covers of the December issue wearing a black long-sleeve turtleneck leotard.

GQ, which first made women part of its Men of the Year honorees in 2003, included the American alongside actors Michael B Jordan, Henry Golding and Jonah Hill.

In February, Williams told CNN she almost died giving birth to her daughter last year, yet within months she was back training and returned to the sport earlier this year, reaching both the Wimbledon and US Open finals.

Chasing a record-equaling 24th major, Williams lost in both finals, falling to a straight-sets defeat to Angelique Kerber at Wimbledon and a controversial loss to Naomi Osaka at Flushing Meadows, where she was docked a game after calling the umpire a “thief.”

GQ’s cover has sparked controversy on Twitter, however. Many users seemed unaware that the typography was handwritten by designer Virgil Abloh, who uses quotation marks in his work. Abloh collaborated with Williams and Nike for the player’s US Open outfit which featured “Serena” in quotations on her trainers and “Logo” on her tutu dress.

GQ has not immediately responded to CNN, but in response to a Twitter thread Mick Rouse, research manager for GQ, according to his Twitter bio, tweeted: “Because it was handwritten by Virgil Abloh of Off-White, who has styled everything in quotation marks as of late (see Serena’s US Open apparel that he designed).”

Last year, in an open letter on reddit, Williams wrote about being called a man because of her muscular physique, writing: “I’ve been called man because I appeared outwardly strong ... It has been said I don’t belong in women’s sports -- that I belong in men’s -- because I look stronger than many other women do.

(Source: CNN)

## Jonathan Klinsmann called up for United States friendlies vs. England, Italy



Hertha Berlin goalkeeper Jonathan Klinsmann has been called up to the United States squad for the forthcoming friendlies against England and Italy after goalkeeper Zack Steffen and midfielder Darlington Nagbe withdrew from the team with injuries.

Klinsmann, the son of former U.S. head coach and Germany captain Jurgen Klinsmann, holds both German and American citizenship. The 21-year-old had been invited to take part in a Germany goalkeeper training camp in September, but was not included in U.S. caretaker coach Dave Sarachan’s original squad for the prestige friendlies in London and Genk, Belgium respectively.

However, Columbus Crew SC keeper Steffen was ruled out with a hamstring injury suffered in his side’s Eastern Conference semifinal second-leg loss to New York Red Bulls on Sunday, which opened the door for the former California-Berkeley man to get his first senior-level call up.

To celebrate the occasion, Jurgen Klinsmann congratulated his son via Twitter, advising the younger Klinsmann to “have fun!” Jonathan Klinsmann would still be

eligible to play for Germany if he was to make his debut for the United States in one of the friendlies. FIFA rules allow a player to switch allegiances until their first competitive match for a country.

He played every minute of the U.S.’s run to the 2017 Under-20 World Cup quarterfinals in South Korea and earlier that year was named the best goalkeeper at the 2017 CONCACAF U20 championship in Costa Rica.

Having joined Hertha last year, Klinsmann has played in a Europa League match for the senior team but has largely featured for the under-23s in the regional fourth division. He has been part of the senior squad for one Bundesliga and one DFB Pokal match this season.

Jurgen Klinsmann was a member of the 1990 German World Cup winning team as a player and led them to the semifinals as coach in 2006. He was sacked as head coach of the U.S. in 2016 following consecutive losses during the qualifying campaign for the 2018 World Cup.

(Source: ESPN)

## Williams sparks Clippers over Warriors in overtime upset

Lou Williams scored 25 points from the bench as the Los Angeles Clippers upset the league-leading Golden State Warriors 121-116 in a wild overtime thriller at the Staples Center on Monday.

Williams reeled off 10 of his points in overtime to secure victory after the Clippers squandered a 14-point fourth quarter lead before digging in for the win.

The 32-year-old veteran was supported by 23 points from the bench by Montrezl Harrell as the Clippers improved to 8-5 in the Western Conference standings.

The Warriors remain on top of the West after suffering only their third loss of the season. The NBA champions are 11-3 following the defeat.

Kevin Durant led the scoring with 33 points while Klay Thompson had 31, including five three-pointers.

