



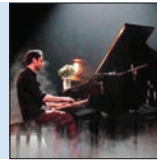
Anti-Iran sanctions will harm U.S., allies in future: advisor **3**



The self-destruction of American power **13**



Persepolis win Iran's Super Cup **15**



Russian pianist Evgeny Grinko to give concert in Tehran **16**

Oil tankers incident in tandem with U.S. sanctions



Iran, Russia take new steps for expansion of trade ties

TEHRAN — The 15th Iran-Russia Joint Economic Committee meeting and the second Iran-North Caucasus trade conference started on Sunday in Tehran, IRNA reported.

Officials from both sides including Minister of North Caucasus Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergei Chebotarev, Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian, Russia Ambassador to Tehran Levan Dzhagaryan, Iranian Ambassador to Moscow Mehdi

Sanaie, and Russian Commercial Attaché in Iran Rustam Zhiganshin are attending the events along with entrepreneurs and businessmen from the two sides.

■ Growing economic ties

Speaking in the opening ceremony of the 15th Iran-Russia Joint Economic Committee meeting, Ardakanian emphasized the fact that the relations between Iran and Russia have been growing significantly in recent years. **→ 4**

Tehran sets to release details on limiting nuclear commitments

TEHRAN — Following Tehran's decision to counter the United States' unilateral withdrawal from the nuclear deal in May 2018, Iran on Monday will announce its latest measures to limit its commitments under deal with world powers.

The briefing will be held at the Arak heavy water reactor facility.

According to a report by Tasnim news agency, the Atomic Energy Or-

ganization of Iran has invited over 70 press representatives to the Arak nuclear facility for Monday, where "very important information" on increasing the country's enriched uranium stockpile will be announced.

The report added that Tehran will also announce its measures to prepare for a second phase of limiting commitments that is to begin in a few weeks. **→ 2**

Russia & EU keen on switching to national currencies for mutual trade

TEHRAN — Banks based in several states are planning to participate in the Russian-developed money transfer network that serves as an alternative to the traditional SWIFT system, according to the head of the Central Bank of Russia (CBR).

"It is open for external connection, we

are developing it for our trade partners if they want to join. This work is already ongoing and banks of several countries are going to join, test connections already exist," Elvira Nabiullina said at the first EU-Russia Student Conference in Moscow on Saturday. "We think it will be developing," RT reported. **→ 13**

U.S. is the obvious benefactor of attacks in Oman Sea: Cartalucci

By Payman Yazdani

TEHRAN (MNA) — Referring to US policy papers, Bangkok-based geopolitical expert says familiar pattern by the US to rush to conclusions before any investigation makes the US and its allies the prime suspects of attacks in Oman Sea, not Iran.

While the Japanese Prime Minister was visiting Iran after 4 decades and many expected even more reduction of the tensions in the region due his visit, in another suspicious and provocative move two large tankers were hit by explosions in the Sea of Oman on Thursday, a move that can intensify the tensions more than before.

Following the attack, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo hastily accused Iran of carrying out the attacks without providing any evidence to back up his accusation.

In this regard, Iran rejected US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's anti-Iran accusations, saying the suspicious nature of the recent attacks on two oil tankers in the Sea of Oman is "not funny or ridiculous but alarming".

To shed more light on the issue, an interview was done with Bangkok-based geopolitical researcher Anthony Cartalucci.

Following is the full text of the interview:

The US administration has hastily accused Iran of being behind the attacks on two oil tankers in Oman Sea. How do you assess validity of the accusations?

As the US has done before with now verified fabrications, it has hastily - and without any evidence or investigation - accused Iran of being behind these attacks. It did so within the same day of the attacks. So of course, there is no validity

to the accusations. Even a local crime committed within the United States cannot be "solved" in a single day and without any sort of investigation, so how could an incident as serious as this be somehow solved without an investigation or evidence so quickly?

The US reveals its hand by quickly accusing Iran before any sort of independent investigation can be mounted. We've seen this pattern before in Iraq in 2003 where the rush to war was made before inspectors could confirm US claims of "weapons of mass destruction" in Iraq. We also saw the US did this last year in Syria where it quickly accused the Syrian government of a "sarin chemical attack" in Douma before carrying out military strikes - all done before the OPCW could even begin its investigation - which by the way, concluded claims of sarin gas were false. **→ 7**

Tehran exhibit to take visitors on cultural tour of Nordic countries

By Manijeh Rezapoor

TEHRAN — Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland will provide a golden opportunity in Tehran to introduce Nordic culture during an exhibition opening at the Iranian Artists Forum (IAF) on Friday.

A collection of artworks, movies, architectural designs and aspects of the countries' literature will be showcased at the exhibition named "Traces of the North, Nordic Days in Tehran", the ambassadors of the countries announced during a press conference on Sunday.

The five-day exhibition will hang photos of natural attractions of Norway and

also screen the short movies "Odd Is an Egg" directed by Kristin Ulseth and "The World's Middlest Fish" by Cathinka Tanberg, Norwegian Ambassador Lars Nordrum said.

"The exhibit consists of 56 photos, which will take visitors on 18 Norwegian scenic routes," he added.

"The photos show the dramatic variety in Norwegian nature, including snow-covered peaks and mountaintops, deep fjords, northern lights and the midnight sun," he stated.

Finnish Ambassador Keijo Norvanto on his part explained that his country is partic-

ipating in the cultural event with a poster exhibition by Finnish graphic designer Erik Bruun.

Bruun has designed a numerous amount of logotypes, brand guidelines, posters, books, stamps and even Finnish banknotes. His posters, postcards and stamps mainly describe the natural beauty of Finland.

The exhibition will also display a collection of innovative home designs from Finland.

"The exhibition conveys a picture of Finland as a creative modern society looking towards the future. It shows various segments of industry and reflects the way of life in Finland," the ambassador added. **→ 16**

PERSPECTIVE

Hanif Ghaffari

Political analyst

The meaning behind Trump's March polling

Polls taken by independent organizations inside the United States indicate that popularity of Donald Trump has substantially declined over the last few months. Even though Trump himself denies these statistics, the polls taken inside his presidential campaign indicate that presidential approval ratings of Donald Trump has significantly dropped.

The poll clearly reveals that in U.S. 2020 presidential elections, Trump will almost certainly lose against democratic front-runner, Joe Biden.

The internal poll was conducted by Donald Trump's own reelection campaign and the results were published in ABC news.

The internal polling showed that Trump was far behind Joe Biden in key battleground states.

The data revealed Biden had a double-digit 55 percent to 39 percent lead in Pennsylvania, a 51-41 percent lead in Wisconsin and a 7 point lead in Florida. Trump was shown to be ahead by only 2 points in Texas, which has a strong Republican base.

This news is especially groundbreaking because Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Florida were the three key states where Trump beat Hillary Clinton in 2016 elections.

The poll was conducted between March 15 and March 28, but the results were published recently.

After the publication of these results, the top members of Trump presidential campaign claimed that the polls have been improved in favor of Trump since March.

However, the new poll taken by Quinnipiac University and other American organizations shows that he has lost even more state votes.

For example, the internal poll of Donald Trump's reelection campaign showed that Trump was ahead of Biden by 2 points, but the more recent poll taken by Quinnipiac University revealed that he is now 4 points behind Biden.

In this poll, Biden secured 48 and Trump 44 percent of the whole votes.

The most important thing here is that in all these polls, American citizens were almost satisfied with their country's economic situation over Trump's presidency, but they were highly unhappy with his foreign policy. **→ 13**

ARTICLE

Ebrahim Fallahi

Tehran Times journalist

Oil market should expect oversupply in 2020, IEA says

In its latest monthly oil market report called "2020 vision", the International Energy Agency (IEA) said the "relentless" growth in U.S. production is going to significantly disrupt the supply and demand balance in the global oil market.

The IEA report sees the U.S. accounting for 90 percent of the growth in the supply side of the oil market in 2019, and also having the greatest share of the 2.3-million-barrels growth in 2020.

■ Disruption of supply-demand balance

As one of the major sources of information and insight for the oil traders, the recent IEA report raised some red flags for both supply and demand side of the oil market.

A significant slowdown of the oil demand in the current year added up by the increase in the supply from non-OPEC countries, especially the United States is indicating that the market should once again expect oversupply in the year to come.

In the report, IEA cut the global oil demand growth in 2019 for a second consecutive month. The agency estimates the oil demand at 1.2 million barrels per day (mb/d).

Supply growth from the Non-OPEC nations is also seen to accelerate from 1.9 mb/d this year to 2.3 mb/d in 2020, mostly coming from the U.S. shale producers.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration expects annual average U.S. oil production to grow 1.4 million barrels a day this year. And the country's daily oil production is expected to reach nearly 13 million barrels by the end of 2019.

■ OPEC cuts vs. U.S. supplies

While OPEC member states and some non-OPEC countries are trying to keep their production at a certain level by cutting their output, U.S. oil producers, mostly owned by the private sector, have no obligation to adhere to production cutbacks and are unconstrained in production growth.

OPEC and its allies including Russia have agreed to cut their production by 1.2 million barrels per day as from January, however the question of "how long to keep on cutting output facing the surge in U.S. production", has been haunting the OPEC+ efforts since the deal was reached. **→ 4**



Iran ease past Russia at VNL

TEHRAN — Iran overpowered Russia in three sets in the third match of week three of the 2019 Volleyball Nations League on Sunday.

Team Melli, who had defeated Canada (3-0) and Poland (3-2) in their first two matches, beat the defending champions in straight sets (25-20, 26-24, 25-23) at the Ghadir Hall in Urmia, West Azarbaijan province.

Iran extended their winning run at the third competition week of the men's 2019 FIVB Volleyball Nations League to eight matches as Igor Kolakovic's team had already seized seven wins against Italy, Germany, China, Argentina, Japan, Canada and Poland.

Iran just lost to Brazil 3-2 in week 2. Amir Ghafour was Iran's top scorer with 17.

Zarif hails ‘excellent meetings’ in Rouhani’s regional tour

POLITICAL **TEHRAN (Tasnim)** – Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif highlighted Iran’s “active diplomacy”, saying President Hassan Rouhani had “excellent meetings” with his Tajik and Turkish counterparts as well as the Emir of Qatar and other leaders during visits to Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.



“#Iran’s active diplomacy continues: Excellent meetings bet. President @HassanRouhani & presidents of Tajikistan & Turkey and Emir of Qatar in Dushanbe,” Zarif said on his official Twitter account on Saturday night.

“Productive talks also held with Pres. & Chief Executive of Afghanistan. I had useful mtg w/ new FM of India. #NeighborsFirst,” he added in his tweet.

Rouhani also held separate meetings with his Russian and Chinese counterparts, Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the 19th Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit in Kyrgyzstan on Friday.

The summit was held on June 13-14 with leaders of 11 countries, including Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India, Pakistan and Iran in attendance.

Rouhani also paid an official visit to the Tajik capital of Dushanbe on the second leg of his trip to attend the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA).

CICA is an inter-governmental forum for enhancing cooperation towards promoting peace, security, and stability in Asia.

Bernie Sanders warns against Trump’s ‘pretext for war’ with Iran

(Press TV) – U.S. Democratic presidential hopeful Bernie Sanders has slammed Washington’s attempt to blame Iran for purported attacks on oil tanker vessels in the Sea of Oman, warning that the move is aimed at generating a “pretext for war.”

“The Gulf of Oman incident must not be used as a pretext for war with Iran,” said Sanders on Twitter, insisting that any military action on Iran would not only be illegal, but “an unmitigated disaster for the United States, Iran, the region, and the world.”

The development came as officials from multiple countries, the United Nations as well as one of the owners of the ships struck in the recent incidents have discounted or contradicted Washington’s claim accusing Iran of staging the attacks.



Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) delivers remarks at a campaign function in the Marvin Center at George Washington University on June 12, 2019 in Washington, DC. (Photo by AFP)

While it remained unclear what exactly happened to the ships, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo claimed on Thursday that Iran had carried out the attacks on the two tanker vessels without offering any evidence. U.S. client states in the Persian Gulf as well as the UK also followed suit the next day.

Moreover, the U.S. military further published a blurry video clip on Friday with Pentagon officials claiming that it proves commandos of Iran’s Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) had planted explosives on one of the ships. The footage, however, proved not very convincing to authorities of other countries and organizations.

■ Japanese ship owner contradicts U.S. version of attack

Yutaka Katada, the owner of the Japanese tanker attacked near the Strait of Hormuz, however, offered a different account of the attack on Friday, saying that the Filipino crew of the Kokuka Courageous believed that their vessel had been hit by flying objects rather than a mine.

“The crew were than a mine. They say something came flying towards them, then there was an explosion, then there was a hole in the vessel,” he told reporters. “Then some crew witnessed a second shot.”

Further contradicting the U.S. version of events, Katada added: “To put a bomb on the side is not something we are thinking. If it’s between an explosion and a penetrating bullet, I have a feeling it is a penetrating bullet. If it was an explosion, there would be damage in different places, but this is just an assumption or a guess.”

■ “Not enough” to prove Iran’s guilt

On Thursday, company officials said the vessel had first been hit by what appeared to be an artillery shell toward the stern, causing a fire in the engine room that was extinguished.

Three hours later, the ship was again attacked on the same side in the center of the hull, at which point the captain felt it was no longer safe and ordered the crew to take to the life boats, officials said.

“When the shell hit, it was above the water surface by quite a lot,” Katada further underlined on Friday. “Because of that there is no doubt that it wasn’t a torpedo.”

German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas, who recently visited Tehran to meet with his Iranian counterpart, Javad Zarif, emphasized that the video was “not enough” to prove Iran’s guilt.

Tehran, meanwhile, categorically denied any involvement in the suspicious incidents, with Zarif pointing to the odd timing of the alleged attacks and accusing Washington of moving to “Plan B: Sabotage diplomacy” in a bid to “cover up its economic terrorism” against the Islamic Republic.

Tehran sets to release details on limiting nuclear commitments

1 → On May 8, exactly one year after U.S. President Donald Trump quit the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Iran adopted a countermeasure announcing its decision to abandon limits on its uranium enrichment stockpile unless Europe makes a decision within 60 days to shield it from the U.S. sanctions.

After walking away from the landmark nuclear deal a year ago, Trump imposed strict sanctions that squeezed Iran’s economy, triggered a currency collapse and ushered in shortages of consumer goods. The JCPOA had lifted previous sanctions on Iran and forbade any new ones as long as Iran complied with the deal.

Iran’s appeal was addressed to European signatories to the agreement, which are struggling to reconcile Trump’s hardline stance on Iran with their promise to continue trading and engaging with the energy-rich nation.

German trade with Iran was worth 3.4 billion euros (\$3.8 billion) in 2017 and 1.5 billion euros in the first half of 2018. Trade with France totaled 2.42 billion euros last year. But secondary U.S. sanctions, which punish non-American companies and financial institutions doing business with Iran, mean major European companies



are already staying away.

The U.S. stepped up economic pressure early in May by allowing the expiration of

waivers that permitted eight governments to import Iranian oil, in a drive to cut Iran’s oil exports to zero.

In a letter to other signatories on May 8, Iran’s Supreme National Security Council said it was no longer committed to restrictions on the storage of enriched uranium and heavy water stocks, and could stop observing limits on uranium enrichment at a later stage.

If European partners meet pledges to facilitate Iran’s access to banking and oil markets, however, it will restore full compliance with the agreement, Tehran promised.

On Saturday, Iran’s Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Seyed Abbas Araqchi told the visiting Secretary General of the European External Action Service (EEAS) Helga Schmid that the 60-day ultimatum “will under no condition be extended,” adding, “Iran will operationalize later measures, i.e., the second phase [of commitment limitation], unless they [Europe] fulfill our demands.”

Under the JCPOA, Iran agreed to put limits on its nuclear activities in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions, however, with the return of sanctions, which are even harsher than the previous ones, the validity of the multilateral agreement has come under question by the officials and the public.

Schmid, Araqchi discuss ways to save JCPOA

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Visiting Secretary General of the European External Action Service (EEAS) Helga Schmid and Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Seyed Abbas Araqchi held talks on ways to save the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

In the meeting, held in Tehran on Saturday, Schmid and Araqchi exchanged views about a host of issues, including the latest developments surrounding the JCPOA.

The two sides also discussed the U.S. sanctions imposed against the Islamic Republic and Tehran’s recent move to stop fulfilling some commitments under the nuclear accord.

Schmid visited Tehran as part of her regional tour of Persian Gulf countries that earlier took her to the United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Qatar.

The EU official’s visits comes against the backdrop of increased tensions between Iran and the U.S. with Washington



imposing new sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

The U.S. has ratcheted up pressure on Iran since last year

after withdrawing from the JCPOA.

It is trying to reduce Iran’s oil exports to “zero.” It has also has sent an aircraft carrier strike group, a bomber squad, an amphibious assault ship, and a Patriot missile battery to the Middle East to try to stack up pressure on Tehran.

Iranian officials, however, have dismissed such moves as psychological warfare, saying the country has its own ways of circumventing the American bans and selling crude oil.

On the first anniversary of the U.S. withdrawal from the nuclear deal, Iran announced that it would suspend the implementation of some of its commitments under the deal, announcing that it would stop exporting excess uranium and heavy water, setting a 60-day deadline for the remaining five parties to the deal to take practical measures towards ensuring Tehran’s interests in the face of the American sanctions.

Tehran summons British ambassador over ‘unacceptable’ tanker accusations

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** – The Iranian **d e s k** Foreign Ministry has summoned British Ambassador to Tehran Robert Macaire over the accusations levelled by London against Tehran over the Thursday attacks on two tankers in the Gulf of Oman.

British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt issued a statement on Friday blaming Iran and the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps for the attacks. He claimed no other state or non-state actor could have been responsible. The UK official, however, did not present any evidence

for his claim.

In a late Saturday meeting with the British ambassador, Assistant Foreign Minister for Europe Mahmoud Barimani conveyed Tehran’s strong protest to the British government’s “unfounded allegations” and “unacceptable” anti-Iran stances.

The Iranian official said the accusations have been levelled without any proof, saying such remarks by Hunt are in line with Washington’s position.

“In the [closed-door] meeting of the UN

Security Council last Thursday, no one but the UK accepted the unsubstantiated accusation levelled by Washington,” Barimani pointed out, the Foreign Ministry’s website reported. “Even many well-known media outlets rejected the claim by America and Britain, citing statements by the crew and authorities at the company which own the tankers,” he said.

The Iranian official demanded an explanation from the British side for the accusations and called on the UK to rectify its position.

“The popular reactions against Britain emanate from such approaches adopted by this country in support of American officials’ unfounded allegations about different issues, including the issue mentioned above,” he stated.

He urged the British government to adopt realistic stances in conformity with the realities of the policies adopted by Iran and the need for London to revisit its approach.

The British ambassador, in return, said he would immediately inform London of Tehran’s stance.

U.S. economic war threatens regional security: official

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** – The United **d e s k** States’ economic war on Iran is threatening peace and security in the whole Middle East region, Iran’s deputy foreign minister has said.

Abbas Araqchi made the remarks in a meeting with a visiting French delegation led by Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the French National Assembly Marielle de Sarnez in Tehran on Saturday.

He said the U.S. economic war has “created tension in the region.”

Pointing to the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers which U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally quit in 2018, Araqchi said, “The JCPOA is the only successful diplomatic experience to solve disputes through

negotiations in the hectic West Asia region.” “By quitting the deal, America has challenged diplomacy and multilateralism, putting this experience on the verge of collapse.”

De Sarnez, for her part, hailed the JCPOA as a diplomatic achievement and stressed the need to preserve it.

She also underlined Iran’s role as a cornerstone to regional issues and highlighted the importance of talks with Tehran to deal with international issues.

De Sarnez on the same day met with Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani.

During that meeting, Larijani criticized France for its inaction to preserve the nuclear deal, saying a European-proposed financial mechanism meant to protect trade ties with Iran

against the U.S. sanctions is still “on paper”.

“Despite the multiple negotiations that were held, the French president’s promise to Iran’s president to save the JCPOA was not fulfilled,” Larijani said.

“In fact, it should be said that the INSTEX mechanism has remained on the paper,” he said, referring to the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges which the UK, France and Germany -- the three European signatories of the JCPOA -- unveiled in January to protect trade with Iran from harsh U.S. economic sanctions.

Larijani also said Paris can play a role in the region.

The French lawmaker, for her part, highlighted the importance of parliamentary ties

between Iran and France, saying the lawmakers of the two nations can play a significant role in tough times.

Expressing Europe’s support for the nuclear deal, de Sarnez said her country is determined to achieve the objective of saving the JCPOA.

After leaving the JCPOA in May 2018, Trump reimposed what he called “toughest ever” sanctions on Tehran.

The European trio claimed upon unveiling the long-awaited special trade vehicle that they would try to keep the nuclear deal alive.

Tehran, however, has made it clear ever since that it is already considering several trade agreements with its neighbors and close allies as alternatives to the European mechanism.

Woodrow Wilson Center analyst: White House is itching for a fight with Iran

Kugelman says “accusations against Iran are questionable”

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** – The United **d e s k** States’ administration is “itching for a fight with Iran”, which is the reason why it is making different accusations against the Islamic Republic, a political analyst has said.

The Washington Post on Saturday quoted Michael Kugelman, senior associate for South Asia at the Washington-based Woodrow Wilson Center, as saying, “Unfortunately, that sometimes entails making some accusations against Iran that are somewhat questionable.”

Kugelman made the remarks after U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo blamed Iran for a bombing attack on U.S. forces on May 31st in Afghanistan’s capital of Kabul that had already been claimed by the Taliban militant group.

Two weeks after the attack and amid Washington’s growing enmity against Tehran, Pompeo

referred to the Kabul bombing as an example of one “in a series of attacks instigated by the Islamic Republic of Iran and its surrogates against American and allied interests,” The Post reported.

“If there was clearly a belief that Iran had hit troops in Afghanistan, it would have been huge news right away,” said Kugelman.

In the incident that took place in eastern Kabul, a bomber detonated his explosives near a U.S. convoy, killing four Afghan passersby and slightly wounding four American servicemen and at least three civilians.

At the time, the Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack, with spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid claiming in a phone interview that 10 U.S. troops were killed.

The State Department has declined to com-

ment when it was asked to clarify the allegation Pompeo made while speaking to reporters on Thursday.

Tensions between Tehran and Washington escalated this week after the U.S. had accused Iran of being responsible for the recent attacks on two oil tankers in the Sea of Oman.

The attacks on the Marshal Islands-flagged Front Altair and the Panama-flagged Japanese-owned Kokuka Courageous sent shockwaves through the world which was awaiting the news of a meeting between Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei in Tehran.

Pompeo said immediately, “It is the assessment of the United States government that the Islamic Republic of Iran is responsible for the



attacks that occurred in the Gulf of Oman today.”

Russia and China, however, warned against reaching hasty conclusions, arguing that a thorough investigation should be carried out into the incident.

EU diplomat meets Zarif’s assistant over Yemen

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** – Secretary General of the European External Action Service Helga Schmid has held talks with Ali Asghar Khaji, senior assistant to Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif for special political affairs, on the crisis in Yemen.

