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Rouhani: Normalizing oil, banking transactions first step Europe should take

TEHRAN — In a phone conversation with his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron late on Tuesday, President Hassan Rouhani said the first step that Europe should take to save the 2015 nuclear deal is to normalize oil and banking transactions. Presidential chief of staff Mahmoud Vaezi said on Wednesday that Rouhani-Macron phone conversation lasted for 100 minutes which indicates that Iran has logic. Under the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the JCPOA, Iran agreed to put

limits on its nuclear activities in exchange for the termination of economic and financial sanctions. “Unfortunately, despite Iran’s full commitment to its obligations, only a small part of Iran’s economic interests has been met, and after the withdrawal of the United States, we have not only not seen any serious action by Europe in this respect, but also some European companies left Iran following United States’ unilateral sanctions,” Rouhani stated. **→2**

Iran expresses positive view toward Russia’s Persian Gulf security proposal

TEHRAN — Tehran has expressed its positive outlook towards a Russia-proposed security plan to reduce tension in the Persian Gulf region. Iran’s view was announced by its ambassador to Moscow Mehdi Sanaei during

a meeting with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov on Wednesday. During the meeting, the Iranian diplomat stressed the need to improve security in the Persian Gulf collectively with the participation of regional states. **→3**

UN censures Bahraini regime over execution of two dissidents

TEHRAN — The United Nations has strongly condemned the execution of two young activists in Bahrain, as the ruling Al Khalifah regime presses ahead with its heavy-handed crackdown on political dissidents and pro-democracy activists in the Persian Gulf kingdom. “We strongly condemn the execution on July 26 in Manama of two Bahraini citizens, Ali Mohamed Hakeem al-Arab, 25, and Ahmed Isa al-Malali, 24. The executions went ahead on Friday

night, despite concerns expressed by the High Commissioner, following two earlier public statements by UN human rights experts ... that the men’s “confessions” were obtained through torture, and about lack of due process and fair trial guarantees. A third man, a migrant worker, was also executed after being convicted of murder,” Spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Rupert Colville, said in the Swiss city of Geneva on Tuesday. **→13**



EDITORIAL
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How plans for restraining Iran backfired

Iran’s active resistance and strategic patience have nullified all plans of western opponents to restrain Iran. In the latest meeting on Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the western countries stepped back from their previously harsh policies. It seems that Iran has been successful in restraining the west, as the remaining members of JCPOA Committee stopped talking about using the trigger mechanism.

Based on Paragraph 37 of JCPOA, the trigger mechanism can automatically reactivate previous international sanctions against Iran.

In fact, Europe did not do much to offset the damage inflicted on Iran by withdrawal of the United States from JCPOA, as Europeans had wrongly interpreted Iran’s strategic patience as being passive. Europe thought it has nothing to worry about; on the one hand, JCPOA seemed like a good block to Iran’s nuclear activities and on the other, U.S. was putting pressure on Iran to stop its economic and political progress and weaken its stance in the region.

With the end of Iran’s strategic patience, a new chapter was opened and Iran revealed its new strategy that is active resistance. Tehran announced that it will gradually decrease its commitment to the JCPOA and gives the other side some time to compensate for its former inactivity. At first it was hard for Europe to believe such thing as they had grown accustomed to Iran’s patience, but with Iran’s threats, Europe woke up from its former ignorance, and started threatening Iran.

However, these threats did not change Iran’s decision, and Tehran took two major steps in its way toward reducing its commitments to the JCPOA.

Tensions over JCPOA coincided with new conflicts in the region. Americans did not think that Iran will show a reaction after they drove their spying drone into Iran’s territory, but Iran seized the drone and changed all former plans of the West powers.