The Warriors had trailed for much of the game, and appeared to be sliding toward a loss before a determined fourth quarter rally transformed the contest.

A Williams three-pointer had put the Clippers ahead by 101-87 with 6min 36 remaining before the Warriors came roaring back. Thompson tied the game at 106-106 with 1:27 left on the clock but neither side were able to take a decisive advantage, sending the game into overtime.

Williams then took over with 10 points as the Clippers completed a morale-boosting victory.

Earlier Monday, the Warriors’ loss was mirrored by a defeat for their Eastern Conference counterparts, the To-



ronto Raptors.

The Raptors suffered only their second defeat of the season in a 126-110 loss to the New Orleans Pelicans in Toronto.

Anthony Davis had 25 points and 20 rebounds to lead a superb all-round offensive performance from the Pelicans, who saw four starters crack double digits.

New Orleans improved to 7-6 with the win, which was another sign the Pelicans are back on track after a six-game losing streak which jolted their early season progress.

- Sending a message -

The Pelicans have now won three straight to move up

in the Western Conference standings.

Davis said New Orleans had been determined to send a message after their six-game slump.

“We just had to get back to it,” Davis said. “We lost five in a row on the road and we’re a better road team than that.

“We just have to be dominant on the road again and this was our next road game, so we had it in our mind.

“It was a good test for us; best team in the East and we’re on the road, so we just made a conscious effort to get this one.”

Davis was given support from across the Pelicans line-up on Monday, with E’Twaun Moore, Jrue Holiday and Julius Randle all making significant scoring contributions.

Moore led the scoring with 30 points while Holiday poured on 29 points with 14 assists to hush the Raptors’ home crowd at the Scotiabank Arena.

The Pelicans defense successfully kept Toronto’s dange-rgemen in check, with Kawhi Leonard and Pascal Siakam restricted to 20 and 22 points, respectively.

Point guard Kyle Lowry was held to just four points from 33 minutes on court as the Raptors fell to 12-2.

Elsewhere Monday, the Philadelphia 76ers celebrated the capture of Jimmy Butler with a 124-114 win over the Miami Heat.

Butler, who completed his acrimonious trade from the Minnesota Timberwolves earlier Monday, is not expected to make his first appearance for the Sixers until Wednesday.

(Source: AFP)



# Iran could host 2022 World Cup teams, but no decision taken yet

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Qatar is considering offers from other countries to host teams during the 2022 World Cup, but no decision has been taken yet, the head of the organizing committee told AFP on Monday.

Iran has recently offered to host teams who will play in tiny Qatar in the World Cup which starts in just over four years time.

When asked whether teams could be based in Iran, chief organizer Hassan Al Thawadi said Qatar had received “numerous proposals from countries with regard to hosting teams” around the time of the tournament.

“This is part of the operational plan, but obviously it will have to be done with FIFA,” he said. “Nothing is decided on this matter yet and it remains under discussion.”

Any move to accept Iran’s offer would provide a major boost for Iran at a time when the U.S. is trying to isolate the country internationally.

Asked about whether Qatar was prepared to increase the number of teams at the Qatar World Cup to 48, as mooted by FIFA, Al Thawadi said he was still planning for the usual figure of 32.

“Our preparations right now are for 32 teams, the current format. All the preparations are ongoing based on that,” he said.

“There’s a feasibility study undertaken right now for a 48-team competition and then a decision will be taken both by FIFA and ourselves as a host nation,” he added.

Accommodating another 16 teams would vastly complicate Qatar’s task in preparing for the World Cup, which was awarded to the tiny desert state in 2010.

FIFA president Gianni Infantino last week all but wrote off the chances of a 48-team tournament in 2022, saying it would be “a difficult challenge”.



## Foolad Arena inaugurated by Iran’s sports minister

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — The inauguration ceremony of Foolad Arena was attended by Iran’s Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Masoud Soltanifar and First Vice President Eshaq Jahangiri on Tuesday.

The 30,000-seat stadium, located northeast of Ahvaz, has been constructed at a cost of one million dollars.

From now on, Foolad’s home matches will be played at the 22-hectare stadium.

Foolad Arena will be inaugurated in January 2019 in the match against Persepolis in Iran Professional League.