In view of the Stockholm agreements between Yemeni groups

coupled with the humanitarian situation in the country, the two sides highlighted the need for a quick implementation of the agreements between warring sides to advance the political process and resolve the country’s conflict through dialogue, the Foreign Ministry’s official website reported.

Another topic on the agenda was the necessity of continued

consultations and exchange of views between Iran and the European Union to help alleviate the sufferings of the Yemeni people.

Saudi Arabia and the UAE have been pounding Yemen since March 2015 to restore the government of Mansour al-Hadi. The bombing campaign coupled with war between rival factions have caused humanitarian disaster in Yemen.

MP says U.S. well aware of Iran's defense power

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee Chairman Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh said on Sunday that the White House is well aware of Iran's defense power.

Speaking to a visiting French delegation led by Chair of the French Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee Marielle de Sarnez, Falahatpisheh said since the enemies know Iran's defense capabilities well, there is no chance of engaging in war with Iran.

The U.S. recently sent military reinforcement forces, including the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier strike group, a squadron of B-52 bombers, and a battery of patriot missiles, to the Middle East, citing alleged unspecified "threats" from Iran.

The Iranian MP in another part of his remarks pointed to the days when the French-made Dassault Mirage fighters were provided to the Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein during his war with Iran in the 1980s, saying



the use of those aircraft incurred irreparable damages on civilian and domestic areas in Iran, some effects of which have not been wiped out even today.

He then pointed to the Thursday attacks on two oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman, saying, "The presence of foreign warships

in the Gulf of Oman has created insecurity in the region and we are waiting for more investigation into the case."

U.S. President Donald Trump's administration was quick to blame Iran for the attacks, which targeted a Norwegian-owned and a Japanese-owned vessel carrying pe-

troleum products in the strategic choke-point through which much of the world's oil travels. The U.S. Defense Department released black-and-white video footage purportedly demonstrating that Iran is behind the attack, but some of the United States' allies have held back from explicitly blaming Iran—including Japan and Norway. Iran has categorically denied the U.S. accusations that it was involved and strongly condemned the attacks.

The senior MP also raised doubt if a monetary channel introduced by the European Union to help Iran benefit from the 2015 nuclear deal would prove effective.

European countries established the channel, called INSTEX, in January to help shield trade with Iran from U.S. sanctions imposed after Trump withdrew from the multinational nuclear deal in May 2018.

The mechanism has so far failed to be operational.

Oil tankers incident in tandem with U.S. sanctions: Larijani

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — The suspicious acts against the oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman go along with U.S. economic sanctions against Iran, Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani said on Sunday.

Speaking during a parliament session, Larijani said the oil tankers incident has all the markings of being conducted by the United States.

After the U.S. failed to reach its goals through sanctions on the Islamic Republic, it is resorting to such acts, Larijani said. "Suspicious acts in the Sea of Oman against oil tankers... seem to be supplementary to the [US] economic sanctions as the Americans went nowhere with the sanctions, [also,] especially, given America's historical record in the area [of false flag ops]," Larijani remarked.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has also said attacks on oil tankers is the "Plan B" of the U.S. and its

regional allies against Iran.

On Thursday, two oil tankers — one sailing under a Panama flag and owned by Japan and another bearing the Marshall Islands' ensign owned by Norwegian Frontline — were targeted in the Sea of Oman. Iranian rescuers rushed to the assistance, transferring all of their 44 crew members to Iran's southern shores.

The incident took place while Japan's prime minister was holding a meeting with Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in Tehran. Abe visited Tehran on Wednesday and Thursday. He became the first Japanese leader to visit Iran in more than four decades.

Following the incident, Pompeo accused Iran of carrying out the attacks without providing any evidence to back up his accusation.

"It is the assessment of the United States government that

the Islamic Republic of Iran is responsible for the attacks that occurred in the Gulf of Oman," Pompeo said.

■ **'Really cute'**

Larijani also said, "The satirical part of the story lies within Pompeo's remarks in which he advised Iran to use diplomacy in response to diplomatic moves," adding, "Such comment, coming out of Mr. Pompeo's mouth, is really cute."

Larijani explained that there is nothing diplomatic in Washington's policy of maximum pressure campaign and its economic terrorism against Tehran.

"Is violating commitments and waging an economic war against Iran a diplomatic move?" he asked Pompeo.

The Majlis speaker further argued that the U.S. measures in Venezuela, or its arming of Saudi Arabia in their war against Yemen, or its support of the Israeli regime in its aggression against the Palestinians are not diplomatic moves.

Anti-Iran sanctions will harm U.S., allies in future: advisor

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — A senior foreign policy advisor to the Iranian parliament speaker has said the negative impacts of Washington's anti-Iran sanctions will finally affect the economies of the U.S. and its allies.

Hossein Amir Abdollahian said the sanctions will be detrimental to them in the long term.

U.S. President Donald Trump cannot continue its campaign of sanctions and pressures against the Islamic Republic in the long term, Amir Abdollahian said in a live TV program late on Saturday.

Pointing to the country's progress since the victory of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, he said, "For 40 years, the great people of Iran have endured sanctions and achieved significant progress despite the sanctions."

The remarks came against the backdrop of increased tensions between Iran and the U.S., days after two commercial oil tankers were hit in the Gulf of Oman, prompting the evacuation and rescue of dozens of crew members.

The attacks were the latest incident in a confrontation between the United States and Iran after weeks of tightening U.S. sanctions and a war of words.



One of the tankers was Japanese. Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif tweeted that it was "suspicious" that the attacks took place during Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to Tehran.

Washington has also dispatched additional forces to the region in recent weeks after accusing Tehran of threatening shipping there. Iran has denied being behind attacks on ships and suggested they could be intended as a provocation.

Expediency Council addresses CFT, Palermo bills

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — The Expediency Council (EC) on Sunday addressed the ratification of two controversial bills on Iran's accession to the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF). During the meeting, chaired by Mohsen Rezaee, members of the council addressed the convention against the funding of terrorism (CFT) and the UN Palermo Convention on Transnational Organized Crime, according to the Mehr news agency.

Iran has been called upon to ratify CFT and Palermo as part of the requirements to join the global anti-money laundering watchdog. During the meeting, the questions and uncertainties of the council members regarding the ratification of the two treaties were discussed.

Representatives from the Central Bank,

Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Vice President Department for Legal Affairs, and Ministry of Intelligence were also asked to share their expert opinions on the matter. It was also decided to submit 11 questions on the issue to the president's office and request an official response to them from the Rouhani administration.

The EC joint commission will continue the sessions until a final verdict is reached.

The FATF has given Iran until June to fix its anti-money laundering and ter-



rorism financing rules or face increased international scrutiny of its banks.

One of the actions Iran is required to take to appease the FATF is joining the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), which is also called the Palermo Convention, a 2000 United Nations-sponsored multilateral treaty against transnational organized crime.

The other action is to join the CFT (the convention combatting financing of terrorism).

Japan unconvinced over Iran's role in tankers incident: sources

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — The Japanese government remains unconvinced over evidence provided by the United States to prove Iran was responsible for attacks earlier this week on two oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman, government sources said on Sunday. The Japanese government has been requesting Washington for concrete evidence to back its assertion that Iran is to blame for the attacks, the Japan Today quoted the sources as saying.

The request came after U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo gave a statement hours after the attacks blaming Iran but without offering proof. But Japanese government officials remain unconvinced, the sources said. "The U.S. explanation has not helped us go beyond speculation," said one senior government official.

Japan has been seeking more concrete evidence through various channels, including Foreign Minister Taro Kono who is likely to have made the request during a call with his counterpart on Friday, the sources said.

Pompeo said in a press conference on Thursday that the United States' assessment



If having expertise sophisticated enough to conduct the attack could be a reason to conclude that the attacker was Iran, "that would apply to the United States and Israel as well," said a source at the Japanese Foreign Ministry.

was based on their "intelligence, the weapons used, the level of expertise needed to execute the operation, recent similar Iranian attacks on shipping, and the fact that no proxy group operating in the area has the resources and proficiency to act with such a high degree of sophistication."

A source close to Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said, "These are not definite proof that it's Iran."

"Even if it's the United States that makes the assertion, we cannot simply say we believe it," he said. If having expertise sophisticated enough to conduct the attack could be a reason to conclude that the attacker was Iran, "that would apply to the United States and Israel as well," said a source at the Japanese Foreign Ministry.

The attacks occurred around the time Abe was meeting with Leader of Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in Tehran.

Tehran warned the U.S. to stop playing a blame game through "suspicious" attacks on oil tankers in the Middle East, describing the American behavior as "worrying."

Qalibaf calls on the youth to run for parliament



POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, a member of the Expediency Council and former presidential contender, has called on the younger generations to run for the parliament in the winter elections.

Appealing to the youth, Qalibaf said the country is in a dire situation and the way out of such condition is to trust the youth, ISNA reported on Sunday.

"The upcoming elections is an opportunity and the country's progress depends on the formation of a new Majlis (parliament)," he stated in a message.

He maintained that if the youth do not come forward, the next parliament will be no different than the previous ones.

The parliamentary election will be held on February 21, 2020.

Candidates will have until December 7, 2019 to register. Then the Guardian Council begins vetting registered candidates and will release the names of candidates deemed eligible to run by December 18.

Moscow opposed to acts against JCPOA, envoy says

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Russian Ambassador to Tehran Levon Dzhagaryan says his country is opposed to any act against the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), commonly known as the Iran nuclear deal.

Dzhagaryan said that Iran and Russia should boost their economic cooperation to confront the U.S. brutal sanctions imposed against the two countries, the Mehr news agency reported.

Iran, China and Russia should develop their economic cooperation so that they can stand against anti-JCPOA activities, he added.

Dzhagaryan also noted that Moscow will continue trade ties with Iran and hoped other countries would do the same.

In May 2018, U.S. President Donald Trump abandoned the landmark deal and ordered sanctions against Iran.

Trump himself has acknowledged that it has waged an "economic war" against Iran in line with his government's "maximum pressure" on Tehran.

The Trump administration has been threatening to punish any country that enters economic transactions with Iran.

Commander lauds Leader's refusal to respond to Trump



TEHRAN (Tasnim) — Police Commander Brigadier General Hossein Ashtari described Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's refusal to respond to U.S. President Donald Trump's message as a source of pride for Iran.

Speaking at a ceremony to introduce the new police commander of the western province of Kermanshah on Sunday, General Ashtari said whenever the Iranian nation resisted, it emerged victorious.

He added that the country's dignity has its roots in the resistance of Iran's "honorable" nation.

Heading a high-ranking delegation, Shinzo Abe held a meeting with Ayatollah Khamenei in Tehran on Thursday morning.

At the beginning of the meeting, the Japanese prime minister said he intended to relay a message to Iran from Trump.

In response, Ayatollah Khamenei told Abe, "We have no doubts about your goodwill and seriousness, but with regard to what you relayed from the U.S. president, I see no merit in Trump as a person to deserve the exchange of any messages, and I do not have any answer for him and will not give him any either."

As regards the Japanese premier's comments about Trump's assertion that Washington does not seek a regime change in Iran, Ayatollah Khamenei said Iran's problem with the U.S. does not relate to the issue of regime change, although the U.S. would never achieve such an objective even if it wanted to.

"Trump's claim that he does not intend to change the regime (in Iran) is a lie, because he would do this if he were able to, but he can't," Ayatollah Khamenei underlined.

On the Japanese leader's message that the U.S. has called for nuclear negotiations with Iran, the Leader said the U.S. once reneged on an agreement that was reached after five to six years of negotiations with the U.S. and Europeans. "So, which wise man would negotiate again with a country that has broken all agreements?"

Demonstrators block Iran embassy's entrance in London: envoy

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian Ambassador to the UK Hamid Baedinejad said on Sunday that a group of demonstrators protesting outside the embassy had blocked the entrance to the building.

"A few demonstrators continue to block today sole entrance of Iran's Embassy in London and prevented the diplomats to enter into the building," Baedinejad said in a tweet. "Satur-

days and Sundays are working days in Iran and diplomatic staff arrange some parts of their work with their capital in these two days." In another tweet, Baedinejad said, "Entrance and the pavement are the essential parts of the Iran Embassy building and needs to be cleared of persons and media to ensure security and peace of mind for diplomats entering the Embassy. Civil protest should be organized at

other side of street under Police supervision."

It came a day after the husband of a British-Iranian woman jailed in Iran announced that she has begun a new hunger strike to protest against her detention.

Zaghari-Ratcliffe, 38, has been imprisoned in Iran for more than years on charges of trying to orchestrate a soft overthrow of the Islamic Republic.

STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	238220.2
IFX	2985.27

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	47,125 rials
GBP	52,875 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: cbi.ir

COMMODITIES

Brent	\$62.01/b
WTI	\$52.51/b
OPEC Basket	\$61.51/b
Gold	\$1,342.70/oz
Silver	\$14.93oz
Platinum	\$807.85/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

Shafeie reinstated as head of ICCIMA

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** – The board of representatives of d e s k Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) selected Gholam-Hossein Shafeie as the head of the chamber for the ninth round of presidency.

Out of the 448 ballots cast, Gholam-Hossein Shafeie, the former head of ICCIMA, defeated Yunes Zhaeleh, to take the helm for the next three and a half years. Shafeie garnered 302 votes while the only other contender Zhaeleh got 140 votes.

Shafeie was elected as the head of ICCIMA in 2016 after the former head Mohsen Jalalpour stepped down on health grounds.

Oil market should expect oversupply in 2020, IEA says

1 → In such a situation, the gathering of OPEC+ ministers which is scheduled to be held later this month in Vienna, seems to be a challenging event.

The short-term uncertainty surrounding the global oil demand, as well as the significant growth in supply by non-OPEC nations like U.S., Brazil and Norway will be the top two major issues faced by OPEC+ in the Vienna summit.



The meeting is scheduled to be held during June 25-26 in Vienna, but the Russian oil minister insists that the meeting should be postponed to July 2-4.

What to expect

The International Energy Agency expects demand for OPEC's oil to be reduced by around 650,000 barrels per day in 2020 compared to the figures for May.

So, Next year OPEC it facing a difficult path in balancing the oil market, because according to the IEA report, from the H2 2019 onwards, we should be expecting a wave of supply from non-OPEC nations.

Economy may stay on growth track pending awaited measures: think tank

South Korea's economy can still grow at an earlier anticipated pace this year should the country take necessary steps, such as a rate cut, to boost local spending and investment that will offset a drop in exports, a local think tank said Sunday.

According to en.yna.co.kr, in its latest revision to its growth outlook, the Hyundai Research Institute forecast Asia's fourth-largest economy to grow 2.5 percent this year, unchanged from three months earlier.

The "fact the economic slowdown in major countries is accelerating and that the country's exports continue to drop are downside risks," the institute said in a press release.

"However, assuming that the country's stimulus measures will take effect and the drop in exports will slow in the second half of the year from that in the first half, (the institute) maintains its earlier forecast of 2.5 percent growth," it added.

The report comes shortly after Bank of Korea Gov. Lee Ju-yeol hinted at a possible rate cut in the future, making an about-face from his earlier commitment to stand pat.

"As external uncertainties have increased due to the U.S.-China trade dispute and the slump in the semiconductor market, we must take appropriate measures to accommodate changes in economic conditions while closely monitoring the direction of changes and their impact," the top central banker said Wednesday in a speech marking the 69th anniversary of the bank's foundation.

The country's exports have dipped for six consecutive months amid drawn-out trade negotiations between the United States and China that ended in May without any deal.

The escalating trade tension between the world's two largest economies will continue to haunt the South Korean economy and its exports, the think tank noted.

The "global trade is expected to slow in 2019 due to uncertainties stemming from the slowing growth of the global economy, the U.S.-China trade dispute and Brexit," it said.

Iran, Russia take new steps for expansion of trade ties

1 → "The presidents of the two countries met five times last year, and Putin has already come to Iran three times," he added.

He noted that the increasing number of delegations exchanged between the two countries is also an indication that the two sides are determined to expand ties in all areas.

Further in his remarks, the official underlined the important role of North Caucasus in the relations between Iran and Russia, saying "with a population of 10 million, North Caucasus region has a key role in developing relations between Iran and Russia and it is a gateway for the trade between the two countries."

The official also mentioned the banking cooperation between Iran, Russia and the Caucasus region, saying that these countries can connect their banking networks and also trade in their national currencies.

Iran calls for expansion of provincial cooperation

Elsewhere in his remarks, Ardakanian called for economic cooperation between northern provinces of Iran and southern Russian provinces, saying that the two sides should benefit from the Caspian Sea's capacity for developing trade and tourism.

Chebotarev in his turn, mentioned the North-South corridor, saying establishing the North-South transportation corridor



Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian speaking in the 15th meeting of Iran-Russia Joint Economic Committee in Tehran on Sunday

between Iran and Russia, which also passes through Azerbaijan, is very important for the international community and will make the costs of shipping goods from the north to the south significantly lower.

The Russia Ambassador to Tehran Levan Dzhagaryan also announced Russia and North Caucasus's readiness for granting visas to Iranian businessmen under the existing frameworks.

Need for implementing signed agreements

Iranian ambassador to Moscow also

announced that all necessary measures have been taken for facilitation of trade between the two countries.

Mehdi Sanaie mentioned some of the signed agreements between the two countries in recent years and noted that "unfortunately despite all the signed agreements, the level of trade between the two sides is not satisfactory."

Russian Commercial Attaché in Iran Rustam Zhiganshin also criticized the performance of the two countries in the implementation of the signed agreements,

Agricultural production set to rise significantly: minister

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** – Iranian d e s k Agriculture Minister Mahmoud Hojati said the country is expected to experience a significant increase in agricultural production due to sufficient rainfalls this year (March 2019-March 2020), Tasnim reported on Saturday.

Mentioning the recent heavy rainfalls across the country, the official noted that this year "we are having a great water year."

"Although in some regions like Khuzestan Province [in southwestern Iran] flood caused some concerns but the situation is now completely ideal for summer cultivation" Hojati noted.

He further stated that, for the fourth year in a row, Iran's wheat harvest is enough to make it self-sufficient in the strategic crop.

According to the official, sufficient rainfalls across the country is going to offset the losses of crops due to unprecedented flooding in some provinces in March.

Iran's use of improved seed technol-



ogy over the past five years has boosted the country's self-sufficiency in wheat by more than 30 percent.

Extreme rainfall, starting on March 19, caused flooding in 28 out of 31 provinces affecting 42,269,129 inhabitants in 253 cities and causing widespread damage to municipal facilities, including roads, sewage systems, health centers, hospitals, etc.

The crops cultivated over autumn were ready for harvest in Khuzestan Province, 200,000 hectares of which were undergone massive damage beyond repair.

Iran's ceramics, tile exports up 10% year on year

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** – Head of d e s k the Iranian Ceramic-Tile Producers Syndicate (IRCPs) said the country's ceramic and tile exports in the Iranian calendar year of 1397 (ended on March 20, 2019) increased by 10 percent compared to its preceding year.

"The ceramic and tile exports stood at 121 million cubic meters in [Iranian calendar year of] 1396," Mohammad Roshanfekr told IRNA.

The official put the country's ceramic and tile production during the Iranian calendar year of 1397 at about 400 million cubic meters.

Roshanfekr further noted that the country's tile and ceramics industry is working at only 40 percent of its full capacity and that many companies are on the verge of bankruptcy due to their inability to pay off bank loans.

"Despite western sanctions imposed on Iran during the past few years, tile

saying that the two countries have the potential for at least \$10 billion worth of trade, only one fifth of which has been realized.

10th Iran-Russia joint transportation working group's meeting

On the sidelines of the 15th joint economic committee meeting, the 10th Iran-Russia joint transportation working group meeting was also held at Espinas Palace Hotel in Tehran.

During this two-day summit, the two sides will discuss bilateral cooperation and explore issues pertain to the transportation industry.

After initial discussions and agreements, five specialized committees, including "Committee of the International North-South Corridor", "Rail Transport Committee", "Marine Transportation Committee", "Road Transportation Committee", and "Air Transportation Committee" will be formed.

During the three-day events, a third Iran-Russia provincial cooperation working group is also going to be held on the sidelines of the two events, in which Ardakanian, Chebotarev, the deputy prime minister of the Russian Republic of Dagestan and eight regional ministers are going to attend.

The events are going to wrap up on Tuesday in Isfahan.



and ceramics manufacturers have made attempts in order to retain their export market," he said.

According to Roshanfekr, Iran is the world's fifth biggest exporter of ceramics and tile after China, India, Brazil and Spain.

Current statistics suggest that in the past years over 80 percent of the country's tiles and ceramics production has been consumed in the domestic market, while the rest was exported to Iraq and other target markets.

Tehran hosting International Forum on Islamic Capital Markets

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** – The 11th International Forum d e s k on Islamic Capital Markets (ICM) is being held in Tehran with participation of 28 representatives from 15 countries, IRIB reported.

The event is being held through cooperation with the Islamic Development Bank (ISDB); and representatives from Italy, Spain, Qatar and Morocco are participating in the forum for the first time.

Addressing the forum on Sunday (the first day of the event), Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) Head Shapour Mohammadi announced his country's readiness to launch financial instruments jointly with the Islamic countries.

Referring to existence of different financial instruments in the Islamic capital market, the official said that Iranian capital market is ready for setting up a joint committee with the other Islamic countries to launch such instruments.

Speaking to the reporters on the sidelines of the event, Mohammadi also said that Iran's capital market is enjoying some good stability at the moment and the people have



SEO Head Shapour Mohammadi speaking to reporters on the sidelines of 11th International Forum on Islamic Capital Markets in Tehran on Sunday

received good profits from this market during the recent months.

The 11th International Forum on Islamic Capital Markets is being held with the aim of developing Islamic financial instruments.

Main topics being discussed during the event include:

- Socially Responsible Investment in Islamic Capital Markets;
- Green Financing in Islamic Finance Framework;
- Collective Investment Schemes in Islamic Financial System;
- Shariah Compliant Risk Management Instruments and Derivatives;
- Fintech in Islamic Financial Markets;
- Government Financing through Islamic Finance Products.

Iranian capital market launched some new financial instruments during the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20, 2019), as Tehran stock Exchange (TSE) officially launched "futures" in mid-December 2018 for more risk management and Iran Mercantile Market (IME) launched "option" in early March 2019 in an approach to diversify financing methods for agricultural products.

Issuance of industrial unit establishment permits rises 25% in 2 months

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Issuance d e s k of permits for setting up industrial units in Iran increased 25 percent during the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-May 21) compared to the same period of time in the past year, IRNA reported on Sunday citing the data released by the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade.

As reported, 3,599 permits have been issued during the two-month period of this year, rising from 2,879 permits issued in the first two months of the previous year.

The units that have received permits are estimated to create jobs for 79,913 people.

As previously announced by the Minis-

try of Industry, Mining and Trade, issuance of permits for setting up industrial units in Iran increased 16 percent in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20, 2019).

As reported, most of the issued permits were related to the food industries; and Semnan, Qom and Khorasan Razavi were the provinces receiving the highest number of the permits.

Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Reza Rahmani has announced that some 2,200 industrial units will come back to the production cycle by the end of the current Iranian year.

The minister said that last year, 1,900 inactive units were planned to restart activity, but the planning came true for 1,700 units

and led to creation of 28,000 jobs.