This time, U.S. president who was under a lot of pressure over the negative public opinion, did not show any reaction out of fear of rising a war and thanked Iranians for not targeting a passenger flight. **→7**

Smart city, challenges and opportunities in Iran

By Marzieh Rezaei Ghaleh

TEHRAN — According to United Nations reports, the world’s population is expected to grow by about 63% between 2014 and 2050, and it is anticipated that this rapid growth will occur in larger cities with a population of over 20 million. Unfortunately, this upward trend may lead to many environmental challenges. In 2015, 828 million people were living on the margins of cities, suffering from a lack of basic needs such as water and sanitation. Also, cities face social problems, such as social inequalities, unemployment, air pollution, heavy traffic, and urban crime, as the population continues to grow.

Despite all these problems, megacities could

provide significant economic opportunities. 80% of the world’s Gross Domestic Product is created in cities, and consequently, urban residents earn, on average, 3 times more than rural dwellers. People living in larger cities require less infrastructure and resources, as well as have higher levels of productivity. For example, a city with a population of 8 million will have 15% more productivity and require 15% less infrastructure than two cities of four million each. Therefore, the phenomenon of urbanization, especially in large cities, is not an entirely undesirable phenomenon. As a result, we should think of a solution for the sustainable development of cities in order not

only to provide the necessary facilities and infrastructure required for population growth but also to ensure urban sustainability and preservation of resources for the future.

Today, there are various models for employing digital technologies to address the challenges of sustainability and urbanization. Also, smart cities are a comprehensive solution to overcome the limitations of developing traditional cities. Smart cities use the digital technologies, such as the Internet of Things, to connect all citizens, improve citizen participation, introduce new services, and upgrade existing facilities. However, developing a smart city could be a complicated and challenging issue. **→11**

May Iranian economy resuscitate from doldrums

By Haniyeh Sadat Jafariyeh

TEHRAN — Inflation rate (the increase in consumer prices besides those of the producer), as one the main economic indices, has skyrocketed during the past recent year, i.e. as of the US withdrawal from the JCPOA, May 8, 2018.

Prices started their incremental growth after almost two years of economic stability under JCPOA implementation.

As the economic index which is more tangible

to common people, inflation rate plays a vital role among other economic indices due to its influence on people’s livelihood.

Along with the common people stand the Iranian business activists, producers and investors. Those whose businesses were tied with fluctuating forex rates and their impact on imports of raw materials and could not have a clear vision of the market’s future to make safe investments.

No one can deny the positive correlation between forex rates and the inflation index in Iran, the two go hand-in-hand in this country.

During the past one or two months, forex rates have cooled down. Dollar exchange rate stepped down to 118,000 rials in July from its previous level hovering around 144,000 rials in late March and the market seems to be experiencing a stable condition but is not highly predictable yet. **→4**

Signs of tension reduction appearing in Persian Gulf

By Zahra Mirzafarjuyan

TEHRAN (MNA) — After years of tensions between Iran and some Persian Gulf states, particularly in recent months in the Strait of Hormuz, reports indicate the emergence of tensions reduction in this strategic region.

For nearly four decades, the Persian Gulf has

not been calm and occasionally been the stage for Iran’s confrontation with the U.S. and its regional allies because of America’s hostility toward Iran. These tensions have sometimes led to direct military conflict.

In 1988, the U.S. attacked Iran’s military and oil facilities in the Persian Gulf. It also shot down

an Iranian passenger plane over the Persian Gulf with 290 people onboard.

The Persian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz, and the Sea of Oman are a strategic route for supplying oil to world markets, and in this regards oil tankers have been one of the main targets of military actions. **→3**



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Army brigade hold firing range session near Qom

TEHRAN — Islamic Republic of Iran Ground Force Quick Reaction Force Brigade 223 hold training session in their outdoor shooting range in Aliabad, near Qom, central Iran on Tuesday morning.



ARTICLE
Manijeh Rezapoor
Tehran Times journalist

Isfahan children’s film festival unveils intl. lineups for animations, shorts

The 32nd International Film Festival for Children and Youth in Isfahan announced on Wednesday the lineup of shorts and animated movies for the international competition.

Eleven animated movies and nine short films have been selected from different countries to be screened at the festival, which will be running in the central Iranian city of Isfahan from August 19 to 26.