“We are very happy to participate in an inauguration ceremony of a classy stadium. Now, Ahvaz city has two

modern stadiums, namely Ghadir and Foolad Arena. We can host the international events in the stadiums as we hosted the final match of the AFC Champions League in Tehran’s Azadi Stadium between Persepolis and Kashima Antlers,” Soltanifar said.

Foolad Arena includes 30,000 and 5,000 capacity football stadiums, training camp, futsal arena, volleyball and basketball halls and two pools which one of them opened in 2012.

The project includes cafeterias, restrooms, including access for the handicapped, press area, convention center, and a trophy room.

## Karim Moghadam confirmed as new Iraq beach soccer coach



The Iraq Football Association has confirmed the appointment of Iranian Karim Moghadam as the new coach of the Iraq National Beach Soccer Team.

Mr Moghadam is a very experienced coach, and takes the reigns of the Iraq team after coaching Lebanon’s National Beach Soccer Team for over three years.

Before that, his previous positions included coaching the Kuwait National Beach Soccer Team, the Philippines National Team, as well as several roles within the sport in his home country of Iran.

“I am very glad to start working with the Iraqi Football Federation”, Moghaddam told Beach Soccer Worldwide.

“I had been offered positions by four Asian and North American countries, but eventually I chose Iraq because I know Iraqi players have a great potential for success in beach soccer.”

The new coach also offered words of

confidence when asked about his future ambitions with the team.

“Using my 15-years of experience in beach soccer, I plan to build a powerful team in Iraq.”

In four months’ time, and with support of Iraq Football Federation, we can achieve very good results in the FIFA World Cup 2019 Qualification in Thailand.”

Using his significant experience and expertise, Karim Moghadam has high hopes of what he can do with the talent that the Iraqi beach soccer squad has to offer.

“I have been working as a head coach and developing beach soccer in Iran, Lebanon and Kuwait since 2003.

“Although there is not much time left, I will try to get the best results with the Iraqi national team by choosing the best players and training with new tactics,” Moghadam added.

(Source: beachsoccer.com)

## Korea Republic coach Bento giving hopefuls a chance



Several players are being given the opportunity to show their credentials as Korea Republic head coach Paulo Bento prepares to finalise his squad for the AFC Asian Cup UAE 2019.

The likes of Tottenham Hotspur forward Son Heung-min and Newcastle United midfielder Ki Sung-yueng were not called up for the friendlies against Australia (Saturday) and Uzbekistan (November 20).

Hamburg SV forward Hwang Hee-chan withdrew from the squad due to an injury on Tuesday, joining right-back Kim Moon-hwan on the sidelines.

Bento, however, was unperturbed that he will be missing several key players for the first friendlies of his reign on foreign soil.

“Before we finalise our roster for the Asian Cup, I want to test three new players and others who haven’t played much for the national team,” said Bento to local media.

“We’ll test new players and will let them

understand what our style of play is like,” he said. “The players are working hard, so we’ll help each other to try to make one team.”

Besides calling up squad regulars Lee Chung-yong of VfL Bochum and Koo Ja-cheol of FC Augsburg, Bento will also be trying out Na Sang-ho, Lee You-hyeon and Kim Jung-min - who have been selected for the first time.

Bento, who has guided Korea Republic to two wins and two draws in four matches since assuming the head coach post in August, is also looking forward to playing away.

“I think it’s going to be a good opportunity for us to grow,” Bento said. “It will give us good experience because we are going to have more away matches in the future.”

Korea Republic, who are in Group C at the AFC Asian Cup UAE 2019 with China PR, Philippines and Kyrgyz Republic, are seeking their first Continental title - having won their last of two in 1960.

(Source: the-afc)

## Lindelof beats Zlatan Ibrahimovic to Sweden’s top footballer award

Manchester United defender Victor Lindelof has been named Sweden’s top footballer in 2018, with 10-time winner Zlatan Ibrahimovic missing out on the award for the second year running.

Lindelof was awarded the Golden Ball trophy during a ceremony in Stockholm on Monday evening after helping Sweden reach the World Cup quarterfinals and establishing himself as a regular at United.