He further said, "We have some plans for removing the problems of the units which are facing serious challenges."

There are some units that enjoy high potential and capacities, but due to some problems such as inadequate working capital they cannot work with full capacity, the minister noted, adding, "Our priority in the current year is to facilitate the condition for such units."

As previously announced by Deputy Industry Minister Mohsen Salehinia, during the current year the government plans to provide facilities under the framework of subsidies for projects with more than 60 percent of physical development, to supply working capital of



firms, to renovate production units and etc.

He said that 360 trillion rials (about \$857.1 million) of facilities will be granted to the industrial units in this year in the framework of production flourishing plan.

More worry for China as industrial growth disappoints

China's economy showed further signs of weakness last month, with industrial output posting its slowest growth in 17 years, placing further pressure on the government as it tries to steady the ship while battling a trade war with the U.S.

According to thedailystar.net, authorities have for years been attempting to transition the world's number two economy from a re-

liance on state investment and exports to a more stable model driven by consumption, with the tariffs stand-off complicating that mission of late.

Retail sales actually beat expectations, rising 8.6 percent year-on-year in May, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said on Friday.

That compares to an 8.1 percent increase forecast in a Bloomberg poll of analysts.

But the NBS also said industrial output rose just 5.0 percent, the slowest increase since 2002, and missing a 5.4 percent analyst forecast.

Fixed-asset investment growth also underwhelmed with 5.6 percent growth.

The readings are likely to fan speculation that authorities may launch another round of stimulus.

Beijing has rolled out huge tax cuts and

other measures this year to try to blunt the impact of a trade war, which has seen the US impose tariffs on hundreds of billions of dollars worth of Chinese goods, causing worries for exporters.

China's exports beat gloomy forecasts to rebound somewhat in May, though imports sank more than expected, according to official data released earlier in the week.

Saudi energy minister hopes OPEC agrees to extend production cut ‘early July’

Saudi Energy Minister Khalid al-Falih said on Sunday that OPEC would probably meet in the first week in July in Vienna and that he hoped it would reach consensus on extending its agreement to cut oil output.

According to Reuters, Falih said earlier this month that OPEC was close to agreeing to extend the agreement beyond June, although more talks were still needed with non-OPEC countries that were part of the production deal.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries plus Russia and other producers, an alliance known as OPEC+, have a deal to cut output by 1.2 million barrels per day (bpd) from Jan. 1. The pact ends this month and the group meets in coming weeks to decide their next move.

“We are hoping that we will reach consensus to extend our agreement when



we meet in two-weeks-time in Vienna,” Falih told reporters on the sideline of a G20 energy and environment ministerial meeting in Karuizawa, northwest of Tokyo.

Asked when the meeting will be held, he said: “Probably the first week of July.”

It was not completely clear whether the agreement would also include OPEC+.

OPEC was set to meet on June 25, followed by talks with its allies led by Russia on June 26. But Russia suggested a date change to July 3 to 4, according to sources within the group.

Falih said that oil demand usually picks up in the second half the year, with refineries coming back from maintenance and with seasonal demand boost, and that the new agreement would help rebalance the market.

“I’m fairly confident that fundamentals are going in a right direction,” he said.

Saudi crown prince expects Aramco IPO as early as next year: report

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman said Aramco will go through with an initial public offering as soon as next year, though no decision has been made on where the stock will trade.

The world’s top crude exporter aims to offer Aramco stock on its domestic exchange and at least one international bourse, with the prince projecting the company’s value at about \$2 trillion. Aramco’s financial performance, revealed in April, indicated a valuation closer to \$1.2 trillion if investors judge it by the same metrics as other giant oil companies.

“We are committed to the Aramco IPO, given the proper

circumstances and the right time,” the crown prince said in an interview with Asharq Al Awsat newspaper published Sunday. “It will happen between 2020 and early 2021, and setting the location of the IPO now is premature.”

Selling stock in New York, London or an Asian exchange -- some of the speculated options -- could tap a broader investor base. The IPO underpins plans to transform the kingdom’s economy by developing new industries, boosting employment and bringing in foreign investment.

Such programs, collectively known as Vision 2030, are progressing and enjoy popular support, the crown prince told the Saudi-owned newspaper.



Dubai’s DEWA launches tender for 900MW fifth phase of mega solar park

Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA) has issued a tender for the 900MW fifth phase of its mega solar park using photovoltaic solar panels, it announced on Saturday.

As stated by gulfbusiness.com, DEWA said it received letters of intent for the tender – based on the Independent Power Project (IPP) model – from 64 companies.

The deadline to submit the tenders is August 22, 2019, a statement said.

The winning bid will own 40 percent of the company operating the project, and DEWA will own 60 percent.

The winning bidder will sign an agreement with DEWA to purchase the generated power for 25 years.

The fifth phase of the solar park will be commissioned in stages starting from Q2 2021, the statement added.

The Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum solar park is the largest single-site solar park of its kind in the world. It will have a capacity of 5,000 MW by 2030 with investments of Dhs50b.



■ Photovoltaic solar panels

The 13MW first phase became operational in 2013 using photovoltaic solar panels. The 200MW photovoltaic second phase of the solar park was operational in March 2017. The 800MW photovoltaic third phase will be operational

by 2020.

The fourth phase of the solar park is the largest single-site Concentrated Solar Power (CSP) project in the world based on IPP, at a total investment of Dhs15.78b. The fourth phase of the 950MW hybrid power plant will use three technologies:

600MW from a parabolic basin complex, 100MW from a solar tower, and 250MW from photovoltaic panels.

The project will feature the tallest solar tower in the world, 260 meters tall, and the largest thermal storage capacity of 15 hours – generating power around the clock.

Through its projects, the park will accelerate Dubai’s expansion of solar power.

The park will ensure that the “energy supply will meet growing demand in Dubai and enhance the shift toward green economy by increasing its share of clean energy”, said Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer, managing director and CEO of DEWA.

Dubai’s clean energy strategy 2050 aims to provide 75 per cent of Dubai’s total power output from clean energy by 2050.

“DEWA is working to transform Dubai into a global hub for clean energy and green economy, to make it the city with the lowest carbon footprint in the world. Meeting the clean energy objectives requires a capacity of 42,000MW of clean and renewable energy by 2050,” Al Tayer added.

Renewables: A focus of the UAE and the Caribbean

By Bader Almatrooshi

The floating storage regasification unit Golar Freeze that arrived at the New Fortress Energy LNG Regasification Terminal in Old Harbour last December.

One of the challenges encountered these days in the Caribbean is access to energy. This region is highly dependent on imported oil and other fossil fuels for transport and electricity, accounting for huge amounts of money spent every year in this sector.

No doubt, this dependency negatively impacts the overall competitiveness of the region. On the other hand, climate change has contributed to unprecedented natural disaster, urging people to transit to a resilience revolution.

The potential for renewable energy, based on the geographical position, is limitless — which opens the door for transforming the energy sector. International cooperation plays a major role in supporting renewable initiatives in Caribbean countries. The United Arab Emirates (UAE), understanding the consequences of climate change and supporting the ideals of a greener and modern world, has stepped forward in extending a hand to the region through the launch of the \$50-million UAE Caribbean Renewable Energy Fund (CREF) in 2017, on the sidelines of the Sustainability Week celebrated in Abu Dhabi.

■ High potential for solar energy

The initiative celebrates the similarities shared by both the UAE and the Caribbean, such as the high potential for solar energy and the willingness to diversify their energy matrix. In addition, the initiative is also in line with the UAE’s principles of international cooperation and in compass with their commitment to the sustainable development goals, especially to those of climate action and clean energy.

The fund is administered by a steering committee consisting of the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, and Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company. The primary objective of this bilateral cooperation is to support renewable energy projects across 15 Caribbean countries: Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Belize, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Suriname, across different cycles.

The fruits of this partnership are already visible. Recently, the Bahamas, Barbados, and St Vincent and the Grenadines, which belong to cycle number one, inaugurated their projects under the fund, setting the leading pace of a brighter renewable energy future to come. Altogether, the three projects, which broke ground in November 2018, will deliver 2.35 MW of solar and 637 kWh of battery storage capacity, while displacing more than 2.6 million tons of carbon dioxide annually.

In total, diesel savings will account for more than 895,000 litres per year, worth approximately \$1.1 million. The three projects are also designed to withstand up to 160 miles per hour winds and extreme weather, following a new requirement introduced in the UAE-CREF in the wake of hurricanes Irma and Maria.



■ Part of the third cycle

The second cycle of the fund was announced in January 2018 during Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week and the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) Assembly. It involves renewable energy projects in Belize, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, St Kitts and Nevis, and St Lucia, most of whose projects will proceed to procurement soon. On the other hand, Jamaica was announced in January 2019, part of the third cycle along with Cuba, Trinidad and Tobago, and Suriname.


On a national scale, the UAE has embarked on a number of initiatives that demonstrate the importance given to the renewable energy sources. For example, the UAE has plans to increase the contribution of clean energy in the total energy mix from 25 percent to 50 percent by 2050, and reduce carbon footprint of power generation by 70 percent — thus saving around \$190 billion by 2050.

In addition, since 2009 Abu Dhabi has hosted IRENA, the first inter-governmental organization to have its headquarters in the Middle East. IRENA supports countries in their transition to a sustainable energy future and serves as the principal platform for international cooperation — a center of excellence, and a repository of policy, technology, resource and financial knowledge on renewable energy.

Furthermore, the UAE has also built a zero-carbon city — Masdar City — which has become a greenprint for the sustainable development of cities through the application of real world solutions in water, energy efficiency, and the reduction of waste.

The UAE-CREF is just the beginning of a long-term partnership between the UAE and the Caribbean, proving that cooperation will always be the correct path for those who believe that binding efforts build up for greater outcomes. As the founding father Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan used to say: “There is no true benefit for us from the wealth we have unless it also reaches those in need, wherever they may be, and regardless of their nationality or belief.”

(jamaicaobserver.com)




N.I.O.C
1398.1613

Second Announcement

Call for public tender (First/Second publish)

Two Stages (semi compressed) tender

Subject of Tender: (CRA TUBING 7")



National Iranian Drilling Company

Tender descriptions:

The Tender holder	Registration No. through national electronic tendering system	Tender No. / Indent No.	Estimated value (Rial/Euro)
National Iranian Drilling Company	3204292	Tender No. PFP/KSH/96/002 Indent No: 48-22-9622001	54,340,000,000

Qualitative evaluation of tenderers

Method
Based on minimum scoring (60) made in award criterion reflected in the tenderers' pre-qualification forms.

- The tenderers who have more than four (4) active contracts with NIDC are not allowed to attend in this tender.
- The tenderers who have more than two (2) active contracts with same subject (exactly compliance with this subject) with NIDC are not allowed to attend in this tender.

Purchasing & Submitting

Tender Documents Distribution by Company	The distribution of the documents will be started one day after the publishing of second advertisement and ended on the following tenth day thereof.	<p>A) Hall No.: 316, 31st floor, Foreign Procurement Dept. (DRILLING PROJECTS), National Iranian Drilling Company, After Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN 06134148329</p> <p>B) Jomhuri street , yaghma alley nioc 8th building floor no : 04 room no 428 –tehran -iran 02166700249</p> <p>Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt in the amount of Iranian Rials under account number 4001114004020491 (Shaba No. IR520100004001114006376636) in name of "NIDC Income Centralized Fund" issued by I.R. Of Iran Central Bank.</p> <p>Submitting format Request for the purpose of receiving Tender Documents.</p>
	<p>Closing date 14 Days after the last time of Purchasing.</p> <p>Address H Hall NO.107, 1st floor, Tender committee, Operation building, National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN. Tel: +98-61-34148580 +98-61-34148569</p>	

Tender Guarantee

Value of guarantee	2,587,000,000 Rial/ 53,900 Euro
Type of guarantee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bank guarantees or guarantees issued by non-bank institutions that obtain activity license from the central bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt under account number 4001114006376636 (Shaba No. IR350100004001114006376636) in name of "NIDC saving account" by the central bank of Islamic Republic of Iran. "NIDC saving account" by the central bank of Islamic Republic of Iran.
Duration of credit & quotation	Tender Guarantee and quotation should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum for onetime in initial validity duration.

(Name of department)

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Getting China wrong, yet again

By Dennis Etler

ANTIWAR — The influential Council on Foreign Relations has released a remarkable special report by longtime diplomat Robert Blackwill entitled “Trump’s Foreign Policies are Better Than They Seem.” The report singles out Trump for praise because he identified China as a threat to the United States in economic, military, and cultural terms and criticized previous presidents for suggesting there was a need for strategic cooperation with China. The implication of the report is that the Obama and Bush administrations betrayed national interests by not taking a hard line on China.

The Council on Foreign Relations has a preeminent position in U.S. foreign policy, and this special report captures the Washington consensus on China at this moment. Politicians across the spectrum, from Donald Trump to Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren, are increasingly speaking of China as a serious threat to American security and competitiveness.

Yet, in its effort to justify Trump’s more extreme actions against China, the report makes a series of deeply misleading assertions. For example, the report states:

While these presidents were making such optimistic statements over a nearly twenty-year period, China implemented a grand strategy under Xi Jinping; used geoeconomic tools to coerce its neighbors and others, including most recently though the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI); violated international commercial practices, including by committing massive theft of US intellectual property; manipulated its currency for trade benefits; threatened Taiwan; build up its military forces to push the United States beyond Japan and the Philippines; constructed and militarized artificial islands in the South China Sea, in violation of the international law... and patiently and incrementally built its power and influence with the strategic goal of challenging the United States as the primary power in Asia.

This passage suggests that China is a brutal aggressor that ruthlessly employs political, economic, and military tools to coerce its neighbors and violates international law as part of a dangerous plot to challenge American dominance.

In fact, Beijing’s main strategy is “the Chinese Dream” whereby the country continues to modernize, developing its science and technology to become a more prosperous country and offer its citizens a better life. China wants to become a more influential voice in international affairs, which is not surprising given that the Eurocentric “international community” has ignored Beijing’s voice for so long despite China having one fifth of the Earth’s population.

Just take a look at the means that China uses for promoting its ideas. The May “Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations” in Beijing argued for a constructive effort to find the best of cultures from around the world, starting with the assumption that all civilizations are essentially equal. There was none of the contempt for Islam or for “developing” nations that is common in recent American statements. But the critical point is not China’s rhetoric, but rather its actions. Unlike the United States, China has not invaded or attacked any other country since a brief border conflict with Vietnam in 1979.

Blackwill’s report goes on to attack the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as a “geoeconomic tool to coerce China’s neighbors and others,” painting a dark vision of a nefarious effort to undermine the sovereignty of the nations of the world. But that was not the mood among the 37 heads of state who attended the recent Second BRI Forum for International Cooperation held in Beijing in April. Although there was plenty of jealousy on the part of rivals, the equitable agreements with nations, especially small nations, was striking. A deep commitment to international law and the principles of the United Nations was visible in all the interactions of BRI – while the United States has been pulling out of treaties left and right and showing open contempt for international law at every turn.

Blackwill asserts that China has violated international commercial practices, but it is hard to find any instance of a nationwide effort to undermine accepted practices. Regarding the accusation of “theft” of intellectual property, numerous articles have debunked this specious charge. The term is used so broadly as to suggest that any collaboration between Chinese and American scientists is a theft of intellectual property, rather than an effort to pursue mutually beneficial research. Increasingly, Chinese students are accused of being spies without evidence. Emory University dismissed neuroscientists Li Xiao-Jiang and Li Shihua – for not disclosing funding from Chinese institutions – without giving them a chance to defend themselves.

The charge of Chinese manipulation of its currency for trade benefits is so ridiculous that even the Trump administration gave it up. But it is still trotted out for the CFR report. China obviously uses monetary policies to support its own currency. But so, too, does the United States pursue quantitative easing to manipulate the dollar.

The argument that China is militarizing to push the United States out of Asia is intriguing. The United States has been engaged in a massive military buildup around China for several decades. Given the history of Europeans carving up China into spheres of influence in the nineteenth century and Japan invading China in the 1930s, the Chinese have good reason to be nervous about any military buildup in the neighborhood.

But imagine the outcry in Washington if China started amassing naval forces off the California coast for training exercises, held “freedom of navigation” drills around Guantanamo Bay, or actively encouraged Hawaiian independence? That’s what US actions look like from the Chinese perspective.

Similarly, the assertion that the artificial islands built by China in the South China Sea are a violation of international law is laughable coming from a country that blatantly violates international law on a daily basis and does not even recognize the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (it frequently cites when criticizing China’s island-building projects. Moreover, Vietnam and Taiwan have similarly militarized islands in the region without a peep out of Washington. The best way to improve the environment in the South China Sea is for the United States, Japan, and other nations to keep their navies out of the region.

The United States needs to establish think tanks that present an objective analysis of national interests and do not push a narrative of confrontation with China that flies in the face of the overwhelming need for cooperation, from climate change and international law to joint research and cultural exchange. The United States must learn from China, and vice versa. Attacks on an imagined Chinese bogeyman only undercut this urgently needed cooperation.

What will be the fate of the U.S. national security advisor? John Bolton, critical to the white house

By Saeed Sobhani

TEHRAN — U.S. National Security Advisor tough days! Some sources report Bolton’s expulsion from the White House in the near future. It seems that the Foreign policy of the Trump government in the time of John Bolton and Mike Pompeo’s presence in the White House has progressed to failure. The problem that has struck herself in Surveys conducted in the United States show that Trump’s popularity in polls has declined. Accordingly, only 37% of US citizens agree with the foreign policy of the Trump government. In such a situation, the Trump has no choice but to change the conditions.

A review of the papers and analyzes published on John Bolton can give us a clear picture of the political situation in the White House:

John Kiriakou: Bolton’s long goodbye John Bolton’s days as national security advisor are apparently numbered—for reasons that have all played out in the press, says John Kiriako in Consortium News. Everybody in America knows that Donald Trump places a premium on what he considers to be “loyalty.” You’re either with him or against him. The White House staff has been a revolving door from virtually the start of his administration. It’s not unusual for aides to last mere weeks or months, only to then be thrown out on the street.

Trump then inevitably says something about “loyalty.”

The situation isn’t unique to just the White House political and domestic policy staff. It is just as pervasive at the National Security Council. Nobody is sacred. Remember, you’re either with him or against him. Now it’s John Bolton’s turn to find himself in a corner. I believe that his days as national security advisor are numbered—for reasons that have all played out in the press. I’m one of those people—not at all unique in Washington—who has contacts and friends all over the political spectrum, including in the Trump Administration. After work and over drinks, they like to vent. What they are telling me privately is what other Washington insiders are telling the conservative press. The White House, and especially the National Security Council, are in disarray. And Bolton will soon be fired.

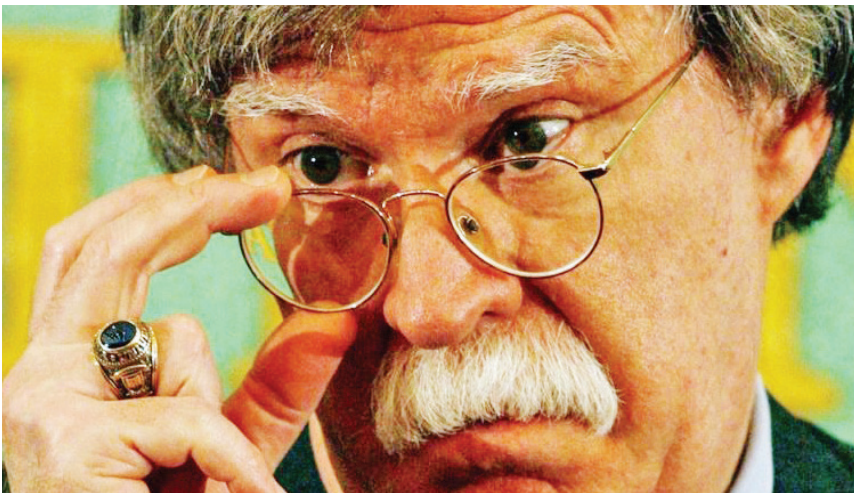
Bolton: On the way out?

The right-wing Washington Examiner reported this week that Bolton acknowledged these reports, but in a back-handed way. He said in a Wall Street Journal podcast that he believes five countries are spreading “lies about dysfunction in the Trump administration.” Those countries are North Korea, Iran, Venezuela, Russia, and China. That’s laughable.

What Bolton is saying is that there is a vast and incredibly well-coordinated international conspiracy that includes some of the most important countries in the world, the main purpose of which is to embarrass him. That sounds perfectly rational, right?

Of course, a more rational person might conclude that Bolton has done a terrible job, that the people around him have done a terrible job, that he has aired his disagreements with Trump in the media, and that the President is angry about it. That’s the more likely scenario.

Here’s what my friends are saying. Trump is concerned, like any president is near the end of his term, about his legacy. He said during the campaign that he wanted to be the president who pulled the country out of its two longest wars. He wanted to declare victory and bring the troops back from Afghanistan and Iraq. He hasn’t done that, largely at the insistence of Bolton. Here we are three years later and we’re



still stuck in both of those countries.

Second, my friends say that Trump wants to end U.S. involvement in the Yemen war, but that Bolton has been insistent that the only way to guarantee the closeness of the U.S. relationships with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates is to keep providing those countries with weapons, aerial refueling planes, and intelligence support.

Obsessed With Iran

That would explain the reason why the White House did not seek to block the recent Congressional vote on Yemen support. Bolton likely talked Trump into vetoing the resolution. Or he talked the Saudis into talking Trump into it. Still, at least in internal deliberations, Trump has said that he simply doesn’t see a national security reason to keep the war going. The U.S. gets nothing out of it. Third, the mainstream media has accused Bolton of being the reason behind the failure of Trump’s second summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. Bolton toed a hard line, so much so that the North Korean media called him a “war monger” and a “human defect” once the summit ended.

This week Trump told reporters gathered on the White House south lawn that Kim had “kept his word” on nuclear and missile testing. This was a direct contradiction of Bolton, who had said just hours earlier that the North Koreans had reneged on their commitments to the U.S. Trump said simply, “My people think there could have been a violation. I view it differently.”

Most importantly, Bolton has been famous for decades for his irrationally hard line on Iran. He has made no secret of his desire to bomb Iran into the stone age, to smash and overthrow its government, and to let the chips fall where they may. The policy makes literally no sense.

Iran is a country of 80 million people. It has an active and well-trained global intelligence service. It has a robust navy with highly-specialized “swift boats” that are active in the Persian Gulf. And it controls the vital Strait of Hormuz, through which 20 percent of the world’s oil and 33 percent of its liquified natural gas flows.

Trump said just a week ago that he was willing to begin talks with the Iranians “with no preconditions.” This was a major softening of U.S. policy toward Iran and it immediately drew Bolton’s ire. Indeed, The New York Times pointed out that the policy directly “overruled a longtime goal of (Trump’s) national security advisor.”

All of this has made Trump angry. He’s constantly being one-upped by one of the Washington swamp monsters he promised to rid the city of. He finally seems to have come to realize that even establishment Republicans dislike and distrust John Bolton. And now he understands why. Mick Mulvaney, Trump’s chief of staff, has very quietly and discreetly begun informal meetings with a list of a half-dozen

possible replacements for Bolton. Let’s hope he finds one that he and Trump both like sooner, rather than later.