The animation lineup includes Russian filmmaker Sergei Ryabov’s 2018 movie “6:1” that portrays an inseparable girl and cat who are playing checkers, and the cat loses over and over.

Latvian director Edmunds Jansons’ 2017 animation “Pigtail and Mr. Sleeplessness” will also be screened. It is about a six-year-old girl known as Pigtail, who together with her shaggy friend from her closet, Mr. Sleeplessness, come up with a “brilliant” plan to return her baby brother Leo to the amusement park where they believed he was bough.

Also included are “Plankton” by Gustaf Lindstrom from Britain. The 2018 animation gives the viewers a glimpse of the ideas and aspirations that float around at the bottom of the food chain. “The Kite” by Martin Smatana from Germany is a 2019 animation which depicts a little boy who visits his grandfather in the countryside and they fly a kite together.

“Kinkaku-ji” by Viktor Azeev from Russia narrates the story of a camper, Greg, who wants to learn to write poetry, and follows his friends’ advice and makes his way to Japan where a majestic golden temple belonging to Kinkaku-dzi lies.

The lineup also includes “Wolf Paths” by Vojtech Dockal and Noemi Valentini and “Fruits of Clouds” by Katerina Rankankova, both from the Czech Republic.

“Wolf Paths”, a short animated film dedicated to a younger audience, tells the story of a boy who overcomes his weaknesses and fears. It tells how the life of a young boy, who suffers from asthma, changes when his inhaler falls out the window. The boy is forced to leave his home, and on his way he meets a wild wolf. His curiosity gets the better of his fear, allowing him to experience a wonderful adventure and do the things he could only have dreamed of. **→16**

INSTEX should not be a vehicle to carry out U.S. orders: Zarif

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Wednesday that the European special purpose vehicle for trade with Iran, known as INSTEX, should not be a means to carry out U.S. orders.

“INSTEX is a preliminary phase and has not yet been implemented completely, and if it’s implemented, it is essential that oil income enter it. It should not be in a way that INSTEX be a means to carry out the U.S. orders and they tell the Europeans that how INSTEX should work,” he told reporters after a cabinet meeting.

The Europeans should dare to act based on their commitments and not the U.S. orders, he added.

He also said, “Today’s tension and problems have been caused by the U.S. economic terrorism and Europe’s inability to meet its commitments which means accompanying the U.S. economic terrorism.”

The United States has slapped the harshest ever sanctions in history against Iran. It has introduced a total ban on Iran’s oil exports.

Under the 2015 nuclear agreement, formally called the JCPOA and endorsed by the UN Security Council Resolution 2231, Iran is tasked to put a cap on its nuclear activities in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions.

■ **‘Thope B-team will be reduced to Netanyahu and Bolton’**

Zarif also said that Iran has always been interested in ties with neighbors if they change their policies and stop interfering in other countries’ affairs.

“I hope that the members of B-team will be reduced and limited to Netanyahu and Bolton,” he said.

The B-Team includes U.S. President Donald Trump’s national security advisor John Bolton, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman and UAE Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Zayed.

Zarif had previously warned that the B-Team could goad Trump into a war with Tehran.

Rouhani to Macron: Normalizing oil, banking transactions first step Europe should take

➡ Donald Trump withdrew the U.S. from the UN-endorsed JCPOA in May 2018 and imposed the toughest ever sanctions against Iran in line with his administration’s “maximum pressure” policy against Tehran.

Rouhani described the U.S. sanctions against the Iranian people as examples of “economic terrorism” and “inhuman action”.

The United States has introduced a total ban on Iran’s oil exports, which are Iran’s main source of income.

“Full compliance with the commitments by Iran while the other side does not meet its least commitments is not acceptable for the Iranian people,” Rouhani said.

He also said that Iran can reverse its decision to reduce nuclear commitments as soon as Europe meets the country’s economic interests.

Last week, Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Abbas Araghchi submitted a written message from Rouhani to Macron.