It’s the second year in a row that the player-of-the-year award goes to a center-back, with Andreas Granqvist winning in 2017, ending a run of Ibrahimovic winning 10 times in succession.

“It means a lot to me, I’m incredibly proud,” Lindelof told newspaper Aftonbladet, which awards the prize. “It’s an award that I grew up with and watched on TV when Zlatan stood there year after year. It’s huge, and it’s still hard to comprehend.”

Lindelof was one of Sweden’s best players in Russia but has often faced criticism for his performances at United. However, he has been praised after recent



games, especially the two Champions League matches against Juventus.

And he said working with Jose Mourinho has helped him improve since arriving at Old Trafford last year.

“He’s very good at almost everything. He gives me advice on how to think, how to judge different situations, and gives me confidence,” Lindelof said. “Ever since I arrived he’s told me I should do my thing, that’s why I’m here.”

“It’s been going well, but I know I can do more. Especially when we have the ball, I want to show even more what I can do, because in that aspect people have only seen 50 percent of my capacity. Mourinho is pushing me to believe in myself.”

At 24, Lindelof is still relatively young for a center-back and said he still has plenty of areas to develop over the next five years.

“I want to reach the very highest level,” he said. “I still have a long way to go before I am where I want to be. I especially want to develop my leadership abilities and turn that into one my main strengths.”

(Source: Soccernet)

## AFC warns Iran over government interference

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) is closely monitoring the current issues faced by the Football Federation Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) with regard to the announcement of a Law by the Republic Parliament designating the FFIRI as a Non Government public body and prohibiting the engagement of retired personnel.

The FFIRI stresses that it is a Non Governmental Organization and the AFC state that all Member Associations must fulfil their duties without any third party interference either from the Government or the Parliament.

The AFC is closely working with the FFIRI, whose current board was elected for four years in May 2016, to prevent any outside interference.

The AFC has a zero tolerance policy towards any third party interference in their Member Associations and hopes that, with less than two months to the AFC Asian Cup UAE 2019, the FFIRI can maintain its independence and avoid any sanctions.

(Source: theafcub)



## Iran football players deactivate Instagram accounts

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Players and coaching staff of Iran national football team have deactivated their Instagram profiles on Monday.

They have deactivated their Instagram accounts over lack of facilities in a well-coordinated action.

Team Melli, who have been scheduled to meet Trinidad and Tobago on Thursday in a friendly match, have started their preparation on Sunday for the 2019 AFC Asian Cup.

Iran have been drawn along with Yemen, Iraq and Vietnam in Group D of the AFC Asian Cup.

Team Melli have not won the title for 42 years.

## Iran into 2020 Women’s Olympic Football Tournament Qualifiers Round 2

**TEHRAN** — Iran was held to a 1-1 draw by Hong Kong at the 2020 Women’s Olympic Football Tournament Qualifiers Round 1 but advanced to the second round.

Hong Kong scored in the 15th minute but Hajar Dabbaghi equalized the match one minute into the second half.

The Iranian team started the campaign in Chonburi, Thailand with an 8-0 win over Lebanon in Group B and then drew 1-1 with Hong Kong to win the group.

The four group winners and runners-up, and two best third-placed teams, will join Uzbekistan and Vietnam in the second round of qualifiers to be held next April, with the final eight teams - including Australia, China PR, DPR Korea, Korea Republic and Thailand - to compete in early 2020 for the two available slots at the Games.

As host of the Tokyo Olympics, 2018 AFC Women’s Asian Cup winners Japan will qualify automatically for the 2020 Finals.

(Source: the-afc)

## Iran skiers bag gold, bronze at World Para Alpine

**IRNA** — Iranian skiers earned a gold and a bronze medal at World Para Alpine Skiing which was held in the UAE.

Sadeq Kalhor in a tough competition against Japanese rival bagged a gold medal.

Meanwhile, Javad Solghani ranked third and snatched a bronze medal.

New Zealander rival ranked second and received a bronze medal.

The World Para Alpine Skiing was held with the attendance of 9 countries in the UAE.

Paralympic alpine skiing is an adaptation of alpine skiing for athletes with a disability. The sport evolved from the efforts of disabled veterans in Germany and Austria during and after the Second World War. The sport is governed by the International Paralympic Committee Sports Committee.