“THEY’RE BOTH MAXIMAL NARCISSTS”: WILL THE TRUMP-BOLTON COLD WAR CLAIM A CASUALTY?

Abigail Tracy wrote :To close observers of the revolving door in the West Wing, a clear pattern has emerged. After a brief honeymoon period, Donald Trump is reported to have grown frustrated with a new adviser. The president knocks down these reports as “fake news,” but their disagreements spill out into public view. Inevitably, after a series of increasingly labored denials, the adviser is shown the door. All of which invites the question: Is John Bolton, the president’s belligerent national security adviser, wearing out his welcome?

Twice during his Memorial Day trip to Japan, Trump publicly undercut Bolton—first waving off regime change in Iran, a persistent Bolton hobbyhorse, and then declaring (contra Bolton) that North Korea’s latest ballistic missile tests were no cause for alarm. According to The New York Times, the president was recently overheard at Mar-a-Lago complaining about Bolton’s more hawkish advice and wondering if he was being led around by the nose.

And yet, according to the Washington diplomats and bureaucrats who know him, it seems unlikely that Bolton will step down any time soon. Nor will the former ambassador—a veteran knife-fighter who doesn’t suffer fools—be exterminated by means of conventional office politics. “My bet is that Bolton, who is a very able, clever bureaucrat, figures he can tolerate a bit of the public presidential commentary, but by staying in the job can push many policies that he considers important,” said a former high-ranking State Department official who used to work with Bolton. “He looks at the bigger picture. He’s a difficult person but I don’t think he’s thin-skinned. Probably serves him well with this White House.”

While another administration might have choreographed a clash between the president and his top adviser, in order to push Pyongyang or Tehran to the negotiating table, Trump’s historical approach to foreign policy supports a less generous interpretation. Time and again, the president has lashed out when deputies try to substitute their expertise for his own. (“Save your energy, Rex,” Trump tweeted at former secretary of state Rex Tillerson, when he attempted to conduct his own negotiations with Kim Jong Un.)

But Bolton, unlike his predecessor H.R. McMaster, has learned from experience how to navigate the corridors of power. “He has the savvy to do the sorts of things with people with whom he does not agree, but who are nonetheless his boss, and survive,” said Lawrence Wilkerson, a former chief of staff for Secretary of State Colin Powell who often sparred with Bolton

in the George W. Bush administration. Since his appointment last year, Bolton has shored up his influence by concentrating decision-making within the National Security Council and exploiting the Trump administration’s institutional deficits. “The most important ingredient in national-security decision-making [is people]. What Trump has done is injured himself by getting rid of people who would often either not do what he said to do, or would object, or do something of a combination of the two,” Wilkerson continued, referring to the defenestrations of McMaster, James Mattis, and former White House chief of staff John Kelly.

Bolton, he contends, has taken advantage of that void. “He’s a very powerful person around there, in the absence of attention to detail on the president’s part, and in the absence of anyone in the Cabinet who really knows how, and would, challenge him—he’s a pretty powerful person.”

There is also the matter of who could possibly replace Bolton—Trump’s third national security adviser in two and a half years. Across the administration, there is a dearth of qualified and willing candidates to fill departmental vacancies. But the NSC job comes with additional complications. Since joining the White House, Bolton has purged the NSC and surrounded himself with loyalists from past lives, ensuring that his departure would leave a gaping hole in the national-security apparatus.

Perhaps, some sources speculate, the volatile Bolton—Trump dynamic will stabilize. “In their own way, they’re both maximal narcissists,” said Wilkerson—both are predisposed to be uncompromising. But constant tension/turmoil “has become the new normal,” said a second high-ranking State Department official who overlapped with Bolton. “Unheard of in past administrations to have this kind of public disconnect, especially in the W.H., but, like I said, it’s become routine.”

Another former senior U.S. official professed a more sobering assessment. “So many people in the government accept the unacceptable that I no longer can predict when a situation isn’t tenable any more.” Maybe, this person continued, “the lesson is that in the postmodern era, there are many people exercising power in many ways, and traditional power relationships aren’t really in force anymore.”

John Bolton has no fate but defeat

In George W. Bush’s presidency, people like Dick Cheney and John Bolton have become the messengers of the White House’s defeat in the world. This time Bolton has also become a messenger for defeating Trump and the US in the world. The US National Security Adviser is having difficult days. John Bolton has not been able to achieve his goals toward the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Bolton’s story is a sad story for American citizens! He is today a symbol of the embarrassment of all Americans. Bolton was one of the influential officials in the country since the start of the war in Iraq in 2003, by the George Walker Bush administration until 2008 (when the neocons in the US were at the head of the political and executive equations of the country). Bolton and his entourage have repeatedly become the symbol of the failure of the US in the West Asia region. However, Bolton’s defeat in the US is now far broader! John Bolton, the US National Security Adviser, continues his anti-Iranian negotiations in various fields. In recent months, he has been busy discussing the presence of Iran in Syria and, on the other hand, engaging in negotiations with other countries over Iran’s sanctions. But the existing evidence suggest that the US National Security Adviser is not going to succeed in this regard.

E. Michael Jones: U.S. oil sanctions target iranians people

TEHRAN (FNA) — E. Michael Jones, Author and Journalist, says the embargo which the US enacts against the Iranian oil industry and export is an act of war against the Iranian people.

In an exclusive interview with FNA, Dr. Jones also discussed Riyadh’s support of the Washington sanctions against Iranian oil, saying “[the Saudis] are now collaborating in their own destruction as an oil exporter by disrupting international trade agreements.”

He further mentioned the Trump’s Administration’s role in overturning international laws, saying “Pompeo and Bolton have used their offices to ignore normal diplomatic procedures and normal diplomatic channels in conducting diplomacy... This overreach will have unintended consequences, by uniting the world against the US.”

E. Michael Jones is an American writer who received his doctorate from Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He was formerly a professor at Saint Mary’s College in Indiana. He is the editor of the Culture Wars magazine. Below is the full text of the interview:

■ Iran is an oil-rich country which counts on the income from the oil export. How do you view the US oil sanctions against Iran?

A: The oil embargo which Secretary Pompeo just enacted is an act of war against the Iranian people. It is similar to what the United States did to Japan in the late 1930s by denying them access to oil in Southeast Asia. That act led to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, which the United States liked to describe as unprovoked. But the time proved it the other way.

■ Secretary Pompeo said Iran should behave like a normal country. What does “normal” mean in the US foreign policy terminology?

A: “Normal,” according to Pompeo, means complete acceptance of any demand made by the current regime in Washington. His use of that word is calculated to distract us from the fact that Pompeo and Bolton have used their offices to ignore normal diplomatic procedures and normal diplomatic channels in conducting diplomacy, not only in the Middle East but in Europe as well, alienating former

allies and all but ensuring the collapse of NATO. Another example of abnormality in just about every sense of the word is America’s ambassador to Germany Robert Grenell, who has alienated the German people by his arrogance. Grenell is now in charge of a mission to overturn certain international laws. This overreach will have unintended consequences, by uniting the world against the US.

■ “Saudi Arabia and others in OPEC will more than make up the Oil Flow difference in our now Full Sanctions on Iranian Oil”, Trump tweeted. Is it an indication of Saudi Arabia’s involvement in Washington’s sanctions against Iran’s oil?

A: The Saudis fail to understand that the United States is now energy independent and in not need of Saudi oil. They are now collaborating in their own destruction as an oil exporter by disrupting international trade agreements. As one more example of diplomatic chutzpah, the United States is trying to force German to abandon its Nord Stream II pipeline with Russia. All of these maneuvers will have counter effects which will contradict the intentions of those who put them in motion

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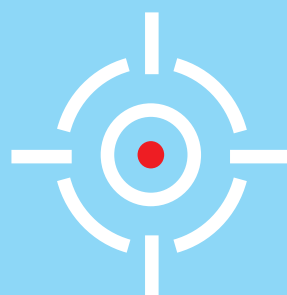
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Politics, lack of support, funding have foiled U.S. plans to return to moon

Mankind’s first steps on the moon a half-century ago were followed by three more years of lunar missions. And then, a standstill.

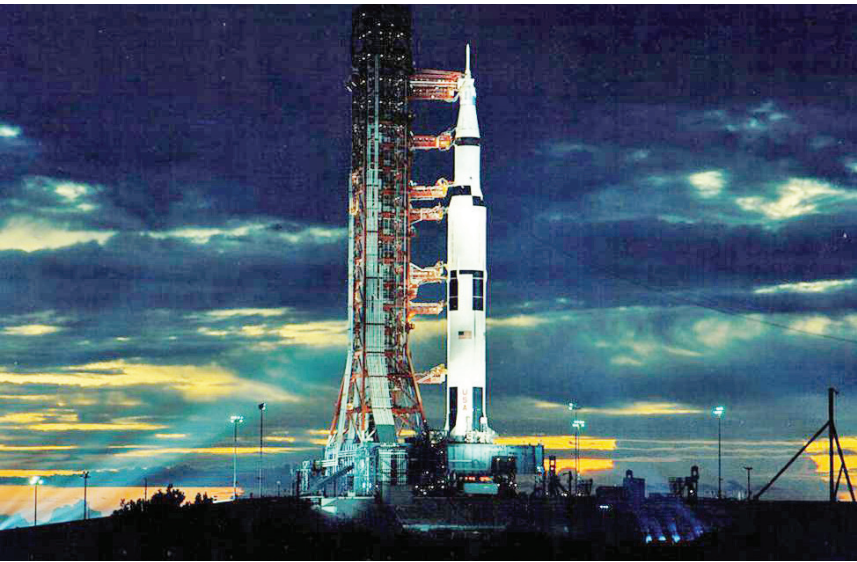
Neither the United States nor any nation on Earth has sent a manned mission to the moon since NASA’s Apollo 17 mission left in late 1972. While the space administration has periodically made plans to return, none have reached the operational phase. A large part of the reason is a lack of money and support.

The Constellation Program, proposed by George W. Bush’s administration, hoped to return to the moon no later than 2020. It, however, was canceled by the Obama administration after the financial crisis. President Donald Trump has pushed for a return since taking office, but has equivocated on whether travel to the moon or Mars should take priority.

“Any project as complex as Apollo requires three things: resources, technology and -- most important -- the will to do it,” Apollo 7 astronaut Walt Cunningham said at a 2015 congressional hearing aimed at examining U.S. goals in human space exploration. He pointed out that NASA’s portion of the federal budget peaked at 4 percent in 1965 and has remained minimal ever since.

“For the past 40 years, it has remained below 1 percent and for the last 15 years it has been driving toward 0.4 percent of the federal budget,” he said. “Manned exploration is the most expensive space venture and consequently, the most difficult for which to obtain political support.”

Howard McCurdy, professor of public affairs at American University, said last month cost is a major factor. He said the United States spent almost \$21 billion to put Neil Armstrong on the moon in 1969 -- which would equal about \$200 billion today. Cunningham said NASA has tried to cut costs to free up money for exploration, like



reducing operations at U.S. Space Centers, but lawmakers have keep them open.

“NASA is still burdened with the same 10 Space Centers and a half-dozen other facilities,” he said. “This reduces the funds available for science and space applications.”

Experts say another hurdle is a lack of public support. American support for NASA’s lunar missions has hovered around 50 percent for decades, even going back to the Apollo program when the United States was trying to beat Russia to the moon. A recent Pew Research poll found 55 percent of Americans consider it essential that NASA continue to explore. Forty-five percent said, however, that private explorers like SpaceX will ensure adequate progress in space.

Last month, Amazon founder Jeff Bezos’ space company Blue Origin unveiled a full-size model of its Blue Moon lander, which he

said could support a human moon landing by 2024. SpaceX has primarily focused its efforts on landing humans on Mars, but has hinted at moon missions and signed up a tourist to ride one of its rockets to the moon.

One argument against using public money in space is that it’s better spent on Earth. Ahead of the first moon landing, civil rights leader Ralph D. Abernathy protested near the Kennedy Space Center with 150 poor black families to argue the money would be better spent feeding the poor.

“I want you to hitch your wagon to our rocket and tell the people the NASA program is an example of what this country can do,” then-NASA chief Thomas O. Paine told Abernathy at the time.

Despite some renewed enthusiasm from the Trump administration, many of those same hurdles remain.

In May, Trump called for an additional

\$1.6 billion in NASA funding for the return to the moon, and promised to “restore” NASA to “greatness.” Most of that money would be used to develop commercial human lunar landing systems and \$651 million would develop the Space Launch System and Orion spacecraft, which are critical mission pieces. The plan, however, sought to draw from a Pell Grant surplus, which prompted criticism from education advocates and some Democratic lawmakers.

“I support restoring funding to NASA, but that cannot come at the expense of low-income students,” Tennessee Rep. Steve Cohen tweeted. “Raiding Pell Grant funds to boost NASA’s budget is foolish. If we are going to the moon, NASA will need funding AND an educated workforce.”

NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine defended the budget request, saying Congress can consider whether to approve the funds -- which he said would entirely fulfill NASA’s funding needs for 2020. He noted more money, however, will be needed in the years ahead.

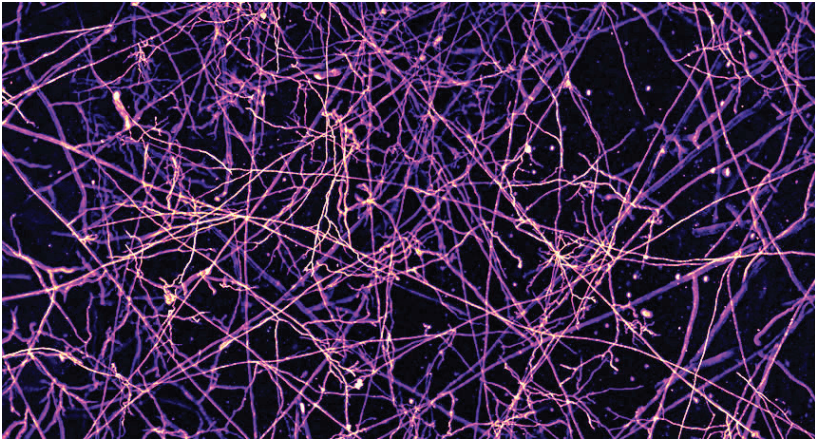
NASA’s “Moon to Mars” program, announced in November, seeks to establish a permanent human presence on the moon through work with private U.S. and international companies. The venture proposes a spacecraft called “the Gateway” -- basically a space station that orbits the moon.

“The Gateway will, for the first time, give NASA and its partners access to more of the lunar surface than ever before, supporting both human and robotic missions,” NASA’s website states.

NASA plans to conduct its first unmanned mission next year, to test the new spacecraft systems. A manned test flight, with astronauts, could follow within two years. The first component of the Gateway craft is planned to launch on a private rocket in 2022.

(Source: UPI)

Some fungi trade phosphorus with plants like savvy stockbrokers



Some stringy fungi are tough negotiators, trading nutrients shrewdly with plants.

An advance in tracking the nutrient phosphorus has revealed new details of ancient trading networks between fungi and plants. Some fungal species grow what are called arbuscular mycorrhizal connections underground, reaching intimately into plant roots. These fungi pull phosphorus from the soil and trade it for carbon from a wide range of plants.

Marking phosphorus with glowing dots shows the fungi hoarding the nutrient in parts of their elaborate networks of filaments when there’s a glut of it and plants wouldn’t be likely to trade much carbon. Phosphorus also gets shipped over the fungal networks to areas where it’s scarce and thus more valuable to trade.

These fungal-plant trades have been frustrating to study as biological markets because, until now, researchers could see snapshots, but not details, of the negotiations, says study coauthor Toby Kiers, an evolutionary biologist at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. It was “like a really good poker game” where the lights go out between dealing and winning, she says. For a better view, the researchers devised a way to watch the process in action by tagging phosphorus with nanoparticles called quantum dots that glow red or blue in ultraviolet light.

Arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi have no ability to capture carbon themselves, though they need it to live. Instead, they have traded with plants for the resource for some 450 million years. Today, the fungi can connect with at least 70 percent of all plant species, including most crops. Unlike other nutrient-trading fungi that sheath a plant root, these fungi work their way inside plant cells and grow “beautiful tree-like structures” with plenty of surface area that can help with swapping sustenance, Kiers says.

In the new study, the researchers allowed the fungus *Rhizophagus irregularis* to tangle with carrot roots growing in part of a lab dish. The fungus also grew filaments away from the carrot roots into two other compartments. To challenge the fungus with a discouraging

trade market, the team added equal amounts of phosphorus to the two compartments where the fungus grazed alone. In one compartment, the phosphorus was tagged with dots that glowed red, and in the other with blue.

As if riding out a period of oversupply, the fungus took up phosphorus and stored a sizable share of it. Researchers can’t yet track the carbon that the carrot provided in return for what phosphorus was traded, but overall, the filaments didn’t grow much, suggesting the carbon payoff was ho-hum.

To see how the fungi reacted to a hot market, the scientists applied the same total amount of phosphorus but put 10 percent into one compartment and 90 percent in the other. The color-coded dots let researchers see a share of the phosphorus moving through the fungal filaments toward the undersupplied compartment. Judging by how much fungus filaments grew, the carrot trading with the merchants in the scarcity zone essentially panicked, and the fungus made a market killing. The price, the ratio of carbon gained per phosphorus traded, was around 3.8 times higher on the nutrient-poor side versus the well-supplied.

The team thinks that these fungi are somehow managing the phosphorus flow, rather than simply letting it diffuse from an area of abundance to one of scarcity. For instance, flows of material that would carry phosphorus through the network move and switch directions too fast for simple diffusion, Kiers says.

The quantum dot technique lets researchers track phosphorus flows on a scale “that was difficult, if not impossible” until now, says Ylva Lekberg, a mycorrhizal ecologist at MPG Ranch, a conservation and research group in Missoula, Mont., not involved in the work. If the researchers manage to develop dots for carbon, that view could answer many outstanding questions, such as where plants hand over their carbon payments to the fungi and -- a big one -- how prices change.

(Source: sciencenews.org)

Earth’s heavy metals result of supernova explosion, research reveals



That gold on your ring finger is stellar -- and not just in a complimentary way.

In a finding that may overthrow our understanding of where Earth’s heavy elements such as gold and platinum come from, new research by a University of Guelph physicist suggests that most of them were spewed from a largely overlooked kind of star explosion far away in space and time from our planet.

Some 80 per cent of the heavy elements in the universe likely formed in collapsars, a rare but heavy element-rich form of supernova explosion from the gravitational collapse of old, massive stars typically 30 times as weighty as our sun, said physics professor Daniel Siegel.

That finding overturns the widely held belief that these elements mostly come from collisions between neutron stars or between a neutron star and a black hole, said Siegel.

Using supercomputers, the trio simulated the dynamics of collapsars, or old stars whose gravity causes them to implode and form black holes.

Under their model, massive, rapidly spinning collapsars eject heavy elements whose amounts and distribution are “astoundingly similar to what we observe in our solar system,” said Siegel. He joined U of G this month and is also appointed to the Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics, in Waterloo, Ont.

Most of the elements found in nature were created in nuclear reactions in stars and ultimately expelled in huge stellar explosions.

Heavy elements found on Earth and elsewhere in the universe from long-ago explosions range from gold and platinum, to uranium and plutonium used in nuclear reactors, to more exotic chemical elements such as neodymium found in consumer items such as electronics.

Until now, scientists thought that these elements were cooked up mostly in stellar smashups involving neutron stars or black holes, as in a collision of two neutron stars observed by Earth-bound detectors that made headlines in 2017.

Ironically, said Siegel, his team began working to understand the physics of that

merger before their simulations pointed toward collapsars as a heavy element birth chamber. “Our research on neutron star mergers has led us to believe that the birth of black holes in a very different type of stellar explosion might produce even more gold than neutron star mergers.”

What collapsars lack in frequency, they make up for in generation of heavy elements, said Siegel. Collapsars also produce intense flashes of gamma rays.

“Eighty per cent of these heavy elements we see should come from collapsars. Collapsars are fairly rare in occurrences of supernovae, even more rare than neutron star mergers -- but the amount of material that they eject into space is much higher than that from neutron star mergers.”

The team now hopes to see its theoretical model validated by observations. Siegel said infrared instruments such as those on the James Webb Space Telescope, set for launch in 2021, should be able to detect telltale radiation pointing to heavy elements from a collapsar in a far-distant galaxy.

“That would be a clear signature,” he said, adding that astronomers might also detect evidence of collapsars by looking at amounts and distribution of heavy element s in other stars across our Milky Way galaxy. Siegel said this research may yield clues about how our galaxy began.

“Trying to nail down where heavy elements come from may help us understand how the galaxy was chemically assembled and how the galaxy formed. This may actually help solve some big questions in cosmology as heavy elements are a nice tracer.”

This year marks the 150th anniversary of Dmitri Mendeleev’s creation of the periodic table of the chemical elements. Since then, scientists have added many more elements to the periodic table, a staple of science textbooks and classrooms worldwide.

Referring to the Russian chemist, Siegel said, “We know many more elements that he didn’t. What’s fascinating and surprising is that, after 150 years of studying the fundamental building blocks of nature, we still don’t quite understand how the universe creates a big fraction of the elements in the periodic table.”

(Source: Science Daily)

Researchers learned how to better combat muscle loss during space flights

A new study from The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston has further documented how muscles are affected by reduced gravity conditions during space flight missions and uncovered how exercise and hormone treatments can be tailored to minimize muscle loss for individual space travelers. The findings are available in PLOS One.

NASA has recently announced that it will allow private citizens to visit the International Space Station. The growing number of space travelers underscores the need to understand the impact of reduced gravity on the human body.

“The study has given us the ability to identify biomarkers that predict how susceptible each individual is to muscle function decline and how effectively different exercise and hormone treatments can combat the atrophy,” said senior author Randall Urban, UTMB chief research officer and professor in the department of internal medicine.

Senior author Melinda Sheffield-Moore, professor in the Texas T&M department of health and kinesiology and UTMB department of internal medicine, said, “This new ability may allow scientists to personalize space medicine by designing specific exercise and/or hormone intervention programs for each astronaut on Earth before they embark on a long-term mission to space.”

Space flight-related losses in muscle mass and strength are a key concern for long space exploration missions. The muscle loss during space flight largely stems from fact that weight bearing muscles don’t work as hard in reduced gravity conditions. While in space, people exercise in an effort to counter this muscle loss, but it cannot completely prevent muscle atrophy. So, researchers are searching for additional interventions that complement in-flight exercise.

The effects of long-term muscle inactivity can be investigated with extended bed rest. In the study, 24 healthy male participants were placed on bed rest for 70 days. During the bed rest period, some of the men followed an exercise regimen and blindly received either testosterone supplements or a placebo while a control group remained in the bed without any exercise training or supplements. Throughout the study, the researchers collected muscle biopsies to analyze the proteins within the muscle tissue.

The researchers uncovered several changes to the men’s muscle proteins during the bed rest period that were blunted or reversed with exercise, which appeared to drive a healthier protein organization within the muscle fibers. The testosterone supplements prompted further protein changes that promoted muscle growth beyond that of exercise alone.