Rouhani and stressed the need for continued talks between Tehran and Paris to ensure two sides’ commitment to the JCPOA.

On May 8, exactly one year after the U.S. withdrew from the multi-nation nuclear agreement and reimposed sanctions on Iran, Tehran said its “strategic patience” is over and announced a partial withdrawal from some aspects of the pact, saying that the country would no longer adhere to some of the limits on its nuclear activities. It also threatened to step up uranium enrichment if an agreement is not made within 60 days to protect it from the sanctions’ effects.

In follow-up to that deadline, on July 7 Iran announced that it has started enriching uranium to a higher purity than the 3.67% as the Europeans missed the 60-day deadline to devise a concrete mechanism to protect the country from the U.S. sanctions.

The remaining JCPOA parties held an emergency meeting in Vienna on Sunday to discuss Iran’s moves in reducing its nuclear commitments and explore ways to save the nuclear deal.

Araghchi, Tehran’s top nuclear negotiator who represented Iran in the meeting, called the talks “constructive”. However, he warned Iran would continue to reduce its nuclear commitments if Europeans failed to normalize economic ties with Iran.

“The atmosphere was constructive. Discussions were good. I cannot say that we resolved everything, I can say there are lots of commitments,” the senior nuclear negotiator told Reuters.

Helga Schmid, secretary general of the European External Action Service (EEAS), also issued a statement on Sunday saying that “participants reaffirmed their continued commitment to preserving the JCPOA.”

She also said, “They recalled that both nuclear commitments and sanctions-lifting are essential parts of the agreement.”

■ **‘Iran is the main guarantor of regional security’**

Rouhani also told the French leader that Iran has been and will be the main guarantor of security for shipping in the Persian Gulf region and the Strait of Hormuz.

He noted that continuation of the U.S. policies in the region cause tension which will have negative consequences for the international stability.

Rouhani also lauded the French president’s efforts to resolve existing issues, saying, “Iran has always welcomed any initiative aimed at fair solutions and constructive dialogue.”

■ **Macron says France to make any effort to normalize Iran’s economic ties**

For his part, Macron said that France to make any effort to meet Iran’s interests and normalize Tehran’s economic ties with other countries.

He described the U.S. unilateral sanctions against Iran as “unacceptable”.

Top German official calls for upholding nuclear deal

By staff and agency

German Finance Minister Olaf Scholz said on Wednesday that Germany is working with Britain and France to uphold the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

According to Reuters, he said Germany was coordinating closely with France and Britain, and the goal remained to uphold the nuclear agreement with Iran.

He also appealed for efforts to prevent an escalation of tensions in the Persian Gulf region.

“The goal of all responsible politicians must be to observe the situation very soberly and carefully, and not to sleepwalk into an even bigger crisis,” he said.

Britain, France, Germany, Russia, China, and Iran have been trying to salvage the pact since the U.S. withdrew from it in May 2018 and returned sanctions and imposed new ones.

The European Union announced on June 28 that its special purpose vehicle for trade with Iran, known as INSTEX, has gone into effect.

Tehran says the mechanism is far short of Iran’s expectation. Iran has been insisting that the mechanism should include Iran’s oil purchases.

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Release of Iranian tanker could help free British vessel, says Iranian ambassador

Baeidinejad says British tanker unlawfully entered Hormuz Strait from exit lane

By staff and agency

The release of a seized Iranian tanker could help secure the freedom of a British-flagged vessel detained by Tehran, Iran’s ambassador to the UK has told Sky News.

On 4 July, Royal Marines were involved in the seizure of Iranian oil tanker Grace 1 off Gibraltar, suspecting the ship of taking oil to Syria in breach of EU sanctions. Iran called it an act of “piracy”.

Days later, Iran’s Revolutionary Guard Corps seized British-flagged Stena Impero in the Strait of Hormuz. The ship and its 23 crew remain in Iranian custody.