## Former Sri Lanka player Lokuhettige charged

Former Sri Lanka international Dilhara Lokuhettige has been charged under an anti-corruption code relating to a 10-over league in the United Arab Emirates last year, the International Cricket Council (ICC) said on Tuesday.

The 38-year-old, who played nine one-dayers and two Twenty20 internationals for Sri Lanka, has been charged with three counts of breaching the anti-corruption code of the Emirates Cricket Board (ECB), the global governing body said.

“Mr Lokuhettige has been provisionally suspended with immediate effect,” the ICC said in a statement.

Lokuhettige had 14 days to respond to the charges, it added.

The charges against the bowling all-rounder include being party to an effort to fix the result or progress of a match, and directly soliciting, inducing, enticing or encouraging a player to do the same.

Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) has been grappling with a series of corruption cases and Lokuhettige is the latest name to be added to the list of those involved.

Former paceman and bowling coach Nuwan Zoysa was provisionally suspended on Oct. 31 after being charged by the ICC with match-fixing.

Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) promptly sent Zoysa on “compulsory leave”.

Former captain Sanath Jayasuriya was last month charged with two counts of breaching the ICC’s anti-corruption code He denied any wrongdoing.

(Source: Reuters)



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Met exhibit puts focus on decorative techniques in oriental manuscripts

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** – The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City is organizing an exhibition focusing on the decorative techniques used in manuscripts from Iran, Ottoman Turkey, and Mughal and Deccani India, the museum has announced.



A page from a Persian manuscript on display in "Clouds and Gold Dust: Decorated Papers from the Ettinghausen Collection", an exhibition underway at Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

The manuscripts have been selected from a collection accumulated by the German-American historian of Islamic art, Richard Ettinghausen. The exhibition titled "Clouds and Gold Dust: Decorated Papers from the Ettinghausen Collection" opened on October 29 and will run through March 24, 2019. "One of the distinctive features of manuscripts from Iran, Ottoman Turkey, and Mughal and Deccani India is the frequent use of decorative techniques on the borders and even on the written surface of the book's pages," the organizers wrote in a statement for the showcase. The collection "presents works on paper, enhanced with marbling, gold sprinkling, stenciled designs, and decoupage, alone or in combination with one

another or with illumination. "Ranging from the fifteenth to the twentieth century, the thirty-three folios on view reveal an endless variety of patterns and embellishments, surrounding elegantly penned poetic verses and, eventually, forming freestanding images."

Silent cinema and empty seats at Vienna's Breitenseer Lichtspiele

**VIENNA (Reuters)** — Cinema buffs familiar with movie theaters in Los Angeles, Cannes and Berlin do not necessarily link their passion with Austria's capital Vienna. But in a quiet suburb of the imperial city one of the world's oldest cinemas has been running since 1909 on a shoe-string budget. Its license dates back to 1905, when founder Anna Nitsch-Fitz first started showing moving pictures in a tent.