“The unique insights we’ve gained on muscle proteins during extended bed rest could someday be applied to predict changes to muscle mass/strength in various situations and then develop a personalized program of exercises and hormonal countermeasures,” said senior author E. Lichar Dillon, UTMB assistant professor in the department of internal medicine.

(Source: Science Daily)

Almost 600 plant species have gone extinct in last 250 years

Almost 600 plant species have gone extinct in the last 250 years, which is twice the number of birds, mammals and amphibians to have disappeared from the Earth in the same period combined, according to a new study.

Published in the journal Nature, Ecology & Evolution, the study states that 571 plants have been wiped from the face of the Earth and plants species are going extinct 500 times faster than the normal rate of loss without human intervention.



The number was calculated by one of the study’s co-authors, Rafael Govaerts, after reviewing all publications on plant extinctions over 30 years. The study shows that the number of extinct plant species is four times higher than previous compilations and twice the combined 271 birds, mammals and amphibians record extinct in the last two-and-a-half centuries.

“Most people can name a mammal or bird that has become extinct in recent centuries, but few can name an extinct plant,” said co-author Aelys Humphreys. “This study is the first time we have an overview of what plants have already become extinct, where they have disappeared from and how quickly this is happening.”

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and Stockholm University researchers said plants on islands, in the tropics and Mediterranean climates had the highest rates of extinction while plant species in woody and small geographical areas had the highest rates of reported extinction, suggesting that the increase is due to the destruction of native vegetation resulting in habitat loss.

The study is important because it may aid in conservation efforts by predicting where future extinctions are likely to occur, it said.

“To stop plant extinction, we need to record all the plants across the world -- the naming of new species is a critical piece of the puzzle in the wider push to prioritize conservation of our precious natural world for generations to come,” co-author Maria S. Vorontsova said. “To do this, we need to support herbaria and the production of plant identification guides, we need to teach our children to see and recognize their local plants and, most importantly, we need botanists for years to come.”

However, the researchers also discovered 430 plant species previously believed to have gone extinct, though 90 percent of them are considered “high extinction risk.”

“Plants underpin all life on Earth, they provide the oxygen we breathe and the food we eat, as well as making up the backbone of the world’s ecosystems -- so plant extinction is bad news for all species,” co-author Eimear Nic Lughadha said. “This new understanding of plant extinction will help us predict (and try to predict) future extinctions of plants, as well as other organisms.”

(Source: UPI)

Iran, Turkey to resume passenger train services

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran and Turkey are scheduled to recommence passenger train services as of late June, the deputy director of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (IRIR) has said.



Travel between Tehran and Van will commence on June 25 and between Tehran and Ankara on June 27, Mir-Hassan Mousavi said, IRIR reported.

“Four-star trains with sleeper facilities are primarily set to offer a weekly service between Iranian and Turkish cities and it could be extended to twice-a-week or daily services if welcomed by passengers, the official explained.

Journey from Tehran to Van and to Ankara will take 22 hours and 60 hours, respectively, he said.

Tehran-Ankara and Tehran-Van journeys will take 22 hours and 60 hours and they have been priced at €43 and €20, respectively, he added.

In January-November 2018, 1.894 million Iranian tourists visited Turkey, 18.17 percent less than the same period in 2017, according to data compiled by Turkey’s Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

Shiraz meeting explores further cooperation with Hungary on tourism

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — On Sunday, tens of Iranian tour operators and travel associates met with their Hungarian fellows in Shiraz, exchanging views on how to deepen cooperation in the tourism sector.



Shiraz Municipality will present prizes to Hungarian companies, which undertake maximum number of tours to the southern Iranian city, Mayor Heydar Eskandarpour said, IRNA reported.

The assembly was held from June 13 to 16 in close collaboration with Shiraz Municipality, the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization, and the Iran-Hungary Friendship Association.

Hungarian invitees visited some Shiraz attractions as well. Shiraz is home to some of the country’s most magnificent buildings and sights. It was also the literary capital of Persia during the Zand dynasty from 1751 to 1794.

ROUND THE GLOBE

Hill Forts of Rajasthan

The six Hill Forts of Rajasthan, spread across India’s Rajasthan state, clustered together as a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site. The forts are mainly based in the Aravalli Range. They were built and enhanced between the 5th and 18th centuries CE by several Rajput kings of different kingdoms.



The extensive fortifications up to 20 kilometers in circumference optimized various kinds of hill terrain, specifically the river at Gaggan, the dense forests at Ranthambore, and the desert at Jaisalmer, and exhibit an important phase in the development of an architectural typology based on established “traditional Indian principles”.

The vocabulary of architectural forms and of ornaments shares much common ground with other regional styles, such as Sultanate and Mughal architecture.

Within the defensive walls of the forts, the architecture of palaces and other buildings reflects their role as centers of courtly culture, and places of patronage for learning arts and music. As well as housing for the court and military guard, most had extensive urban settlements within their walls, some of which have persisted to the present day.

And some also had mercantile centers as the forts were centers of production and of distribution and trade that formed the basis of their wealth. Most of the forts had temples or sacred buildings, some pre-dating the fortifications and outliving the Rajput kingdoms, and many of these remarkable collections of buildings still attract followers.

(Source: UNESCO)

Foreign arrivals in Mashhad on the rise

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — The number of foreign arrivals in Mashhad has been rising over the past couple of years, said Gholamabbas Arbab-Khales, the head of Foreign Ministry’s Mission in East and North Iran.

“The arrival of foreign tourists to Mashhad is increasing by 15-20% annually, according to [the number of] visas on arrival that are issued by this mission,” the official said.

The maximum number of visas that are issued in Iranian cities belongs to Mashhad as well, he added.

The mission issued visas for some 75,000 foreign travelers during [the Iranian calendar

year] 1395 (ended March 2017), and the number rose to over 83,000 and some 98,000 in 1396-97 respectively.

“Some 19,000 foreign nationals have been granted visas on arrival in Mashhad during the first two months (of the current Iranian year) ... With this trend continuing, the number will reach 115,000 this year.”

Every single day, Mashhad plays host to thousands of travelers and pilgrims who come from various Iranian cities, neighboring countries and even across the globe to visit the beautiful, massive holy shrine complex of Imam Reza (AS), the eighth Imam of the Shia Muslims.



Pilgrims visit the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS) in Mashhad

Some 600,000 visited “The Splendor of Asia” within a month

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** — Some 600,000 people have so far toured the major exhibit “The Splendor of Asia” within less than a month from its opening ceremony at Beijing’s National Museum of China, Mehr reported on Saturday.

Titled “The Splendor of Asia: An exhibit of Asian Civilizations,” the exhibit features loan works from 47 Asian countries including Iran and it also showcases objects from Greece and Egypt.

The National Museum of Iran sent 15 historical relics including clay works, Achaemenid inscriptions, Sassanid sculptures and glassworks which represent the long-lasting relationship between Iran and China.

The opening ceremony was attended by ministers, officials and diplomats from various countries on May 13.

“Different countries closely cooperated with each other for this exhibition,” said Guan Qiang, deputy director of the Chinese National Cultural Heritage Administration, in an address to the ceremony.

“Such a large number of top-level exhibits and participating countries have never been seen before in one exhibition in China,” Guan said.

Asia is home to the largest area, population and most ethnic groups in the world. It is the birthplace of Mesopotamian, Indian and Chinese civilizations.

The exhibition will be running through August 11.

Expedia fined \$325,000 for breaching travel sanctions to Cuba

Expedia Group, the digital travel industry conglomerate has agreed to pay \$325,406 to the U.S. government for breaching Cuban travel sanctions between 2011 and 2014.

According to a memo released by the treasury department on Thursday, Expedia subsidiaries assisted 2,221 people, including Cuban nationals with travel-related services with travel between the U.S. and Cuba, or within Cuba and beyond. The services were in violation of Cuban Assets Control Regulations that were first established in 1963 and were offered prior to the easing of travel restrictions during “Cuban thaw,” which began under the Obama Administration at the end of 2014.

The treasury department stated that foreign subsidiaries of the Seattle-area company that “lacked an understanding of and familiarity with U.S. economic sanctions laws” were responsible for the violation, adding “Expedia employees overlooked



particular aspects of Expedia’s business that presented risks of noncompliance with sanctions.” Expedia Group owns U.S. based

websites CheapTickets, Expedia, Hotels, Hotwire, Orbitz in addition to foreign-based Trivago, Venere and Wotif.

The company voluntarily disclosed the violations to the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), and after learning of the violations, the treasury department stated that “Expedia implemented significant remedial measures to strengthen its U.S. economic sanctions compliance program throughout the Expedia corporate family” and that the company cooperated with the OFAC investigations.

The news comes at a time when U.S. -Cuban relations have stiffened after President Trump’s renegeing of Obama-era negotiations with the Caribbean nation. Last Tuesday, Trump announced new restrictions on travel to Cuba from the U.S., barring cruise ships from visiting the country and banning “People to People” travel. This includes organized tour groups, one of the primary ways U.S. citizens have visited Cuba.

(Source: Time)

How to pack a first aid kit for extended international travel

It’s a question that the two 52 Places Travelers have fielded from readers and colleagues alike: How do you stay healthy when crisscrossing the world for nearly 365 days? And what do you pack in case you get sick? Each location has its own set of challenges, recommended vaccines and access to pharmacies.

There’s a thin line between being over- and underprepared, said Rebecca Acosta, the co-founder and executive director of Traveler’s Medical Service. The average globe-trotting traveler does not need I.V. bags and syringes, she said, though the items are suggested for those trekking in rural areas.

Jada Yuan began her year as the inaugural 52 Places Traveler in 2018 with a first aid kit that was built with the help of foreign correspondents. Ms. Yuan’s kit was so extensive that a Moroccan customs officer accused her of being a drug dealer.

Twelve months and some 74,900 miles later, Ms. Yuan returned to New York City with “basically the same amount of medicine,” she said.

This year’s 52 Places Traveler, Sebastian Modak, is having a similar experience. Five months in, his first aid kit has been almost untouched. But it offers enough peace of mind that it’s worth all the space it takes up, he says.

(His top recommendation for staying healthy? Drink clean, filtered water. Lots of it.)

Here’s how to pack a first aid kit, whether you are going around the world for a year or a remote adventure for a week.

■ Start with a vaccine checklist

The Centers for Disease Control has a list of vaccines, health notices and packing lists for those traveling around the world. That means accounting for location: Ms. Yuan and Mr. Modak had to plan for places as diverse as Liuwa Plain National Park in Zambia and Japan’s Setouchi Islands.

Make sure to look up vaccine requirements far in advance of your travels, as some vaccines may require treatments or doses. Additionally, some nations may require proof of vaccination upon entering customs. The World Health Organization keeps an updated list of nations requiring yellow fever vaccines here.

■ Don’t forget travel insurance

If you are traveling with a group or on business, you may already have traveler’s insurance that covers medical evacuation. If not, consider buying insurance that includes medevac services, which are recommended when traveling to more rural destinations.

In addition to health coverage, travel insurance covers things like lost baggage and flight cancellations. So even if you stay healthy, it can come in handy when you’re on road.

A good travel insurance package will also include a support number to call if you need help identifying the severity of your illness, and where to turn for help.

If your health care provider in the United States offers virtual doctor visits, you may be able to turn to your regular doctor’s office while abroad, too.

■ Management vs. prevention

If you have prescriptions, make sure they are filled for the entirety of your travels. That may take some coordinating between a primary care physician and insurance companies if medicines need to be resupplied on the road. Ms. Acosta recommends working with a doctor to compile a list of all prescribed medications, in generic form, in case prescriptions are misplaced.

When it comes to prevention, Ms. Acosta said, travelers should think of their medicine cabinet. “What are the type of things that you may grab from your medical kit at home? If it’s one in the morning and you have an upset stomach or a headache, what do you go for?”

■ Pack those items first.

For Mr. Modak that included vitamins. “I don’t know if you can overdose on vitamins but if so, I’m doing it,” he said from Bulgaria. “I take a multivitamin every morning and chew an Airborne vitamin C tablet, too, on top of that.”

■ Build your kit

“The worst time to go looking for a pharmacy is after you already need one — and that’s especially true when you’re traveling in an unfamiliar place,” said Ria Misra, the travel editor with Wirecutter, a New York Times Company that reviews and recommends products. That’s why she recommends building your own kit or carefully choosing a prepackaged one.

Traveler’s Medical Service offers recommendations for your kit, listed below; choose the brands that you’ve used in the past. (Traveling internationally is not a great time to test new medication.) Wirecutter recommends packaging a kit in the Osprey UltraLight Roll Organizer; the bag’s roll-up design allows it to pack down significantly.

For travelers short on time, some pre-packed first-aid kits cover the basics. Wirecutter recommends to First Aid Only’s Essentials Kit, which contains the basics needed to clean up minor cuts and relieve pain.



Keep those kits in a carry-on.

■ Make a checklist

Travelers should create a first aid kit for simple wounds and basic medications to treat stomach issues, colds and allergies. Some products that Traveler’s Medical Service recommends include:

First aid items

Alcohol swabs and liquid disinfectant solution

Bandages: Adhesive bandages, gauze, tape, blister pads and bandage rolls

Topical creams: Antibiotic ointment, antifungal ointments, hydrocortisone cream

Oral rehydration solution for diarrhea or dehydration

Tweezers

Digital thermometer

Lubricating eye drops

Insect repellent

Aloe gel

Medications

Antacids

Antihistamines for allergic reactions and seasonal allergies

Bismuth subsalicylate for nausea, gas and bloating

Laxative/stool softener

Anti-motility medication for severe diarrhea

Cough and cold remedies and lozenges

Pain relievers/fever reducers

Motion sickness medication

Similarly, note any preventive medicines in generic form should you need to restock while traveling.

(Source: The New York Times)

Why subsidized forex is still used for tobacco?

HEALTH d e s k **TEHRAN** — It might be hard to believe that cigarettes are among the products that are imported using subsidized foreign currency, Deputy Health Minister Alireza Raisi has said. “Unfortunately, instead of allocating subsidized foreign currency to importing many necessary medical supplies, it is used for importing cigarettes. \$170 million, at subsidized rate, was used for importing tobacco and \$16 million for importing cigarette papers,” he said.

According to ISNA, Raisi made the remarks in a press conference on Saturday organized on the occasion of “No Tobacco National Week”.

“According to Health Ministry statistics, annually, around 35 to 40 billion cigarettes are produced inside the country but the local factories have estimated their outputs at about 80 billion, so that they can increase their production,” said Raisi.

■ Tobacco advertisement should stop
Raisi went on as saying that the advertisement for flavored tobacco products should be banned.

“In November 2017, the Administrative Justice Department of the Judiciary ordered that all advertisement for flavored tobacco products must be banned, but ever since, nothing has changed and the product is still being used and advertised, so we cannot expect environmental health experts to fight single-handedly against the tobacco use.”

“This year, the World Health Organization’s campaign on World No Tobacco Day (31 May) is called ‘Don’t let tobacco take your breath away’, and we also need to realize this goal,” he added.

■ What provinces have the highest use?

According to Raisi, cigarette use is the highest in Markazi province, West Azarbaijan province, Qazvin province and Alborz province.

“Also, Hookah is used the most in the provinces of Bushehr, Hormozgan, Sistan-Baluchestan and Fars. In southern provinces,



There are many rules and legislations against tobacco use but the problem is that they are not observed either by retailers nor by the Ministry of Industry.

hookah use is more widespread among women than men.”

“Smoking rate is the highest among people between the ages of 45 to 54,” he added.

Earlier in June, Tobacco Prevention and Control Research Center announced that about 12 percent of Iranian adults above 15 years old are daily smokers.

Including hookah smokers, the percentage of smokers reach about 20 percent, the report added.

According to the head of the center, Gholamreza Heidari, about 20 percent of men and two to three percent of women are daily smokers.

■ Annual sales of cigarettes at \$238 billion

Over the conference, the secretary general of Iranian Anti-Tobacco Association announced that 200 billion rials (around \$4.7 million) are paid every day for purchasing cigarettes, this amount to 1 quadrillion rials a year (around \$238 billion).

“There are no other industries in the country which their factories have been increased at such a fast rate, but the number of tobacco factories has grown from nine to 17 in only two years, from [the Iranian calendar year] 1394 to 1396 (April 2015 to 2017),” said Mohammadreza Masjedi.

“There are many rules and legislations against tobacco use but the problem is that they are not observed either by retailers and owners of businesses or the Ministry of Industry,” he added.

According to World Health Organization Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, every year, tobacco kills at least 8 million people. Millions more live with lung cancer, tuberculosis, asthma or chronic lung disease caused by tobacco.

According to WHO, over 40% of all tobacco-related deaths are from lung diseases like cancer, chronic respiratory diseases and tuberculosis. WHO is calling on countries and partners to increase action to protect people from exposure to tobacco.

In 2017, tobacco killed 3.3 million users and people exposed to second-hand smoke from lung-related conditions.

More than 60 000 children aged under 5 die of lower respiratory infections caused by second-hand smoke. Those who live on into adulthood are more likely to develop chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) later in life.

Switch from beef to chicken could help the planet

One simple change in your diet -- replacing beef with poultry -- could go a long way toward curbing climate change, research shows.

Beef is the largest dietary contributor to greenhouse gases for average people, and replacing it can halve a diner’s food-based carbon footprint and improve health, according to findings presented Monday at the American Society for Nutrition’s annual meeting, in Baltimore.

“Basically, the top 10 highest carbon foods are all either a cut of beef or ground beef, said lead researcher Diego Rose, director of nutrition at Tulane University in New Orleans. “We can substitute that for things people would still find satisfying, in a culinary sense, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.”

For this study, Rose and his colleagues analyzed diet information from more than 16,000 participants in the nationwide health and nutrition survey conducted by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The researchers compared what people ate to the greenhouse gases emitted during production of those foods, to calculate a carbon footprint for individual diets.

The 10 foods with the greatest impact on the environment were all cuts of beef. About 20% of respondents reported eating one of these high-carbon foods on the day they were surveyed, researchers said.

The foods with the heaviest carbon footprint leave quite an impression on the planet. The top 20% of foods had almost five times more impact on the environment than the bottom 20%, Rose said.

Researchers then calculated a new carbon footprint for each diet by replacing beef with poultry -- broiled chicken for broiled steak, ground turkey for ground beef.

“When we subbed them out, we found the drop from emissions from the new diets were about half what they were before -- 48% less,” Rose said.

Simulations showed people’s dietary carbon footprint became smaller even though they would be eating just as much.

“We wanted to make sure the substitutions were the same calories, so we’re not putting anybody on a diet here,” Rose said. There are a couple of reasons why beef has such a heavy environmental impact, he said.

First, raising cattle involves two rounds of agriculture -- first, growing feed corn for the cows, and then raising cows with that corn, Rose said.

Cows’ digestive systems also are geared to draw maximum nutrition from grass, which involves digestion through a series of four stomachs, Rose said. This produces a lot of methane, which the cows expel by



burping or passing gas.

One positive side effect from subbing out beef came in people’s overall diet quality, as measured by a healthy eating index, Rose said.

“People’s diets improved not just from the carbon footprint but the healthiness of their diet as well,” he said. “It’s not a lot, but it’s there and it’s significant. It’s a win-win.”

Wayne Campbell is a professor of nutrition science at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind. He said that the study’s conclusions were “consistent with what would be expected” from replacing red meat with white.

“I like the way they did their calculations within the context of what people generally eat, as opposed to manipulating someone’s diet in a contrived manner,” said Campbell, who wasn’t involved with the study.

But he said more research is needed.

“I don’t think it would be appropriate based on the limited information that is provided here to all of a sudden say for everybody to go buy a piece of chicken instead of a piece of steak for the grill,” Campbell said.

For instance, he questioned whether substituting beef for chicken would always be the healthiest dietary choice.

“For example, if the person is eating highly processed fatty sausages as their red meat and they switch to a baked chicken breast, that’s going to have a much more positive impact on their health than if they were eating a lean pork tenderloin and switched to fried chicken,” Campbell said.

Further studies also should examine whether people would be willing to make the suggested dietary changes, he added.

Research presented at meetings is typically considered preliminary until published in a peer-reviewed journal.

The study was funded by Wellcome Trust, a London-based biomedical research charity.

(Source: WebMD)

Opiate addiction in UK in the over-40s triples in 12 years

The number of people over 40 receiving treatment for opiate addiction has tripled in just 12 years, a report has found.

In 2018, 75,000 people over the age of 40 were in treatment for dependence on illegal opiates such as heroin -- compared to 25,000 in 2006, a report by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) found.

Over the same period, those in treatment for opioid addiction under the age of 30 fell from 60,000 to 13,000.

The discovery prompted a warning from senior government policy advisers that addiction services are ill equipped to deal with England’s ageing population of long-term opiate users.

The findings suggested the age range of addicts is shifting upwards as long-term users find they are unable to achieve permanent abstinence rather than more people developing an addiction in later life, a spokesman for ACMD said.

Heroin -- the chemical name for which is diacetylmorphine -- was originally synthesized by British chemist C.R. Alder Wright (pictured overleaf) in 1874, by adding two acetyl groups to the molecule morphine, which is naturally found in the opium poppy.

Bayer, the German pharmaceutical company behind Alka-Seltzer and Aspirin, bought the rights to diacetylmorphine, marketing it under the name “Heroin” in 1895 because early testers said that it made them feel “heroisch” or “heroic”.

By 1898, it was ready for mass marketing. It was originally sold as an over-the-counter cough suppressant that didn’t have problematic side effects, like addiction (the irony) - while alternative treatments morphine and codeine did. This was before they realised that, when taken into the body, it actually converts into morphine, and is ferociously addictive. Thus defeating the object and defining what was to become a historically embarrassing moment for the company in later years.

By 1899 Bayer was producing a ton of Heroin and exporting the drug to 23 countries, while free samples sent to doctors and studies appeared in medical journals. It was also around this time that early reports of addiction began to surface. The company wisely released Aspirin this year, which would go on to become one of the most popular and widely used pain relief drugs in the world.

Long-term drug addicts are more likely to have poor general health and bodily pain, as well as increased risk of psychological problems.

Psychological problems can be related to trauma, bereavement and grief and can escalate drug abuse further, the report found.



Dr Owen Bowden-Jones, chair of ACMD, is concerned addiction services, many of which are run by local authorities, will not be able to cope with the complex needs of their ageing clients.

In a letter to Sajid Javid, the home secretary, he said: “This ageing cohort is likely to dominate future demand on substance misuse services which is why more needs to be done now to help these people access services that meet their needs.

“Government, commissioners and services need to urgently reassess how to best manage the complex needs of this ageing group.”

The ACMD report found that across the UK - with the exception of Northern Ireland - treatment services were seeing an ageing population of opiate users who have remained in periodic contact with agencies for many years but have struggled to kick their habit for good.

A spokesman for the Local Government Association said councils had spent more than £700m tackling substance abuse in the last year alone.

He added: “The biggest challenge we all face is an ageing cohort of drug users, who have not previously sought or had any treatment.

“As a result, they are prone to an accumulation of chronic physical and mental health conditions that make them more susceptible to dying through overdose. “However, cuts to councils’ public health grant by central government have consequences.