Iranian ambassador Hamid Baeidinejad told Sky News: “Of course one issue can help resolution of another issue but these are two separate issues that need to be tackled separately.”

He also said: “We’re very keen to see the UK is doing all the measures necessary to release as soon as possible the Grace 1.”

On Monday he had been less open to compromise, tweeting that any exchange would be “impossible”, as the UK had “illegally detained” the Iranian ship and the British-flagged ship had been “detained for violating some key safety/security regulations”.

During his Sky News interview, Baeidinejad said: “That ship collided with a fishing boat in the area...the fishing boat was damaged and there have been injuries.”

He also said Stena Impero had “entered the Strait of Hormuz from the exit lane, which is against the law”.

“We have tension in the region because of the U.S. policies - that ship should have been very careful not to violate any laws.”

Baeidinejad denied Grace 1 was heading for Syria but repeatedly declined to identify the ship’s destination.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said Iran cannot reveal the destination of the tanker because of the U.S. sanctions.

He told Sky News: “It’s very clear, we have announced it’s not going to a sanction entity...we’re not entitled to say what is the destination of the ship.”

■ **‘Some regulations should be followed in Nazanin Zaghari case’**

Iran and the UK also remain in dispute over the continued

imprisonment of British-Iranian Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, who was jailed for five years in Tehran after being accused of spying in 2016, a charge she denies.

When asked if he was insisting she had been spying even though she was in the country with her baby, Baeidinejad said: “Espionage is a very flexible language, it can involve many activities.

“When you’re engaged in illegal activities, it doesn’t matter if you have a baby or not...you should be accountable to law.

“The question is do we want to help her be released before or not? If that’s the intention there are some regulations that should be followed. We have a clemency procedure and that should be followed.”

■ **Russia says Iran’s explanation in seizing British tanker is ‘credible’**

Meanwhile, Russia’s deputy foreign minister Sergei Ryabkov appeared to back Iran’s explanation for its seizure of the Stena Impero, telling Sky’s Russia correspondent Diana Magnay: “In terms of what Iranians did to the British [flagged] tanker, we regard their explanation of some breach of the rules of navigation as being a credible one.”

But he “strongly urged” all sides to remain within the terms of the JCPOA - the 2015 nuclear deal signed by Iran, China, France, Germany, Russia, the UK and the U.S. Last year, U.S. President Donald Trump pulled his country out of the agreement but European signatories have been trying to salvage it. Ryabkov said: “It would be most unfortunate if some will start following a very destructive course which the Trump administration embarked upon and which ended with first complete withdrawal from the deal and, subsequently, very crude imposition of extra-territorial sanctions.”

He added: “We’re pretty sure that [Iran] are fully committed to the exclusively peaceful nature of their nuclear program and they should be rewarded for this.”

Zarif, in a tweet on July 20, said Iran’s conduct towards the British tanker had been fully within international maritime rules.

“Unlike the piracy in the Strait of Gibraltar, our action in the Persian Gulf is to uphold int’l maritime rules. As I

said in NY, it is IRAN that guarantees the security of the Persian Gulf & the Strait of Hormuz. UK must cease being an accessory to #EconomicTerrorism of the US.”

In the emergency meeting of the JCPOA parties in Vienna on Sunday, Iran called the British seizure of the Grace 1 a violation of the nuclear deal.

White House national security advisor John Bolton, an Iran hawk, praised the seizure. “Excellent news: UK has detained the supertanker Grace 1 laden with Iranian oil bound for Syria in violation of EU sanctions,” Bolton exulted on Twitter.

In a commentary on July 20, the British newspaper Guardian said Bolton has succeeded to lure Britain into a dangerous trap to punish Iran by deceiving London to capture a tanker carrying the Iranian oil in Gibraltar, which Iran responded in kind.

The British newspaper said “Britain blindly dances to the beat of Bolton’s war drums” against Iran.

According to the Guardian, the Spanish ambassador to Tehran who was summoned over the seizure, said the Iranian tanker had been seized “following a request from the United States to the United Kingdom.”