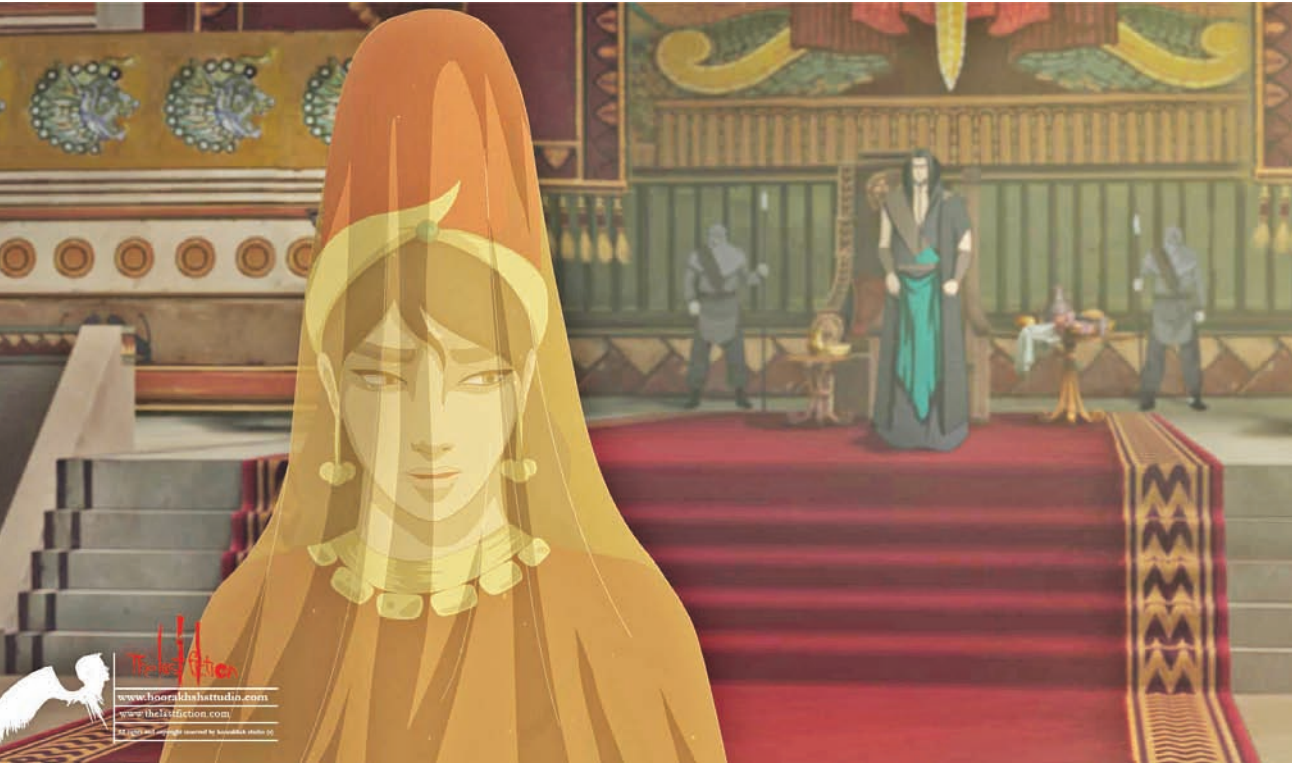


A general view of the building housing Breitenseer Lichtspiele cinema in Vienna, Austria, October 11, 2018. (Reuters/Lisi Niesner)

Vienna's Breitenseer Lichtspiele cinema was the place to go to watch silent movie classics such as "A Woman of Affairs" with Greta Garbo in the 1920s. It got its first sound system in 1930. Over the years, the cinema's technical equipment has been updated several times but Nitsch-Fitz, an 80-year-old who has been running the business for 48 years, never earned enough to switch to a digital movie system. The former teacher would have had to close the cinema long ago were it not for a small cultural grant from the state and if she had not put in a good cut of her pension. She invested in DVD and Blu-ray players and in a digital beamer and borrows films from small, independent distributors instead of the expensive big ones. She also still uses the old 35 mm projector to show silent movies. People keen on old Laurel & Hardy movies, Karl May's Winnetou westerns or kids' classics from the 1970s can indulge their passion at the Breitenseer Strasse. They have a good chance to have the cinema all to themselves as the old interior and the program selection do not attract too many visitors. "I have been coming here for over 30 years once or twice a month," said visitor Axel Walde, 47. He said he always came alone as most of his friends were not interested. "I prefer old movie theaters, they are quaint." Nitsch-Fitz plans to run the cinema for two more years, to celebrate her 50th anniversary, and wants to hand over to her niece afterwards. "But she only wants to take over if I manage to break even," she said. "So I am gonna have to put in a lot of effort for the next two years." Nitsch-Fitz's endurance and devotion is appreciated by many local artists who support her. A cult film event with singer-song-writer Voodoo Juergens next Saturday is completely sold out.