“We have long argued that reductions by central government to the public health grant in local government is a short-term approach and one that will only compound acute pressures for the NHS and other services further down the line.

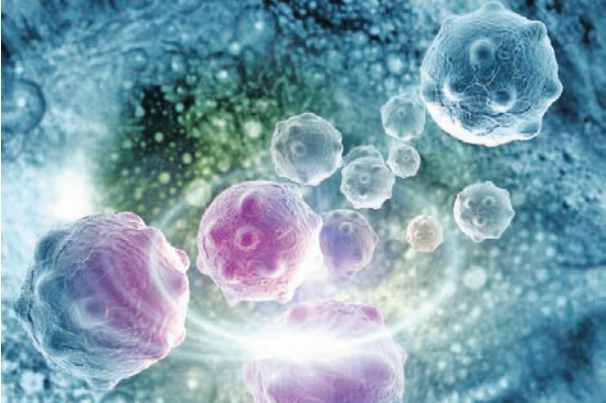
“It is therefore vital that the upcoming Spending Review reverses these reductions to the public health grant and provides councils with the money needed to invest in cost-effective prevention and recovery work.”

(Source: The Independent)

Iranian researchers suggest a novel component against prostate cancer

HEALTH d e s k **TEHRAN** — A type of bacteria called Halophilic archaeobacteria (Haloarchaea) can reduce the formation of cancer cells in prostate cancer, Iranian researchers speculate.

Halophilic archaeobacteria are a class of the Euryarchaeota found in water saturated or nearly saturated with salt. They are now mostly recognized as archaea that are single-celled microorganisms.



The research was published in National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) and Iranian Journal of Pharmaceutical Research.

The study was carried out by Atefeh Safarpour, Marzieh Ebrahimi, Shahzadeh Fazeli and Mohammad Ali Amoozegar from Royan Research Institute, Iranian Biological Resource Center and Tehran University of Medical science.

According to the research, Supernatant Metabolites derived from Halophilic archaeobacteria can have cytotoxic effects on cancer cells.

The study investigated the potential anticancer effects of supernatant metabolites on five cancer cell lines including breast, lung, prostate, and also human fibroblast cells.

The anti-tumor effect of the selected supernatant was assessed both in-vitro and in-vivo.

The study concluded that among all strains, supernatant metabolites from Halobacterium salinarum IBRC M10715 had the most potent cytotoxic effect on prostate cancer cell lines without any effects on normal cells.

Iran produces One for All cardiac retractor

HEALTH d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian researchers in a knowledge-based company produced Cardiac retractors that are used in open-heart surgery, announced the company’s managing director.

A retractor is a surgical instrument used to separate the edges of a surgical incision or wound, or to hold back underlying organs and tissues so that body parts under the incision may be accessed.



After one year of work, the researchers in Niakan Ronagh Pars Company finally produced this device and it has now entered the domestic market, Majid Hashemi told IRNA on Sunday.

This is an advanced and all-in-one sternal retractor that is appropriate for all open heart procedures, said Hashemi.

The model incorporates a number of innovative features which allows for reduced patient trauma, he added.

According to Hashemi, the device can also be used for coronary arteries transplants. With adding a new piece to this retractor, the surgeon can better see the back of the heart and have an easier access to the coronary arteries.

Woman who had ‘miracle’ baby after 13 miscarriages says story gives hope to others

The mother of a “miracle” baby, born after 13 miscarriages, has praised the work of NHS fertility specialists and said she hopes her story can inspire strength in other women who are struggling to give birth.

Laura Worsley had experienced 11 miscarriages in the first trimester since 2008. Two pregnancies with boys, Leo and Gracison, were lost at 17 and 20 weeks.

After trying multiple trials and treatments to overcome fertility issues Ms Worsley and her husband Dave had said their 14th attempt would be their final one.

When her waters broke unexpectedly nearly two months before her due date, Ms Worsley was rushed to hospital and baby Ivy was delivered by caesarean section last September.

“It feels like all of my Christmases have come at once,” Ms Worsley said of Ivy, who weighed 1.7lbs when she was born -- the same weight as an average Christmas pudding.

She has since been given a clean bill of health.

Ms Worsley said she couldn’t thank enough the staff at University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire (UHCW) NHS Trust, who helped her to have the child she had been dreaming about.

The Worsley’s began seeing fertility specialist Siobhan Quenby, at the hospital’s research unit and identified two conditions that were impacting her ability to maintain a pregnancy.

She was initially treated with folic acid to address antiphospholipid syndrome -- also known as “sticky blood syndrome” -- which can increase the risk of pregnancy loss.

After the loss of their unborn son Leo, tests on his placenta revealed Ms Worsley also had a condition called chronic histiocytic intervillositis (CHI).

This causes the body to attack the placenta that supplies blood and nutrients to the foetus.

(Source: The Independent)

‘Welfare Organization helps 15,000 breadwinning women to become financially independent annually’

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — On average, 15,000 female heads of households who have been under Iran Welfare Organization’s assistance, become financially independent annually through employment and entrepreneurship programs, director general of family and women capacity building office at the Welfare Organization has said.

Also, 9,000 women annually attend career preparation courses organized by the Welfare Organization and will be provided with the vocational skills for getting employed or running their own businesses, IRNA quoted Derakhshan-Nia as saying on Sunday.

Empowering the breadwinner women to generate income independently is among the main objectives of the Organization, she added.

In general, Welfare Organization is intended to ensure psychological and social empowerment of these women being the primary source of economic support for their families so that they can have an independent, higher quality of life, she said, adding, ultimately, empowerment is seeking to expand people’s choices.

She further noted that urban and rural social insurance, generating employment opportunities and encouraging entrepreneurship for the target community, providing vocational skills, providing business capital, micro funding and poverty alleviation are among programs underway in the Organization.

Totally there are numerous temporary and permanent services provided by the organization, some include social assistance and support, and the others center on empowerment and social health, which ultimately lead to better life conditions for the communities, she explained.

It is worth mentioning that the family and women capacity building office programs do not solely include the pensioners, but some of them like capacity building schemes as well as micro funding are aimed at developing anti-poverty policies for vulnerable families, she concluded.

According to statistics released in 2017, there are around 2.5 million breadwinner women in the country, including 180,000 families, making up 500,000 people.

About 71 percent of breadwinner women have taken the responsibility of their families due to loss of their husbands.

Some 11 percent of breadwinning women are divorced, 10 percent are disabled or handicapped or have drug-addicted husbands, and about 5 percent of them are unmarried girls who are taking caring of their parents or their whole families.

Tehran to host national toys, entertainment fair

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — The second national fair of toys and entertainment opens in Tehran today with manufacturers and companies displaying their latest products, IRIB reported on Sunday.

The Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA) plays host to the 5-day event aiming at promoting Iranian toys and supporting domestic producers.

Over 70 manufacturing companies are presenting more than 900 domestic toys as well as educational, intellectual, artistic and cultural products that are made by Iranian innovators, and based on Iranian culture, Vida Maleki, secretary of the supervisory board of toys explained.

“A country can reach economic growth when encourages people to support domestic producers; which results in a rise production and employment opportunities in the country, and consequently, the economy will boom,” she noted.

The national toys and entertainment fair opens up a good opportunity for the toy industry, which can help in economic growth, she added.

“Thanks to creative investors and high quality products, Iranian toys are being exported to other countries as well,” she concluded.

WORDS IN THE NEWS

Concorde - one week on

(August 3, 2000)
A week after the fatal Concorde crash in Paris came reports on plans for the Air France Concorde fleet and an incident on a British Airways Concorde.

A spokesman for the French Civil Aviation Authority has confirmed that Air France’s five remaining Concordes will remain **grounded** for the time being. He said the decision had been taken because investigators looking into the causes of last week’s crash had failed to establish why it happened. As a result, a group of British and French **civil aviation** experts meeting in Paris had failed to **come up with** new proposals to improve Concorde’s security. The French Transport Minister had previously said that French Concordes wouldn’t **take to the skies** again until new safety measures had been put in place. Despite calls from some unions to restart the flights, the government has **erred on the side of caution**.

British Airways says passengers reported a **slight** smell of petrol in the cabin of BA flight 003 **bound** for New York, so the captain decided to land the plane in Newfoundland as a **precautionary measure**. A spokeswoman said **preliminary** investigations showed the smell could have been fuel. Emergency services were put **on standby** at the airport in Gander, but the plane landed without **incident**.

■ **Words**
grounded: if an aeroplane is grounded, it means it is not allowed to fly
civil aviation: flying which is not for military purposes
to come up with: if you come up with an idea, you think of it, you create it
take to the skies: fly
erred on the side of caution: if you err on the side of caution you are very careful, perhaps much more careful than is really necessary
slight: not strong
bound for: a plane’s destination is where it is bound for
a precautionary measure: an action taken before something bad happens is a precautionary measure
preliminary: early, not final
on standby: if you are on standby you are not working but are ready and prepared to work if you are needed
incident: an incident is an action, something that happens which is usually negative

(Source: BBC)

Medical waste disposal become possible using plasma technology in Iran

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Using plasma gasification, Iranian researchers managed to dispose medical wastes and disassemble all its hazardous gases by filters, IRNA reported on Sunday.

Plasma gasification is an extreme thermal process using plasma which converts organic matter into a syngas which is primarily made up of hydrogen and carbon monoxide. A plasma torch powered by an electric arc is used to ionize gas and catalyze organic matter into syngas, with slag remaining as a byproduct. It is used commercially as a form of waste treatment and has been tested for the gasification of municipal solid waste, biomass, industrial waste, hazardous waste, and solid hydrocarbons, such as coal, oil sands, petcock and oil shale.

Considering numerous problems encountered in medical and urban waste management in the country, we decided to employ high technology to overcome them, Mahmood Quran-Nevis, an official with Vice Presidency for Science and Technology has said.

He went on to add that currently, autoclaves are used as waste disposal facilities in hospitals; the temperature of the autoclave is 130 degrees and most of the bacteria are not killed and subsequently they can contribute to various environmental problems.

Referring to the foreign countries reluctance to provide us with high technology machines, he noted that regarding the importance of medical waste disposal and disinfection, we managed to domestically produce the necessary equipment needed for healthcare waste treatment and disposal.

He went on to state that the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, Plasma



Physics Research Center, Islamic Azad University, Science and Research Branch, and some domestic companies have cooperated in this regard.

The technology employs plasma torches which increase temperatures up to 1,700 degrees inside the reactor, disposes the waste and separates hazardous gases by a filter, he noted, highlighting, based on environment assessments the gases the device produce are completely safe having no harmful effects. The remains are kind of compressed solid at the bottom of the reactor which can be used for the reinforcing buildings or making decorative items, he also explained.

Using this method dose not entail waste segregation, and all sorts of waste disposed can be disposed in the machine, while in the waste incinerator normally glass, metal and

‘Too soon to decide cheetah kept in captivity is pregnant or not’

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — Female Asiatic cheetah, Delbar, kept in captivity, undergone artificial insemination at Pardisan Park in Tehran earlier this year (starting on March 21), and may be pregnant but it is still too soon to determine, Majid Kharrazian-Moqaddam, director of the wildlife conservation and management at the Department of Environment has said.

Artificial insemination is a method of treating infertility by inserting semen directly into a womb.

With her first pregnancy failed, artificial insemination became an option as possibility of natural mating of Asiatic cheetah couple Kushki and Delbar has declined in the past years, Kharrazian-Moqaddam said.

So, we introduced Kushki’s sperm into Delbar’s cervix for the purpose of achieving a pregnancy less than two months ago, and the result will be announced within next month, because deciding whether she is pregnant or not involves running a scan using anesthetics which is risky regarding her conditions by putting her in a state of high anxiety, he explained.

Although we have not decided so far whether to perform a scan or not, it is safer for the fetus to wait for the physical changes to appear on the cheetah, Kharrazian-Moqaddam further highlighted.

Currently, it is not possible to claim that Delbar is carrying cubs in her uterus, and in fact, we are striving not to put her under stress, he noted, IRNA reported on Saturday.

He further expressed hope that the female cheetah is pregnant, concluding that the couple being kept in captivity are totally healthy.

In 2015, the female Asiatic cheetah once became pregnant naturally but sadly lost her cub.

Last year (March 2018-March 2019)



Delbar was physically prepared for mating with Kushki (the male Asiatic cheetah in captivity), however, possibly due to Kushki’s old age, the two didn’t breed.

Natural mating has been already tried for Asiatic cheetahs kept in captivity, which sadly failed. Now, artificial insemination is considered to be the major option for fertilize the female Asiatic cheetah, nonetheless, the chance of pregnancy and survival of the cubs is extremely low. However, any achievement of using artificial insemination to breed them would raise hopes for Asiatic cheetahs.

The world’s fastest mammal, capable of reaching speeds of 120 kilometers per hour, once stalked habitats from the eastern reaches of India to the Atlantic coast of Senegal, once their numbers have stabilized in parts of southern Africa, but they have practically disappeared from northern Africa and Asia.

The subspecies “Acinonyx jubatus venaticus”, commonly known as the Asiatic cheetah, is critically endangered, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, with fewer than 50 believed to remain in Iran.

Roads fragmenting cheetahs’ habitats are the main threats for the species, while guard dogs and stray dogs, drought spells, decreasing population of the prey species to support the cheetahs, and habitat loss are also other factors endangering the sparse population of the cheetahs in the country.

Global heating to inflict more droughts on Africa as well as floods

Global heating could bring many more bouts of severe drought as well as increased flooding to Africa than previously forecast, scientists have warned.

New research says the continent will experience many extreme outbreaks of intense rainfall over the next 80 years. These could trigger devastating floods, storms and disruption of farming. In addition, these events are likely to be interspersed with more crippling droughts during the growing season and these could also damage crop and food production.

“Essentially we have found that both ends of Africa’s weather extremes will get more severe,” said Elizabeth Kendon of the Met Office’s Hadley Centre in Exeter. “The wet extreme will get worse, but also the appearance of dry spells during the growing season will also get more severe.”

This meteorological double whammy is blamed on the burning of fossil fuels, which is increasing levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and causing it to heat up. Last month levels of carbon dioxide reached 415 parts per million, their highest level since Homo sapiens first appeared on Earth – and scientists warn that they are likely to continue on this upward curve for several decades. Global temperatures will be raised dangerously as a result.

The new meteorology study – carried out by scientists at the Met Office in collaboration with researchers at the Institute of Climate and Atmospheric Science at Leeds University – reports on the likely impact on Africa of these temperature rises and indicates that western and central areas will suffer the worst impacts of weather disruptions. Many countries in these regions – including Niger, Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo – are expected to experience substantial growth

the regional countries as well, he concluded.

Kiyoumars Kalantari, head of the waste management working group affiliated to Department of Environment said in July 2018 that some 115 tons of medical waste is being generated on a daily basis in the province of Tehran. He also regretted that despite the efforts made by the Ministry of Health, except for a few of the hospitals, medical waste is not being regulated in other health-care providing centers.

Deputy supervisor for Tehran City Council Afshin Habibzadeh also announced that some 60 tons of medical waste containing infectious toxic substances, is being stock-piled daily on Arad mountain in Kahrizak, southern part of the capital.

According to the U.S. Environment Protection Agency, improper management of discarded needles and other sharps can pose a health risk to the public and waste workers. For example, discarded needles may expose waste workers to potential needle stick injuries and potential infection when containers break open inside garbage trucks or needles are mistakenly sent to recycling facilities. Janitors and housekeepers also risk injury if loose sharps poke through plastic garbage bags. Used needles can transmit serious diseases, such as human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and hepatitis.

Measures to ensure the safe and environmentally sound management of health care wastes can prevent adverse health and environmental impacts from such waste including the unintended release of chemical or biological hazards, including drug-resistant microorganisms, into the environment thus protecting the health of patients, health workers, and the general public.



in population over that time and will be particularly vulnerable to severe floods.

At the other end of the precipitation spectrum, the study revealed there would be an increase in occasions when severe drought would occur for up to 10 days in the midst of the most critical part of a region’s growing season. The result could cause severe disruption to crop production.

“We have been able to model – in much finer detail than was previously possible – the manner in which rainfall patterns will change over Africa,” said Kendon. In the past it was thought intense rainfalls would occur in a region every 30 years. The new study, funded by UK foreign aid, indicates this is more likely to happen every three or four years.

An example of such flooding occurred two weeks ago when it was reported that eight people had died south of Kampala in Uganda after torrential rain hit the region. Similarly, at least 15 people were reported to have died during floods in Kenya last year. Thousands lost their homes.

“Our research suggests that extreme bouts of rainfall are likely to be seven or eight times more frequent than they are today,” said Kendon. The new research, which is published in the scientific journal Nature Communications, is based on forecasts of rainfall in Africa that were achieved by analysing weather patterns in great detail.

(Source: The Guardian)

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ع

500,000 policemen ready to ensure road safety during Noruz

Traffic police teams comprising 500,000 policemen will stand guard to ensure safety by monitoring road regulations during the new year holidays (Noruz, starting March 21), road traffic police chief Mohammad Hossein Hamidi has announced.

In this regard, coordination has been made with the related bodies to fully control the country’s roads and prevent the probable accidents, he added.

Given that this year’s holiday is longer, trips certainly increases compared to past years, so we decided to constantly monitor the highways, he stated.

PREFIX/SUFFIX

“-crat”

■ **Meaning:** government
■ **For example:** The **bureaucrats** imposed rules and regulations on big business.

PHRASAL VERB

Hinge on/upon something

■ **Meaning:** if a result hinges on something, it depends on it completely
■ **For example:** His political future hinges on the outcome of this election.

IDIOM

A bundle of nerves

■ **Explanation:** if you describe someone as a bundle of nerves, you mean that they are very nervous, tense or worried
■ **For example:** My son is doing his driving test today. Needless to say he’s a bundle of nerves!

Palestinians urge demos, strike against U.S.-led conference

TEHRAN — Palestinian factions have called for demonstrations and a general strike in protest at an upcoming US-led conference in Bahrain, which centers on a controversial Washington-crafted “peace” plan.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas’ Fatah Party said factions within the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) umbrella group had called for the demos and the strike.

The factions have set June 24, a day ahead of the two-day conference, as the day when the rallies will begin across the Israeli-occupied West Bank and the blockaded Gaza Strip. The strike is planned to start across the Palestinian territories as the event begins in the Bahraini capital, Manama.

The conference is meant to offer economic incentives for the US-devised plan, which Washington has called “the deal of the century” and which it says would resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

But, according to reports that have revealed

the details of the plan, it ignores the Palestinians’ rights and historical demands altogether.

The Palestinians, who would normally be one party to any deal on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, have rejected the plan based on the details that have emerged.

According to Press TV, the Palestinian Authority, headed by Abbas, stopped recognizing any “peace” role by Washington in late 2017 after the White House recognized the holy city of Jerusalem al-Quds in the West Bank as Israel’s “capital,” sidestepping Palestinians’ age-old demand that the city’s eastern part serve as the capital of their future state.

The authority has also called on all Arab countries to refrain from participating in the conference.

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have, however, announced readiness to take part in the conference. So have Egypt and Jordan, which have open diplomatic ties with the Israeli regime.



Yemeni drones target airport installations south of Saudi Arabia

TEHRAN — Yemen’s Houthi Ansarullah movement has launched fresh drone attacks on areas south of Saudi Arabia to compensate for kingdom’s devastating bombardment of the impoverished country.

The Houthi-run al-Masirah TV said in a report that the “large-scale and measured” drone operations had successfully targeted airports in Jizan and Abha regions.

It cited a spokesman of the Yemeni armed forces as saying that the installations targeted in the operation by Qasif K2 drones were now out of service. It said the control rooms in Jizan airport and the fuel station in Abha airport were the main target of the attacks.

The spokesman said the attacks were in retaliation for Saudi “aggression” against Yemen, saying such attacks will intensify in size and number if Riyadh continued with its bombardment and blockade of the impoverished Yemenis.

Al-Masirah said air traffic monitoring centers at Jizan



and Abha airports had confirmed the Saturday attacks.

However, Saudi-owned Al-Arabiya TV said that a ballistic missile targeting the city of Abha, located to the southwest

of Saudi Arabia, had been intercepted.

The Houthis have intensified their so-called retaliatory attacks on military positions in southern Saudi territories over the past few days. The main targets in those attacks have been installations in Jizan, Najran, Abha and Khamis Mushait.

In a major attack last month, Yemeni drones managed to hit key oil installations in the Saudi capital Riyadh.

The attacks come as Saudi Arabia continues to target crowded civilian locations across Yemen heedless of international criticism.

According to Press TV, the attacks came a day after Saudis bombed areas in Yemen’s capital Sana’a and in the northwestern province of Hajjah.

Tens of thousands of Yemeni people have been killed since Riyadh started the war on its southern neighbor in March 2015.

Sea of black’ Hong Kong protesters demand leader step down’

TEHRAN — Hundreds of thousands of black-clad protesters in Hong Kong demanded on Sunday that the city’s leader step down over her handling of a bill that would have allowed extradition to China and which sparked one of the most violent protests in decades.

Some carried white carnation flowers and others held banners saying, “Do not shoot, we are HongKonger” - an appeal to police who fired rubber bullets and tear gas at protesters on Wednesday, injuring more than 70 people.

The protesters formed a sea of black along roads, walkways and train stations across Hong Kong’s financial center to vent their frustration and anger at Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam.

“It’s much bigger today. Many more people,” said one protester who gave her

name as Ms Wong. “I came today because of what happened on Wednesday, with the police violence.”

Loud cheers rang out when activists called through loud hailers for Lam’s resignation and the cry “step down” echoed through the streets. Protesters also chanted “pursue the black police”, angry at what they feel was an overreaction by police, Reuters reported.

Beijing-backed Lam on Saturday indefinitely delayed an extradition bill that would have allowed people to be sent to mainland China for trial, expressing “deep sorrow and regret” although she stopped short of apologizing.

It was a dramatic retreat by Lam, but for many opponents, a suspension of the bill was not enough and Sunday’s marchers called for it to be scrapped and Lam to go.

“We want to pressure our government

because (they) didn’t respond to our first march,” said Icy Tang, newly graduated from university in Hong Kong. “So we are coming for the second time - and hope she will listen.”

The about-face was one of the most significant political turnarounds by the Hong Kong government since Britain returned the territory to China in 1997, and it threw into question Lam’s ability to continue to lead the city.

“Carrie Lam refused to apologize yesterday. It’s unacceptable,” said 16-year-old Catherine Cheung. “She’s a terrible leader who is full of lies ... I think she’s only delaying the bill now to trick us into calming down.”

Her classmate, Cindy Yip, said: “That’s why we’re still demanding the bill be scrapped. We don’t trust her anymore. She has to quit.”

Critics say the planned extradition law could threaten Hong Kong’s rule of law and its international reputation as an Asian financial hub. Some Hong Kong tycoons have already started moving personal wealth offshore.

Activist investor David Webb, in a newsletter on Sunday, said if Lam was a stock he would recommend shorting her with a target price of zero.

“Call it the Carrie trade. She has irrevocably lost the public’s trust,” Webb said.