Following the oil tankers standoff, former British Foreign Secretary Jack wrote an article in the Daily Mail on July 20 saying that Iranians have “good cause” to be “resentful” against Britain and call Britons the “cunning, colonial fox”.

In another tweet on July 21, Zarif said only “prudence and foresight” can alleviate tensions.

“Having failed to lure Donald Trump into War of the Century, and fearing collapse of his B-Team, Ambassador John Bolton is turning his venom against the UK in hopes of dragging it into a quagmire,” Zarif tweeted.

During a meeting with Omani Foreign Minister Yusuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah in Tehran on Sunday, President Hassan Rouhani said that Britain will suffer harms for seizing Iran’s oil tanker.

Rouhani also said that presence of foreign forces in the region are the main cause of tension in the region.

U.S. to renew sanctions waivers for five Iran nuclear programs: Washington Post

After an internal policy battle, the Trump administration is set to announce later this week that it will once again waive five different nuclear-related sanctions on Iran, preserving a key part of the Obama-era Iran nuclear deal.

According to the Washington Post, the decision will upset Iran hawks in Washington and be welcomed by Russia, China, European allies and the Iranian leadership. The issue is emblematic of the tension inside the administration over the implementation of President Trump’s “maximum pressure” policy.

In an Oval Office meeting last week, Trump sided with Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, who argued that the administration should again renew sanctions waivers related to five separate parts of Iran’s nuclear program. Mnuchin prevailed over the objections of Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and national security adviser John Bolton, according to six administration officials. Pompeo, who is the lead official on the issue, will nevertheless support Trump’s decision when it is announced later this week.

Mnuchin, these six officials said, argued to Trump that if the sanctions were not again waived as required by law by Aug. 1, the United States would have to sanction Russian, Chinese and European firms that are involved in projects inside Iran that were established as part of the 2015 nuclear deal.

These projects include modifying a heavy-water reactor in Arak and converting an enrichment center at Fordow as well as fuel exchanges at the Bushehr nuclear reactor facility and the Tehran Research Reactor.

The State Department, which is the lead government agency on the issue, last renewed the waivers in May even as it declined to renew two other nuclear-related sanctions waivers. The soon-to-be-announced waiver extensions will give those projects another 90 days of immunity. In April, the Trump administration canceled all waivers for all imports of Iranian oil.

The National Security Council, the State Department and the Treasury Department all declined to comment on the record about internal deliberations.

Earlier this month, Trump seemed to indicate that the nuclear waivers would not be extended, when he reacted on Twitter to news that Iran had exceeded the uranium enrichment levels agreed under the nuclear deal. “Sanctions will soon be increased,

substantially!” he tweeted.

Inside the administration, some officials argued the projects give the United States and the international community crucial insight into Iran’s nuclear program.

“There’s always been a tension inside the administration between those who want to preserve elements of the [Iran nuclear deal] as a framework for negotiations and those who see it as a fatally flawed agreement that provides Iran patient pathways to atomic bombs,” said Mark Dubowitz, executive director of the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies. “Our policy objective is to maximize maximum pressure. These nuclear waivers never made sense, and they definitely don’t make sense in the context of a maximum pressure campaign.”

Daryl Kimball, president of the Arms Control Association, said that since Trump’s “maximum pressure” policy is not going to work anyway, the projects themselves should be saved for their intrinsic value.

“It’s in the U.S. national and international security interest to extend these waivers to allow these projects, which were designed to make Iran’s nuclear programs more proliferation-resistant,” he said.

Zarif’s aide holds talks with Tunisian FM

POLITICAL

TEHRAN — Hamidreza Dehqani, an aide to Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, who had participated in a funeral ceremony for the late Tunisian President Bejo Caid Essebsi, held talks on Tuesday with Tunisian Foreign Minister Khemaies Jhinaoui.

The sides discussed ways to expand bilateral relations in all fields, Fars reported on Tuesday.