“The Last Fiction” stands first at Peruvian filmfest

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Acclaimed animated movie "The Last Fiction" by Iranian director Ashkan Rahgozar was picked as best film at the 3rd Ajayu International Animation Festival in Puno, Peru, the organizers announced on Saturday. The movie received the award "for its technical quality, original script, and great ability for interpreting the mythology of the region in a fantastic way," the festival jury said in its statement. The film is based on a story from the Shahnameh, the epic masterpiece of the Persian poet Ferdowsi. It is about Zahak's treacherous rise to the throne in Jamshid in Persia. The young and naive hero Afaridoun wants to save the kingdom and its people from darkness. But he must first conquer his own demons in this portrayal of Persian mythology that reveals human nature. Earlier in October, "The Last Fiction" won the Cocomics Music Prize at the 20th Bucheon International Animation Film Festival in South Korea. The Ajayu Grand Prize went to "Tweet-tweet" by Zhanna Bekmambetova from Russia, while the award for best international short film was presented to "Nuit cherie" by Lia Bertels from Belgium. "She" co-directed by Brenda Lucia Bascosnes Cornejo and Alessio del Pozo Temoche was selected as best national animation.



A poster for "The Last Fiction" by Ashkan Rahgozar.

Musical instruments showcased at Tehran exhibit



People visit an exhibition of musical instruments at the Momayyez Hall of the Iranian Artists Forum in Tehran on November 12, 2018. (Honaronline/Sara Sassani)

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** – A large collection of musical instruments are on display in an exhibition that opened at the Iranian Artists Forum in Tehran on Monday evening. Dariush Alanjari is the curator of the exhibition organized by the House of Music. "It is appropriate that we remember the living honor of Iranian music, Mohammadreza Shajarian, who earlier organized two exhibitions of the same kind," House of Music director Hamidreza Nurbakhsh said at the opening ceremony of the exhibit. "In our annual visits to Iranian cities, we become familiar with numerous instrument makers who possess a great deal

of talent, and whose capabilities should be acknowledged," he added. Alanjari, who is also a member of the board of directors at the Instrument Makers Center at the House of Music, also delivered a speech. "The main aim of the exhibition is to bring together instrument makers in a place that provides an opportunity for them to share their experiences and feelings," he said. He also expressed his hopes that the center would organize similar events in other countries. The instruments will be on view at the Momayyez Hall of the Iranian Artists Forum until Friday.

Photos, docs display 73 years of ties between Iran, UN at Tabriz exhibit



UNIC director Maria Dotsenko and a number of East Azarbaijan provincial officials visit an exhibition of photos and documents on 73 years of relations between Iran and the United Nations at the 22 Bahman Cineplex on November 12, 2018. (IRNA)

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** – An exhibition of photos and documents featuring major events occurring over 73 years of relations between Iran and the United Nations opened Monday at a gallery in the northwestern Iranian city of Tabriz. Maria Dotsenko, director of the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Tehran, and a number of East Azarbaijan provincial officials attended the opening ceremony of the showcase, the Persian service of IRNA reported on Tuesday. Dotsenko expressed her thanks to Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs

and IRNA for supporting the UNIC to organize the exhibition. She acknowledged the contributions made by experienced Iranian diplomats over these years to strengthen relations between the UN and Iran, and said that, as a result to date, nine persons have served as UN secretary-general, seven of whom visited Iran. One of the photos on display at the exhibition shows Iranian representative Hassan Taqizadeh signing the Charter of the United Nations on July 26, 1945. The exhibition will run at the gallery of the 22 Bahman Cineplex until November 18.

Stan Lee, creator of Spider-Man and other Marvel superheroes, dead at 95

**LOS ANGELES (Reuters)** — Stan Lee, who dreamed up Spider-Man, Iron Man, the Hulk, Black Panther and a cavalcade of other Marvel Comics superheroes that became mythic figures in pop culture with soaring success at the movie box office, died at the age of 95, his daughter said on Monday. As a writer and editor, Lee was key to the ascension of Marvel into a comic book titan in the 1960s when, in collaboration with artists such as Jack Kirby and Steve Ditko, he created superheroes who would enthrall generations of young readers. "He felt an obligation to his fans to keep creating," his daughter J.C. Lee said in a statement to Reuters. "He loved his life and he loved what he did for a living. His family loved him and his fans loved him. He was irreplaceable." She did not mention the circumstances of Lee's death but the celebrity news website TMZ said an ambulance was called to his Hollywood Hills home early Monday and that he died at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. "Stan Lee was as extraordinary as the characters he created," Bob Iger, Chairman and CEO of The Walt Disney Co (DIS.N), said in a statement. "The scale of his imagination was only exceeded by the size of his heart." Disney bought Marvel Entertainment in 2009 for \$4 billion to expand Disney's roster of characters, with the most iconic ones having been Lee's handiwork. Lee was known for his cameo roles in most Marvel films, pulling a girl away from falling debris in 2002's "Spider-Man" and serving as an emcee at a strip club in 2016's "Deadpool". In the 2018 box-office hit "Black Panther", which featured Lee's leading black