“Her minders in Beijing, while expressing public support for now, have clearly lined her up for the chop by distancing themselves from the proposal in recent days.”

China’s Communist Party mouthpiece, the People’s Daily, said in a commentary on Sunday that central authorities expressed “firm support” for Lam.

Syrian forces launch retaliatory strikes in Idlib, Hama

TEHRAN — Syrian government forces have conducted retaliatory strikes against the positions of Jabhat al-Nusra terrorist group, formerly known as al-Nusra Front, in Hama and Idlib provinces.

SANA reported army units on Sunday conducted concentrated bombardments targeting terrorist positions in Hama’s northern countryside in an area between al-Sayyad village and Kafr Zita town, killing a number of the terrorists.

The reporter added that the terrorists’ vehicles and rocket launching pads were also targeted and destroyed in the strikes.

In a separate operation, Syrian forces conducted concentrated bombardments targeting a number of terrorists’ positions in al-Fatira town in the surroundings of Kafr Nabl in Idlib’s southern countryside, destroying an

ammunition depot there.

Syrian forces launched the strikes after the terrorists refused to honor the ceasefire agreement aimed at halting clashes between Syrian forces and militants in the area.

On Saturday, the terrorists had breached the de-escalation zone agreement and fired rocket shells on the villages of al-Sheikh Hadid, al-Jalma and al-Azizya destroying homes and properties, and causing fire to agricultural lands in Hama and Idlib countryside.

According to Press TV, Syrian government forces have managed to liberate almost all the Syrian lands occupied by terrorist outfits.

A de-escalation agreement froze a Syrian offensive to liberate Idlib, where between 10,000 and 15,000 militants are said to be hiding.



Militants have persisted in their stay in the zone, refusing to leave the area while repeatedly violating the ceasefire by staging attacks in the region.

Netanyahu’s wife admits criminal wrongdoing in meals catering case

TEHRAN — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s wife, Sara, appeared in court on Sunday to admit criminal wrongdoing over the misuse of state funds to order catered meals, in a plea bargain carrying no jail time.

Under the agreement, a fraud charge was reduced to a lesser offense and she will pay the state 45,000 shekels (\$12,490) in reimbursement and a 10,000 shekel (\$2,775) fine.

According to the original indictment, Sara Netanyahu, along with a government employee, fraudulently obtained from the state more than \$100,000 for hundreds of

meals supplied by restaurants, bypassing regulations that prohibit the practice if a cook is employed at home.

Smiling broadly, Netanyahu faced a phalanx of cameras in the courthouse before the session got under way.

At the hearing, a judge ratified the plea deal, convicting her of the criminal charge of intentionally exploiting another person’s mishandling of state money for her own benefit, after prosecutors dropped the more serious offense of fraud.

“Do you understand what you admitted to?” the judge asked Netanyahu, 60.

“Yes, I do,” she replied.

Israel’s YNet website published a photograph of what it said was a note from her husband, who was not in the court, that was passed to her during the session. “We will get through this, too. Be strong!”, it said.

While the deal lifts a legal cloud over Sara Netanyahu, it has no direct bearing on the prime minister’s own troubles - three corruption cases in which he has denied wrongdoing.

In February, Israel’s attorney general said he intended to file fraud and bribery charges against Benjamin Netanyahu, pending a pre-trial hearing.

That session is set for early October, two weeks after a Sept. 17 general election that follows a ballot in April in which Netanyahu declared victory but failed to form a government. In explaining the plea agreement to the court, prosecutors cited Mrs Netanyahu’s clean record, the public humiliation she has suffered as a result of the case and the time that has passed - up to nine years - since the crimes were committed.

The government employee charged along with Netanyahu also reached an agreement with the prosecution and was fined 10,000 shekels.

program, and Turkish pilots have trained in the U.S. to fly the aircraft.

Recently, however, the US stopped training the pilots over Ankara’s refusal to halt the purchases.

On Monday, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a non-binding resolution that urges Turkey to reverse its decision to buy the S-400s and that calls for sanctions if Turkish officials continue with the acquisition.

Russia & EU keen on switching to national currencies for mutual trade

➔1 Moscow started working on its own payment service, which is dubbed the SPFS (System for Transfer of Financial Messages), amid threats that it could be disconnected from the internationally recognized SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication) system back in 2014.

The CBR governor said the Russian alternative network operates the same standards as SWIFT. It’s convenient for those joining it as they do not have to change their internal mechanisms. Moreover, not just banks but also large businesses can join directly and some have already done so, she added.

Meanwhile, the SPFS is being already used in Russia, where 18 percent of money transfers are going through it. Banks can therefore choose what system they want to use and “quickly switch” in case of any risks, according to Nabiullina.

Earlier this year, Russia’s central bank announced that the country’s alternative to SWIFT had made “significant progress” as it already complies with international standards and foreign players can be integrated in it. In April, the regulator said it had signed agreements with two non-residents and was holding talks with five more. Joining the network allows foreign players to bypass Western sanctions, enabling them to cooperate with Russian companies hit by the restrictions.

Domestically, some 500 participants, including major Russian financial institutions and companies, have already joined the SPFS network.

The self-destruction of American power

By Fareed Zakaria

Sometime in the last two years, American hegemony died. The age of U.S. dominance was a brief, heady era, about three decades marked by two moments, each a breakdown of sorts. It was born amid the collapse of the Berlin Wall, in 1989. The end, or really the beginning of the end, was another collapse, that of Iraq in 2003, and the slow unraveling since. But was the death of the United States’ extraordinary status a result of external causes, or did Washington accelerate its own demise through bad habits and bad behavior? That is a question that will be debated by historians for years to come. But at this point, we have enough time and perspective to make some preliminary observations.

As with most deaths, many factors contributed to this one. There were deep structural forces in the international system that inexorably worked against any one nation that accumulated so much power. In the American case, however, one is struck by the ways in which Washington—from an unprecedented position—mishandled its hegemony and abused its power, losing allies and emboldening enemies. And now, under the Trump administration, the United States seems to have lost interest, indeed lost faith, in the ideas and purpose that animated its international presence for three-quarters of a century.

U.S. hegemony in the post-Cold War era was like nothing the world had seen since the Roman Empire. Writers are fond of dating the dawn of “the American century” to 1945, not long after the publisher Henry Luce coined the term. But the post-World War II era was quite different from the post-1989 one. Even after 1945, in large stretches of the globe, France and the United Kingdom still had formal empires and thus deep influence.

■ The beginning of the end

Just as American hegemony grew in the early 1990s while no one was noticing, so in the late 1990s did the forces that would undermine it, even as people had begun to speak of the United States as “the indispensable nation” and “the world’s sole superpower.” First and foremost, there was the rise of China. It is easy to see in retrospect that Beijing would become the only serious rival to Washington, but it was not as apparent a quarter century ago. Although China had grown speedily since the 1980s, it had done so from a very low base. Few countries had been able to continue that process for more than a couple of decades. China’s strange mixture of capitalism and Leninism seemed fragile, as the Tiananmen Square uprising had revealed.

But China’s rise persisted, and the country became the new great power on the block, one with the might and the ambition to match the United States. Russia, for its part, went from being both weak and quiescent in the early 1990s to being a revanchist power, a spoiler with enough capability and cunning to be disruptive. With two major global players outside the U.S.-constructed international system, the world had entered a post-American phase. Today, the United States is still the most powerful country on the planet, but it exists in a world of global and regional powers that can—and frequently do—push back.

The 9/11 attacks and the rise of Islamic terrorism played a dual role in the decline of U.S. hegemony. At first, the attacks seemed to galvanize Washington and mobilize its power. In 2001, the United States, still larger economically than the next five countries put together, chose to ramp up its annual defense spending by an amount—almost \$50 billion—that was larger than the United Kingdom’s entire yearly defense budget. When Washington intervened in Afghanistan, it was able to get overwhelming support for the campaign, including from Russia. Two years later, despite many objections, it was still able to put together a large international coalition for an invasion of Iraq. The early years of this century marked the high point of the American imperium, as Washington tried to remake wholly alien nations—Afghanistan and Iraq—thousands of miles away, despite the rest of the world’s reluctant acquiescence or active opposition.

(Source: Foreign Affairs)

The meaning behind Trump’s March polling

➔1 In this situation, Trump has no way other than changing his current foreign policy that has turned into a losing game because of people like John Bolton and Mike Pompeo in his cabinet.

Trump is fully aware that if he doesn’t change his foreign policies, this would become his Achilles’ heel in 2020 presidential elections.

Now, it seems very easy to figure out what Trump’s policy will be toward Iran. He is trying to get out of the trouble he created for himself in the first place by abandoning U.S. nuclear deal with Iran and threatening Iran with putting sanctions on the country.

Erdogan: Russian S-400 systems to arrive in July

TEHRAN — Turkey’s president says advanced Russian S-400 missile defense systems will begin arriving in the country in July, despite threats by the United States over the defense exchange.

“I think they will start to come in the first half of July,” President Recep Tayyip Erdogan told Turkey’s NTV broadcaster on his way back from a multi-national security summit in Tajikistan. “We discussed the S-400 subject with Russia. Indeed, the S-400 issue is settled.”

Turkey and Russia finalized an agreement on the delivery of the S-400s in December 2017, two years after the U.S. decided to withdraw its Patriot surface-to-air missile system from the Turkish border with Syria.

Ever since, Washington has been warning Ankara against going ahead with the purchase, including by threatening to remove it from a multilateral program aimed at manufacturing the U.S.’s F-35 warplanes.

Several Turkish industrial giants are partaking in the

Pogba looking for new challenge away from Man Utd

Paul Pogba has given a strong indication that he wants to leave Manchester United this summer to seek a “new challenge”.

The French World Cup winner rejoined United from Juventus for a then world record £89 million (\$112 million) fee three years ago, but has largely failed to live up to expectations.

Pogba has been strongly linked with a move to Real Madrid or even a return to Juventus with United having failed to qualify for the Champions League next season.

“For me I have been for three years in Manchester and have been doing great; some good moments and some bad moments, like everybody. Like everywhere else,” Pogba was quoted as telling reporters in Tokyo by The Guardian on Sunday.

“I think for me it could be a good time to have a new challenge somewhere else. I am thinking of this: to have a new challenge somewhere else.”

Despite scoring 16 goals this season, half of which came from the penalty spot, Pogba was often criticised for his contribution under both Jose Mourinho and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer as United limped to a sixth-placed finish in the Premier League.

Should Pogba move on, United are likely to seek a higher fee than they spent on the 26-year-old in 2016.

The summer overhaul in the transfer market at Old Trafford has already begun with the signing of Welsh winger Daniel James from Swansea for an initial £15 million (\$19 million) fee this week.

The Red Devils have also been linked with bids for defenders Harry Maguire and Issa Diop and Newcastle midfielder Sean Longstaff.

(Source: Mirror)

Ramos marries TV personality in Galactico wedding ‘like no other’

Sergio Ramos, the Real Madrid captain, married Spanish TV presenter Pilar Rubio in Seville on Saturday in a ‘Galactico’ wedding that he said would be “like no other” although he was coy on whether AC/DC were playing.

The crowd, who had gathered at Seville’s famous 16th century cathedral to watch the many celebrity guests arrive, were delirious at the sight of ex-Real player David Beckham and his wife and former pop star Victoria, former and current La Liga stars Jordi Alba, Luka Modric, Keylor Navas, Roberto Carlos and Alvaro Morata, as well as matador El Cordobes.

The 33-year-old Ramos, who is from a suburb of Seville, arrived wearing a dark three-piece suit in a discrete check pattern, on the arm of his mother Paqui Garcia, who wore a traditional Andalusian mantilla, or raised head scarf.

The bride, who is 41, arrived a little later in a floor-length white gown with a long train.

The couple have been together for seven years and are the parents of three children.

After an hour-long ceremony, at which Asturian flamenco star Nina Pastori sang, the husband and wife emerged, posed at the door and exchanged kisses.

“It was very exciting,” Rubio said.

The celebrations moved to the Sergio Ramos’ ‘Happiness of SR4’ estate, outside the city.

For the party, guests were required top wear a temporary unicorn tattoo and surrenderer their cell phones and any other devices with cameras or microphones.

The banquet was being prepared by chef Dani Garcia, who has won three Michelin stars for his restaurant in the Andalusian resort Marbella.

Photographs in Spanish media in the days leading up to the event showed a Ferris wheel, bumper cars, a stage and Indian teepees had been set up.

(Source: AFP)

Ukraine take England’s crown as U20 world champions



Ukraine came from behind to beat South Korea 3-1 and win their first FIFA Under-20 World Cup.

The match - in Lodz, Poland - featured two teams playing in the final for the first time in their history.

South Korea led through an early penalty, which Lee Kang-in fired past Real Madrid goalkeeper Andriy Lunin.

But Vladyslav Supriaha scored either side of half-time and Dynamo Kiev club-mate Heorhii Tsitaishvili sped away to add a late third.

Korea almost equalised at 2-1 but 20-year-old Lunin, who spent last season on loan with Leganes in La Liga, brilliantly tipped Lee Jae-ik’s header on to the crossbar.

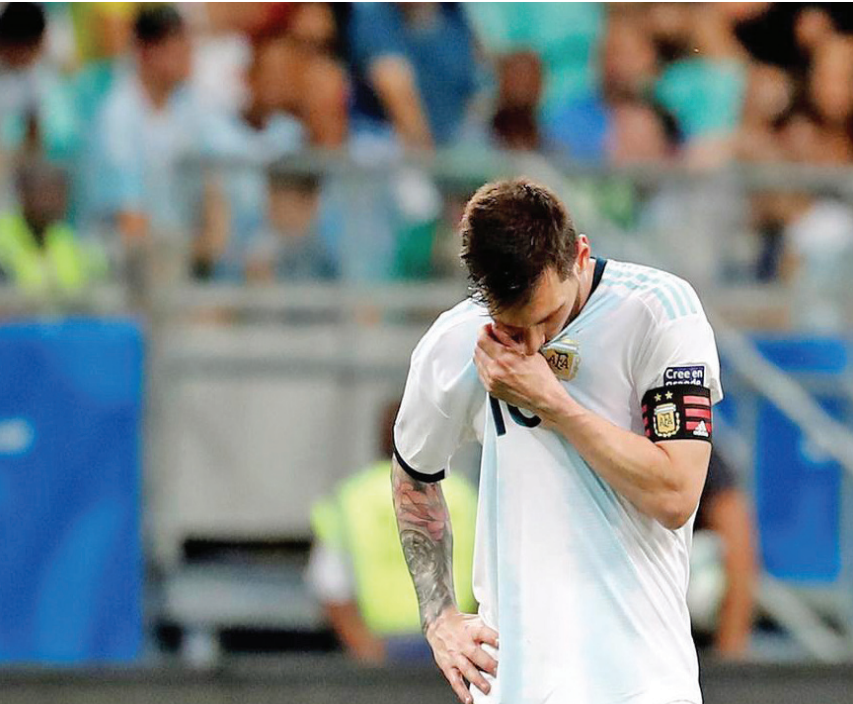
Ukraine - who did not qualify in 2017 - topped a group containing the USA, Nigeria and Qatar, before beating Panama 4-1 in the last 16, Colombia 1-0 in the quarter-final and Italy 1-0 in the semis.

Norway’s Erling Braut Haaland won the Golden Boot with nine goals, all in one game - a 12-0 group win over Honduras, his side’s last game of the tournament.

Defending champions England failed to qualify for the finals.

(Source: BBC)

Messi ‘bitter’ as Colombia stun Argentina



Argentina can still make the knock-out stages with games against Paraguay and guests Qatar, the Asian champions, to come.

Midfielder Leandro Paredes, who forced a diving save out of Ospina with one long

range strike and sent a second whistling past the post, was pleased with the second half performance.

“We created a lot but unfortunately they scored in our best period,” he said.

■ **Controlling Messi**

Colombia were the better side in a goalless first half but scored twice against the run of play in the second period, with both goals coming from substitutes.

“I came on and helped my team. We did the best we could and we managed to turn the game around at the end of the second half. We played really well,” said Zapata, who this season helped Italians Atalanta qualify for the Champions League for the first time in their history.

Portuguese coach Carlos Queiroz, who only took over Colombia after leaving his job with Iran at the end of the January-February Asian Cup, paid tribute to the side’s collective effort.

“Colombia as a team was the best player on the pitch. We played with a lot of discipline, concentration, with responsibility, and players with the quality of James (Rodriguez) and (Radamel) Falcao helped us a lot in this organization,” said Queiroz.

And he praised his team for “controlling Messi a bit,” noting that “we’re always talking about him and you cannot neutralize him.”

Both he and Argentina counterpart Lionel Scaloni agreed that each side had their moments during the game.

“In some moments we were on top, then they were superior to us -- that’s how football goes, there are different stages in matches,” said Scaloni.

(Source: Reuters)

Maurizio Sarri leaves Chelsea to join Juventus



Chelsea have confirmed Maurizio Sarri’s departure from the club after just one season.

The Italian manager has agreed to join Juventus, who announced his appointment as their new boss on Sunday afternoon, on a contract worth around £18m. A deal was agreed between the clubs earlier in the week.

The Stamford Bridge side are now expected to move for record goalscorer and current Derby manager Frank Lampard to fill the vacant role.

The Italian champions agreed a £7million compensation fee for Sarri on Thursday night and concluded the formalities over the next three days. There had been extensive and protracted negotiations between Marina Granovskaia and Juventus sporting director Fabio Paratici, who flew to London to try and find a resolution. Sarri has been allowed to leave Chelsea despite having two years left to run on the £5m-a-year deal the 60-year-old penned last summer.

He has now penned a three-year deal worth up to £6.2m a year to move to Turin and take over from Massimiliano Allegri.

Derby are now anticipating a move for Lampard, who would likely bring assistant manager and former Chelsea midfielder Jody Morris with him.

Sarri’s departure came after he told Chelsea he wanted to leave following the

Europa League final.

There was significant opposition to Sarri’s regime from the stands at Chelsea, despite him reaching the Carabao Cup final, capturing the Europa League and leading them back to the Champions League with a third-place finish. Chelsea were willing to keep him on for next season until he told Granovskaia he wanted to leave — with a desire to return to Italy as he was missing home key.

Director Granovskaia said: ‘In talks we had following the Europa League final, Maurizio made it clear how strongly he desired to return to his native country, explaining that his reasons for wanting to return to work in Italy were significant.

‘He also believed it important to be nearer his family, and for the well-being of his elderly parents he felt he needed to live closer to them at this point.

‘Maurizio leaves Chelsea with thanks from us all for the work he and his assistants did during the season he spent as our head coach, and for winning the Europa League, guiding us to another cup final and a third-place finish in the Premier League.

‘We would also like to congratulate him on securing the role as big as any in Serie A and to wish him the best of luck for the future’.

(Source: Daily Mail)

Froome confident of full recovery after horror crash



Chris Froome said Saturday “he is lucky to be here” after suffering multiple fractures in a high-speed crash that ruled him out of the Tour de France.

Froome, 34, was airlifted to hospital in Saint-Etienne for emergency surgery after slamming into a wall at high speed during practice on Wednesday ahead of the fourth stage of the Criterium du Dauphine race in central France.

The force of the impact fractured his pelvis, right femur, hip, right elbow and left him with broken ribs.

“I know how lucky I am to be here today and how much I owe to all the paramedics and medical staff on the race,” said Froome.

Froome will miss out on a chance to win a record-equalling fifth Tour de France title next month, but after successful surgery there is hope he could return to cycling in six months.

“Whilst this is a setback and a major one at that, I am focusing on looking forward. There is a long road to recovery ahead, but that recovery starts now and I am fully focused on returning back to my best,” Froome said in a statement given by Team Ineos.

He was pictured in a his hospital bed, smiling and giving a thumbs-up to the camera.

“This is obviously a tough time but I have taken a lot of strength from the support over the last three days. The outpouring of support has been really humbling and something I would never have expected.”

Froome was travelling at around 50 kilometres per hour when a gust of wind hurtled him towards a wall after he momentarily took his hand off the handlebars to blow his nose.

In thanking the medical care he has received, the British rider also acknowledged his gratitude to the medical services.

“I’d like to extend my gratitude to the Team, especially Doctor Richard Usher and his medical staff, who have been exemplary since the crash.

“In addition, I am so thankful to the emergency services and everyone at Roanne Hospital who assisted and stabilised me, as well as the surgeons, doctors and nurses at the University Hospital of St Etienne, who have really gone above and beyond the call of duty, for which I am ever so grateful.”

Froome may be gone from the Criterium du Dauphine but he is not forgotten with Dutch climbing specialist Wout Poels of his Team Ineos dedicating his win in the mountainous penultimate stage on Saturday to the stricken Briton.

(Source: Daily Mail)

Fury batters Schwarz, eyes Wilder rematch



Unbeaten British heavyweight Tyson Fury outclassed Germany’s Tom Schwarz to score a victory by second-round technical knockout Saturday.

Fury, determined to put on a show on his Las Vegas debut, overwhelmed Schwarz with a dazzling display of ringcraft before unloading in the second round at the MGM Grand Garden Arena.

The flamboyant 30-year-old had established his dominance early, rocking Schwarz repeatedly with a series of stiff left jabs in the opening round that rapidly reddened the previously unbeaten German fighter’s face.

In the second round Fury bamboozled Schwarz by switching to southpaw, once again landing blows on his less experienced opponent with ease.

Fury had Schwarz on the canvas after uncorking a crisp right-left combination, blood pouring from the German fighter’s nose. He then cornered Schwarz and unfurled a series of unopposed punches that left referee Kenny Bayless no option but to wave an end to the fight.

“The key tonight was to enjoy myself,” Fury said afterwards. “I used the jab, I was slipping and sliding.”

“I came here to have fun and put on a show for Las Vegas and I hope everyone enjoyed it as much as I did,” added Fury, who had entered the ring wearing a Stars and Stripes-themed costume to the strains of James Brown’s “Living in America.”

“I felt like it was my coming out party,” Fury added.

“I wanted to show a few things to the American public to introduce myself properly. And tonight I showed a little bit of speed, boxing skill, an ability to slip and slide and most importantly, to finish.”

The win saw Fury improve to 28-0-1 with 20 knockouts and will heighten demand for a rematch against undefeated WBC heavyweight champion Deontay Wilder.

■ **‘He’s something special’**

Fury and Wilder fought an epic battle in their first meeting in Los Angeles last December, when Fury famously got up from a 12th round knockdown to earn a draw.

Fury said after his win on Saturday that his camp is planning

one more fight, either in late September or early October, before a rematch with Wilder early in 2020.

“What’s next? Next year we’re going to hunt down Deontay Wilder for that green belt,” Fury said.

Fury’s US promoter, legendary boxing impresario Bob Arum, suggested a rematch with Wilder could surpass the earnings records set by Manny Pacquiao and Floyd Mayweather’s 2015 bout.

“I’ve been around a long time,” Arum said. “And this guy (Fury) is right now easily the best heavyweight in the world, maybe one of the all-time best heavyweights.

“I mean how do you deal with a guy who is 6ft 9in and moves the way he does? He’s something else and something special.”

Arum said that next year’s likely rematch with Wilder would take place in Las Vegas.