In September 2015, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif had a meeting with late President Essebsi in Tunis where he said that Iran and Tunisia pursue the same goals and objectives in combatting extremism and terrorism in regional countries.

Essebsi died on Thursday at the age of 92.

Parliament speaker Mohamed Ennaceur, who was sworn in as interim president hours after Essebsi’s

death in line with the constitution, paid tribute to the late leader describing him as “the architect of national reconciliation”.

“He was determined to achieve a successful democratic transition,” Ennaceur said, according to France 24.

Essebsi rose to prominence after Ben Ali’s overthrow, which was followed by revolts against authoritarian leaders across the Middle East including Libya and Egypt.



Some officials insist that the nuclear waivers do not dilute the “maximum pressure” campaign much. “We are permitting restrictions on Iran’s nuclear program to continue while we cripple Iran’s economy,” one official said.

But for most officials, lawmakers and diplomats, the issue is whether the Trump administration and Trump himself are really committed to the unilateralist, aggressive, full-break-from-Obama Iran policy they are always touting. This move could be interpreted as a signal they are not.

“It’s going to be seen as tacit approval that Iran has a right to have a nuclear enrichment program, which we do not accept,” one official said. “That’s not the policy.”

INSTEX might be beginning of autonomous Europe in World: expert

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** – INSTEX, a European special purpose vehicle for trade with Iran to bypass U.S. sanctions, might actually be the beginning of an autonomous Europe, free of the influence of Washington, a political science professor at Tampere University from Finland believes.

“In the long run, the European attitude will have a positive impact on Euro-Iranian relations, and the Iranian international relations in general,” Tuomo Melasuo told the Iran Labor News Agency in an interview published on Wednesday.

Commenting on the probability of negotiation between U.S. and Iran, he said, “Might negotiating with the U.S. president have a result or not, is a minor question because we cannot trust that Donald Trump and his administration will respect it or anything else.”

“The European possibilities to have a strong oppositional answer to USA actions is limited and discreet, because our governments are rather weak and prefer to have a common answer within EU without too much offending the Trump regime.”

“Still personally, I am happy that Europe is showing an oppositional line to the Trump administration; this has a symbolic meaning,” the political science professor said.

He also warned against the destructive consequences of a war in the region.

“The political, economic and social consequences of war and chaos in the region would be catastrophic for all the Middle-Eastern and European stakeholders. In the short run, their consequences for the U.S. would be less immediate because of the geographical distance, but even more serious in the long run when they will lose more profoundly their image as a decent country.”

The professor also said, “We do not know yet what will be the concrete impact of the INSTEX.”

The university scholar said today Washington is now in an imbroglio as its president is unpredictable.

“The United States of America has today a difficult position in the world. Because of its unpredictable president and administration that many multilateral rules of international relations have been fragilized. This means that the U.S. is losing its international importance because many main players can



Political science professor Tuomo Melasuo says today the United States is in a difficult situation because of its “unpredictable president”.

no more trust on it.”

Melasuo continued that the U.S. cannot live without international multilateral treaties and organizations such as the Paris Treaty on Climate, the International Criminal Court - ICC, or the European Union - EU.

“In this situation, the solution lies in different efforts to reduce those tensions, if you cannot simply get rid of them. This means also that responsible countries should be able to start a process of confidence building even with their declared enemies.”

The international analyst suggested that special efforts should be done by regional countries to settle “unnecessary conflicts” like the one in Yemen, or prevent turbulences for maritime transportation in the region. “This also means that local actors clearly signify to

great or superpowers that everything is not possible and neither acceptable.”

The professor also said Iran’s actions to limit its commitments to the JCPOA are political signs and messages to the international community, neighboring countries, Iranian citizens and also all these stockholders that Iran is not happy with the return of sanctions and that she has the capacity to react.

“They invited Iran to respect the 2015 nuclear deal and remain within the framework of those accords, JCPOA, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Iran has also remained modest and reasonable, the increase of enrichment from 3,67 to 4,50%, and the increase of 300 kg storage by 2 kg are more symbolic than anything else.”