superhero, he was a casino patron. "There will never be another Stan Lee," said Chris Evans, who starred as Captain America in Marvel movies. "For decades he provided both young and old with adventure, escape, comfort, confidence, inspiration, strength, friendship and joy." Americans were familiar with superheroes before Lee, in part thanks to the 1938 launch of Superman by Detective Comics, the company that would become DC Comics, Marvel's archrival. Lee was widely credited with adding a new layer of complexity and humanity to superheroes. His characters were not made of stone - even if they appeared to have been chiseled from granite. They had love and money worries and endured tragic flaws or feelings of insecurity. ■ **Characters weren't just super** "I felt it would be fun to learn a little about their private lives, about their personalities and show that they are human as well as super," Lee told NPR News in 2010. He had help in designing the superheroes but he took full ownership of promoting them. His creations included web-slinging teenager Spider-Man, the muscle-bound Hulk, mutant outsiders The X-Men, the close-knit Fantastic Four and the playboy-inventor Tony Stark, better known as Iron Man. Dozens of Marvel Comics movies, with nearly all the major characters Lee created, were produced in the first decades of the 21st century, grossing more than \$20 billion at theaters worldwide, according to box office analysts. The website Box Office Mojo said "Black Panther" had a worldwide gross of \$1.34 billion.



Marvel Comics co-creator Stan Lee shows his hands after placing them in cement during a ceremony in the forecourt of the TCL Chinese theater in Los Angeles, California, U.S., July 18, 2017. (Reuters/Mario Anzuoni)

Spider-Man is one of the most successfully licensed characters ever and he has soared through the New York skyline as a giant inflatable in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Lee, as a hired hand at Marvel, received limited payback on the windfall from his characters. In a 1998 contract, he wrestled a clause for 10 percent of profits from movies and TV shows with Marvel characters. In 2002, he sued to claim his share, months after "Spider-Man" conquered movie theaters. In a legal settlement three years later, he received a \$10 million one-time payment. Hollywood studios made superheroes the cornerstone of their strategy of producing fewer films and relying on big profits from blockbusters. Some people assumed that, as a result, Lee's wealth had soared. He disputed that. "I don't have \$200 million. I don't have \$150 million. I don't have \$100 million or

anywhere near that," Lee told Playboy magazine in 2014. Having grown up in the Great Depression, Lee added that he was "happy enough to get a nice paycheck and be treated well." In 2008, Lee was awarded the National Medal of Arts, the highest government award for creative artists. ■ **Uncle's help** Lee was born as Stanley Martin Lieber in New York on Dec. 28, 1922, the son of Jewish immigrants from Romania. At age 17, he became an errand boy at Timely Comics, the company that would evolve into Marvel. He got the job with help from an inside connection, his uncle, according to Lee's autobiography "Excelsior!" Lee soon earned writing duties and promotions. He penned Western stories and romances, as well as superhero tales, and often wrote standing on the porch of the Long Island, New York, home he shared with his wife, actress Joan Lee, whom he married in 1947. She died in 2017. The couple had two children, Joan Celia born in 1950 and Jan Lee who died within three days of her birth in 1953. In 1961, Lee's boss saw a rival publisher's success with caped crusaders and told Lee to dream up a superhero team. At the time, Lee felt comics were a dead-end career. But his wife urged him to give it one more shot and create the complex characters he wanted to, even if it led to his firing. The result was the Fantastic Four. There was stretchable Mr. Fantastic, his future wife Invisible Woman, her brother the Human Torch and strongman The Thing. They were like a devoted but dysfunctional family.