“The fight will be in the first quarter of next year,” he said. “Right now, I can’t see why that fight won’t surpass Mayweather-Pacquiao.”

Fury’s win came a fortnight after Britain’s WBA, WBO and IBF heavyweight champion Anthony Joshua was stunned by Andy Ruiz Jr. in a massive upset in New York.

“There was three horses in the heavyweight division, and then there were two,” Fury said, referring to Joshua’s defeat.

“Deontay Wilder is coming. It’s going to happen.”

(Source: AFP)

Iran ready for FIBA 3x3 World Cup

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran’s national women’s basketball team are ready to participate at the 2019 edition of FIBA 3x3 World Cup.

The competition will be held in Amsterdam, Netherlands from June 18 to 23.

Iran’s national women’s team composed of Saeideh Elli, Shadi Abdolvand, Kimiya Yazdian Tehrani and Delaram Vakili. The team will be headed by Nika Beyk-Liklee in the competition.

Team Melli are drawn along with Spain, Romania, Mongolia and Czech Republic in Pool C.

Iran will start the campaign with two matches against Mongolia and Spain, slated for Tuesday.

The Persians will meet Romania and Czech Republic on Thursday.

A total of 20 Men’s and 20 Women’s teams will participate in the FIBA 3x3 World Cup 2019. Apart from the men’s and the women’s 3x3 tournament, there will be a mixed shoot-out contest, women’s skills contest, and men’s dunk contest.

FIBA ASIA will be represented by South Korea, Mongolia, China, Qatar and Japan in the Men’s category while China, Japan, Mongolia, Iran and Indonesia will represent FIBA ASIA in the Women’s category.

A total of nine countries (Russia, China, Mongolia, Japan, France, Netherland, Ukraine, Latvia and Australia) have both men and women team in the FIBA 3x3 World Cup 2019.

The teams have a chance of winning a historic double as no country has ever won the gold in both categories in the same edition of the FIBA 3x3 world cup.

Participating teams are drawn in four pools with five in each one of them. Each team plays each other once in their respective pool. Top two teams from each pool advance to the quarterfinals and play knockout games en route to the final.

Here are the pools:

- Men’s**
Pool A: Serbia, United States, Netherlands, Turkey, South Korea
Pool B: Russia, Mongolia, Ukraine, Estonia, Puerto Rico
Pool C: Slovenia, China, Lithuania, Qatar, France
Pool D: Japan, Latvia, Brazil, Poland, Australia



■ Women’s
Pool A: China, Netherlands, Hungary, Latvia, Turkmenistan
Pool B: France, Japan, Switzerland, Australia, Andorra
Pool C: Mongolia, Romania, Iran, Czech Republic, Spain
Pool D: Russia, Ukraine, Indonesia, Italy, New Zealand
Serbia are the defending champions in the Men’s category while Italy will be looking to retain their crown in the

Women’s section.
Serbia have been the most successful team in the FIBA 3x3 World Cup winning four gold medals and a silver in five previous editions.
This is the sixth edition of the FIBA 3x3 World Cup. 3x3 World Cup, a flagship event of FIBA, is the leading competition for national teams in the format.

Iran beat Thailand at Asian Beach Handball C’ship



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran defeated Thailand 2-1 at the Asian Beach Handball Championship 2019 in Weihai, China on Sunday.

Team Melli defeated Thailand 16-12 in the first period but suffered a 13-8 loss in the second period.

Iran beat Thailand 10-8 in penalty shootout.

The Persian, who have started the campaign with a 2-0 win over Japan, will meet Saudi Arabia on Monday.

The tournament includes two groups

of six teams.

Group A consists of Chinese Taipei, Vietnam, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Indonesia and Qatar, while Iran are in Group B along with Oman, Saudi Arabia, Japan, Pakistan and Thailand.

The event also serves as qualifier for the 2020 Men’s Beach Handball World Championships in Italy.

Qatar are the most decorated team in the Asian Beach Handball Championship. They have won the last four titles out of seven editions.

Persepolis win Iran’s Super Cup



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Persepolis football team claimed the title of the fifth edition of the Iran’s Super Cup, Iran Football League Organization announced that on Sunday.

The Iranian Super Cup is a trophy awarded to the winners of a match between the Persian Gulf Pro League’s season champions and the winners of the Hazfi Cup.

It is similar to numerous other Super Cup tournaments held in other countries.

Persepolis claimed the title of the Iran Professional League and also won Hazfi

Cup after defeating Damash 1-0 in the final match.

The Reds won the title for the third time without playing a match.

Saba Battery, as Hazfi Cup winners, won the inaugural edition pf Super Cup by defeating league champions Foolad 4-0.

Zob Ahan won the second edition, beating 2015-16 Persian Gulf Pro League winners Esteghlal Khuzestan 4-2 after extra time. Next year Persepolis were crowned Super Cup by beating Naft Tehran 3-0 in Azadi Stadium.

Vidal says Chile are team to fear ahead of Japan Copa clash

Chile midfielder Arturo Vidal on Saturday vowed to strike fear into Japan when the two sides meet in their Copa America opener on Monday.

The two-time reigning champions are not among the favourites this time around having lost some of the players who took them to the 2014 World Cup and back-to-back Copa titles in 2015 and 2016.

But Barcelona’s Vidal is convinced the remnants of Chile’s golden generation still have much to offer in this tournament.

“This squad should be feared, from the beginning to the final. We hope it’s going to be something amazing, but we’re going to take it game by game,” he told reporters from Chile’s hotel in Sao Paulo, where they will play tournament guests Japan.

The Blue Samurai have brought an inexperienced squad to Brazil with an average age of just 22. When it was announced last month, 17 of the squad had yet to earn a cap.

One of those, 18-year-old Takefusa Kubo, has since then



not only made his debut but also signed for Real Madrid.

“He’s a player with a lot of quality, there’s a reason he’s at Real Madrid,” said Vidal.

“We’ve seen him, analyzed him really well and we know how to stop this player,” he added of the dribbling wizard nicknamed the “Japanese Messi.”

“Japan are an organized team, they’re quick and we have to be careful, concentrate and when they come out to play we have to try to attack them really quickly because afterwards they go into a 5-4-1 and it’s really hard to score a goal.”

After three years of unprecedented success, Chile came down to earth with a bump in 2017 when they failed to qualify for last year’s World Cup.

There has been change since, with veteran goalkeeper and captain Claudio Bravo one of the players ditched from the squad.

“Everything is starting from new: a new process, new players, new coaches,” said Vidal, who at 32 is one of the oldest players in Colombian coach Reinaldo Rueda’s squad and one of six with more than a century of caps.

“It took us many days to talk about and clear up things.”

(Source: AFP)

No regrets, says Golden Ball winner Lee

Golden Ball winner Lee Kang-in will savor every moment of the welcome the Korea Republic 2019 FIFA U-20 World Cup squad will receive upon their return to Seoul on Monday.

A celebration ceremony has been arranged for the squad which defied expectations to finish runners-up to Ukraine on Saturday.

Korea Republic enjoyed a dream start, with midfielder Kang-in giving them the lead in the fifth minute from the penalty spot.

Korea Republic’s exploits in the tournament, which had seen them score five consecutive wins en route to the final after having lost to Portugal in their tournament opener, eventually caught with them as they tired and Ukraine walked away 3-1 winners.

There was sadness within the Korean ranks at not being able to finish the job in their first world level final but Kang-in, awarded the tournament Golden Ball, said he had no regrets.

“There’s no reason to cry. I don’t do regrets,” said the Valencia starlet to local media.

“This has been a great tournament. I am grateful for everything that’s happened since Day One,” Lee said. “I want to thank my teammates for being part of this. I knew they were exhausted today, but they never showed it.”

Lee, who ended the tournament with two goals and four assists, earned the Golden Ball as the best player for his efforts.

At 18, he was the youngest player in the

squad but the top playmaker.

“This is an award for the entire team. We all played as one on the field,” Lee said. “I didn’t think winning the Golden Ball would be that important to me. Our goal was to win the championship, and it’s a shame we came up short. But I played as hard as I could, and I have no regrets.”

Head coach Chung Jung-yong put the loss on himself.

“The players did the absolute best they could, and they executed everything tactically and strategically,” Chung said. “As their coach, I didn’t quite give them the opportunity to succeed. I’ll try to learn from this experience.”

There may not have been the joy of lifting



a first FIFA title but Korea Republic have every reason to be proud.

Thousands watched the final at street screenings on Saturday and the celebration on Monday is expected to draw a huge crowd as the fans show their appreciation to Lee and his teammates.

(Source: the-afc)

Polish volleyball federation apologizes to Iranians

IRNA — In the wake of slanderous remarks made by Michal Kubiak, Captain of the Polish National Volleyball Team where he insulted the Iranians, the Volleyball Federation of Poland in a letter extended apologizes to the Iranian people.

In its letter to head of Iranian volleyball federation Afshin Davari, the Polish federation said: “With regard to the recent most unfortunate and utterly inadequate comments about the people of Iran expressed in media by Mr. Michal Kubiak – the captain of Polish National Senior Volleyball Men Team, Polish Volleyball Federation would kindly like to express in his name sincere and contrite apology for his statement.”

It added: “Feeling deeply sorry for what was said by Mr. Kubiak, please rest assured that Polish Volleyball Federation under no circumstances whatsoever shares such xenophobic approach.”

“Polish Volleyball Federation follows Olympic values of human dignity, national identity and fair-play equally for all its international partners, Volleyball Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran included, and strongly condemns any rude, racist or xenophobic actions as such.”

The FIVB disciplinary committee imposed a six-match ban on Kubiak in the third and fourth weeks of the 2019 Volleyball Nations League.

Kubiak had said that a nation called Iranians or Persians does not exist though Poland has to play with them sometimes. He called Iranians “fatal, malicious and damned people”.

The Polish federation went on to say: “Regretting sincerely this incident, the Polish Volleyball Federation will take all possible and necessary steps to avoid situations like this from happening.”

It reiterated: “We hope to retrieve in no time the good relations between Iran and Poland that were shared over years.”



Brazilian defender Celio joins Iran’s Tractor Sazi

TASNIM — Iranian football club Tractor Sazi completed the signing of Brazilian defender Celio Ferreira dos Santos.

Celio Ferreira dos Santos or simply Celio was a member of Tractor Sazi in 2015 but left the team to join Emirati football club Al-Shaab CSC.

The details of Celio’s contract have not been disclosed.

The 31-year-old center back has most recently played at Indonesian club Persija Jakarta.

Tractor Sazi will start Iran professional League new season under coaching of well-known Turkish coach Mustafa Denizli.

Koji Sugeno is Allianz Athlete of the Month

Japan’s wheelchair tennis player Koji Sugeno has been voted the Allianz Athlete of the Month for May after leading his national team to the World Team Cup quad title following a 2-1 victory over hosts Israel in the final.

It was the first time that Japan won the World Team Cup since the quad event was included in 1998, while denying Israel the chance to emerge as champions for a fifth time.

Sugeno received 76 per cent of the public votes. New Zealand’s swimmer Sophie Pascoe came in second with nine per cent, while Italian judoka Carolina Costa was not far behind with seven per cent.

Dutch cyclist Jetze Plat and US ice hockey player Declan Farmer were also nominated.

(Source: Paralympic.org)

Suarez: Liverpool loss worst moment of my life

Barcelona striker Luis Suarez said the shock elimination by Liverpool in the Champions League semifinals was as painful as when he was sent home from the 2014 World Cup for biting an opponent.

Barca had looked certain to reach the final of Europe’s top competition for the first time since 2015 after winning the first leg 3-0 but were blown away 4-0 at Anfield by Suarez’s former side, who went on to win 2-0 in the final against Tottenham Hotspur.

“The days after, back in Barcelona, were the worst moments of my life and career along with the 2014 World Cup; I wanted to disappear from the world,” Uruguay striker Suarez said in an interview with Fox Sports, referring to when he bit Italy’s Giorgio Chiellini and was subsequently banned from football for four months.

“I didn’t want to take my children to school, everyone could see I was in a very bad way. I had days I didn’t want to do anything, they were very difficult moments.”

The 4-3 aggregate defeat to Liverpool came a year after Barca also surrendered a three-goal advantage in a Champions League quarterfinal by losing 3-0 to Roma and were knocked out on away goals.

Suarez, however, said he could not have imagined history repeating itself when his side turned up at Anfield last month knowing that if they scored once Liverpool would have to score five.

“I didn’t see it because we are Barcelona and we thought we’d have two or three chances to score; we said this but we became nervous, we gave stupid passes away, we didn’t show the right attitude,” Suarez added.

“When the first goal came we didn’t know how to react, we knew we had really messed up. After the game in the dressing room no-one could say anything; there was sadness, bitterness and disappointment because we knew we’d given an awful image.”

Days after the defeat to Liverpool, Suarez opted to undergo surgery to treat a long-term knee problem in order to be fit for the Copa America, which began on Friday with hosts Brazil beating Bolivia 3-0.

(Source: ESPN)

INTERNATIONAL DAILY
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» Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603
» www.eshterak.ir Distributor: Padideh Novin Co.
Tel: 88911433
» Webmaster: webmaster@tehrantimes.com
» Printed at: Hamshahri No. 3(Rooztab) - ISSN: 1017-94

Tehrantimes79

Tehrantimesdaily

No. 18, Bimeh Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran
P.O. Box: 14155-4843
Zip Code: 1599814713

GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Relief is granted by God in proportion to one's need.

Imam Ali (AS)

Niavaran center to review film scores by Erich Wolfgang Korngold

A R T **TEHRAN** — Tehran's Niavaran Cultural Center will host a session on June 20 to review film scores by Erich Wolfgang Korngold, an Austrian-born composer who became one of the most important and influential composers in the history of Hollywood.



A poster for Niavaran Cultural Center's session for the review of Austrian composer Erich Wolfgang Korngold.

Iranian musician and scholar Nasrollah Davudi is scheduled to discuss a number of Korngold's outstanding works, which were composed during the first half of the 20th century. He was a noted pianist and composer of classical music, along with music for Hollywood films, whose score for "Anthony Adverse" won an Oscar in 1936. He also received another Oscar for "The Adventures of Robin Hood" in 1938.

Russian pianist Evgeny Grinko to give concert in Tehran

A R T **TEHRAN** — Russian pianist and composer Evgeny Grinko will be giving a concert in Tehran on July 18, the Rooberoo Mansion, an art and cultural institute in Tehran, has announced. The concert will take place at the Grand Hall of the Interior Ministry.



Russian pianist Evgeny Grinko performs in an undated photo.

Grinko is a talented musician who creates music that touches feelings without the need for words. His compositions prove that modern music is not just a shallow show of highly marketed production but has real substance and depth.

Radiohead to release stolen music for climate campaigners

LONDON (AP) — Radiohead says a trove of unreleased music has been stolen for ransom. But instead of paying up, the band will release it in aid of environmental activist group Extinction Rebellion. Guitarist Jonny Greenwood tweeted that about 18 hours of material from around the time of Radiohead's 1997 album "OK Computer" was stolen from singer Thom Yorke's minidisc archive last week. Greenwood said Tuesday that instead of paying the \$150,000 demanded by hackers, "we're releasing all 18 hours on (music-sharing site) Bandcamp in aid of Extinction Rebellion." Fans can buy the music for \$18 for the next 18 days. Greenwood said it was never intended for release and was "only tangentially interesting." Extinction Rebellion, which stages direct-action protests against climate change, thanked Radiohead "from the bottom of our hearts."

Tehran exhibit to take visitors on cultural tour of Nordic countries

1 → "Steel Treasury", a documentary by Iranian filmmaker Dehqan Mohammadi about Finnish sculptor Eila Hiltunen is scheduled to be screened. One of Hiltunen's sculptures named "Palm Grove" was set up in Tehran's Mellat Park in 1975.

Veronica Nordlund, the Second Secretary of the Sweden Embassy, also said that her country is attending with a tribute to children's literature. Swedish author Asa Lind has been invited to deliver a speech at the forum on June 23.

In addition, a Persian translation of the author's book series "The Sand Wolf" will be introduced during the program.

"Also at the forum, a kid's corner will be created where children will have the chance to sit and draw and read books while their parents visit the exhibit," Nordlund added.

"Danish design furniture by famous Danish architects, including Arne Jacobsen and Poul Henningsen will be on view," Danish Ambassador Danny Annan said.

Two movies by Danish filmmakers have also been selected to be screened, he added.

The films are "The Shamer's Daughter" directed by Kenneth Kainz and "Big Time" by Kaspar Astrup Schröder.

"Big Time" is a documentary about the high-flying young Danish architect Bjarke Ingels, founder and creative partner of Bjarke Ingels Group, widely known for buildings that defy convention.



Left to right, Swedish diplomat Veronica Nordlund, Danish Ambassador Danny Annan, IAF director Majid Rajabi-Memar, Norwegian Ambassador Lars Nordrum and Finnish Ambassador Keijo Norvanto attend a press conference in Tehran on June 16, 2019 to brief the media about the "Traces of the North, Nordic Days in Tehran".

Iranian theaters to celebrate Abbas Kiarostami's birthday



Abbas Kiarostami in an undated photo.

A R T **TEHRAN** — All the theaters across the country will pay tribute to filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami on June 22, concurrent with the late director's birthday. A short film is scheduled to be screened in memory of the legendary filmmaker before each screening at the theaters, the Directors Guild of Iran announced on Sunday.

In addition, "Along with Wind", a documentary by Mehdi Shadizadeh about the life of Kiarostami and his artistic career, will go on screen on his birthday. The film will go on screen at the Art and Experience Cinemas.

The documentary features interviews with several artists and literary figures, including Aidin Aghdashlu, Javad Mojabi, Leili Golestan and Kianush Ayyari. Kiarostami died of cancer on July 5, 2016 at the age of 76.

Anton Chekhov's "Seagull" adapted for Iranian performance



Director Kiumars Moradi in an undated photo. (ISNA/Amir Purmand)

A R T **TEHRAN** — Director Kiumars Moradi has adapted Russian writer Anton Chekhov's 1895 play "The Seagull" for performance in Iran. Renamed "My Seagull" by Moradi, the play will go on stage at Tehran's Iranshar Theater Complex during August, the Hope Iran Theater Company, which holds the rights to the play, announced on Sunday.

Moradi's cast has been rehearsing the play since winter. "The Seagull" is generally considered to be the first of Chekhov's four major plays. It dramatizes the romantic and artistic conflicts between four characters: the famous middlebrow story writer Boris Trigorin, the ingénue Nina, the fading actress Irina Arkadina, and her son, the symbolist playwright Konstantin Tréplev. Moradi directed his fellow writer Naghmeh Samini's play "Spell of the Burnt Temple" about a romantic story from Japan at Iranshar during autumn 2016.

Iranian movies line up for Russia Kinolikbez

A R T **TEHRAN** — Nine movies by Iranian filmmakers will be competing in Kinolikbez, a film festival that will take place in Saint Petersburg, Russia from July 3 to 7.

A highlight of the lineup is Mohammad Bakhshi's drama "Are You Volleyball?!", which will be screened in the international competition.

The film is about a group of Arabic-speaking asylum seekers who arrive at the border of an English-speaking country and can go no further. There are scuffles with the border guards every day until volleyball becomes the catalyst that improves relations.



A scene from Mohammad Bakhshi's drama "Are You Volleyball?!".

Franco Zeffirelli, Italian film and opera director, dies at 96

ROME (Reuters) — Franco Zeffirelli, who directed the world's greatest opera singers and brought Shakespeare to the cinema-going masses, has died. He was 96.

In a statement, his foundation said he died in Rome on Saturday. "Ciao Maestro," said the announcement.

Often appreciated more by the public than critics, Zeffirelli was the last of a generation of Italian film giants who came of age after World War Two, including Federico Fellini, Luchino Visconti and Vittorio De Sica.

He directed more than two dozen films, working with stars including Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, Laurence Olivier, Alec Guinness, Faye Dunaway, and Jon Voight.

"Franco Zeffirelli, one of the world's greatest men of culture, passed away this morning," Dario Nardella, the mayor of Zeffirelli's home city of Florence, said in a Twitter post. "Goodbye dear Maestro, Florence will never forget you."

Deputy Prime Minister Luigi Di Maio said Zeffirelli would "remain in the hearts and the history of this country."

Zeffirelli's opera productions for the stage included singers such as Maria Callas, Plácido Domingo, Joan Sutherland, Luciano Pavarotti, Renata Scotto and Jose Carreras.

In a 2013 interview to mark his 90th birthday, he said the general public would remember him most for his 1978 film of "Romeo and Juliet," the 1967 television mini-series "Jesus of Nazareth," and "Brother Sun, Sister Moon," his 1972 film tribute to St. Francis of Assisi.

"Romeo and Juliet", one of several times Zeffirelli brought Shakespeare to the screen, was nominated for Best Picture and Best Director Oscars. His 1990 "Hamlet" starred Mel Gibson.

One of the high points of his opera career was a triumphant production of Verdi's Aida at Milan's La Scala in 2006, which won more than 15 minutes of applause on opening night.

However, Zeffirelli's unconventional ventures into opera were often welcomed more abroad than at home, particularly in the United States, where he had more than a dozen top productions at the New York Metropolitan Opera.

In 1994 Zeffirelli, who directed several productions at London's Covent Garden, was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II for his "valuable services to British performing arts".

Zeffirelli was born in Florence on February 12, 1923, to Alaide Garosi Cipriani, a seamstress, and Ottorino Corsi, a cloth salesman. Because they were married to other people, the law at the time meant he could not take either of their surnames and had



Italian director Franco Zeffirelli arrives to attend Luciano Pavarotti's funeral at the cathedral of Modena September 8, 2007. (Reuters/Daniele La Monaca)

to be registered by another one.

His mother, who loved Mozart, chose "Zeffiretti" after the Italian word for "little zephyrs" (breezes) in an aria in the Austrian composer's Italian-language opera "Idomeneo". But a transcription error by a city hall clerk made it forever "Zeffirelli".

"Relatives and friends were horrified and very worried for the future which lay ahead of her," he told a Catholic magazine in 2003. "Some advised her to have an abortion, but she refused. She believed that the child which was about to be born was a monument to her great love."

His mother died of tuberculosis when he was six and he was raised by an aunt and at

times by a group of eccentric ex-pat English women in Florence known as "Gli Scorpioni" (The Scorpions) for their biting wit.

Under their influence and tutelage, he learned to love English and Shakespeare, an experience that formed the basis of his 1999 film "Tea With Mussolini," starring Joan Plowright, Judi Dench, Maggie Smith and Cher.

"They taught me all the important things in life," he told an interviewer in 1999. "These ladies helped me to understand my own city, my own culture and my own upbringing."

In World War Two, Zeffirelli fought as a partisan before becoming an interpreter for the Scots Guards.

After the war, he studied architecture at the University of Florence and was drawn into theater and film, working initially as an assistant to Visconti, the director, for whom he designed the set for the first Italian production of Tennessee Williams' "A Streetcar Named Desire" in 1949.

Away from the screen and the stage, Zeffirelli was often in the news for his outspoken views.

From 1994 to 2001 he served as a senator for former prime minister Silvio Berlusconi's conservative Forza Italia party, hoping to inject culture into politics. He later said he regretted the decision.