“However, Iran does not need nuclear

weapons, I hope and I believe that also the political leaders understand this. Nobody needs nuclear arms in today’s world,” Melasuo confirmed.

He said, “First time since eternity, the European democratic countries tried to ally themselves with Iran in order to resist the Trump administration. This is something important, even historical, and might in a long run re-enforce the 2015 accord and produce ways to commerce with Iran. Today this is not just a political discourse, but Europe really tries to form a common front against Trump’s administration in order to protect Iran.”

The professor said it is necessary for Europe to strengthen its “foreign policy independence” and create capacities.

“This also shows that confidence is something extremely important in issues concerning nuclear arms. Our [Finland’s] minister of foreign affairs, Mr. Pekka Haavisto put emphasis on this... when stating that Finland will continue to commerce with Iran,” the professor said.

“For Europe, all this shows that we need to strengthen our foreign policy independence and create our capacities to apply it. The still modest INSTEX might be the beginning of the more autonomous Europe in international economy and politics. Let us hope that Europe will be able to turn these approaches into the strategic tools and goals.”

Melasuo said that throughout the world, the U.S. is the only country which has used nuclear weapons and “we do not have any guarantee that it does not do it again. That is why it would be important to start to debate with that country how it would pay for Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which remain open wounds in the mind of humankind. Otherwise, the U.S. cannot be understood as a normal country.”

“Of course, all these are very general options and they offer very little to the acute important needs of Iran and Iranian citizens. However, on the long run they might contribute to general improvements of international perspectives.”

The professor went on to say that “still we should be able to propose something much more concrete and immediate for easing Iranian living conditions.”

Leader reacts to execution of two Bahraini activists

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** – The Arabic Twitter account of the Office for Preserving and Promoting the Works of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has posted a tweet to react to the recent execution of two young Bahraini political activists by the al-Khalifa regime.



“The oppression and cruelty will not last long, and the decision and will of the justice-seeking nations will eventually prevail,” the tweet read, according to the Mehr news agency. On July 27, Bahrain executed two pro-democracy activists (Ahmad al-Malali, 24, and Ali Hakim al-Arab, 25), on two separate cases, defying widespread calls to commute the death sentences handed to prisoners in mass trials.

Iran expresses positive view toward Russia’s Persian Gulf security proposal

1 → The presence of foreign countries in the region will increase tension, Sanaei said, adding that Tehran welcomes any constructive initiative that involves the regional countries.

In a letter presented to the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly on July 23, Russia said that it is “ready for cooperation with all interested parties to implement this and other constructive proposals.” The Russian Foreign Ministry has named its plan the “Concept of Collective Security in the Persian Gulf.”



“In the current conditions, energetic and effective action is needed at an international and regional levels in the interests of improving and further stabilizing the situation in the Persian Gulf, overcoming the prolonged crisis stage and turning this sub-region to peace, good neighborly relations and sustainable development,” the document said. “Practical work on launching the process of creating a security system in the Persian Gulf may be started by holding bilateral and multilateral consultations between interested parties, including countries both within the region and outside of it, UN Security Council, LAS [League of Arab States], OIC [Organization of Islamic Cooperation], PGCC [Persian Gulf Cooperation Council],” the document added. The document envisages forming an initiative group to prepare an international conference on security and cooperation in the Persian Gulf, which would later lead to establishing an organization on security and cooperation in this region. During his Wednesday meeting with Sanaei, Ryabkov said the Moscow-proposed plan has been drafted to provide security for Persian Gulf littoral states and safeguard their interests.

Pumping like Pompeo: Convincing Iranian public through sanctions?

By Reza Resalat

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has been talking about his show trip to Iran against the fact that according to U.S. sanctions, anybody visiting Iran would face liabilities. He recently told Bloomberg that he wanted to visit Tehran and directly speak to the Iranians. Citing Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif’s trip to New York and his interviews with American press, he talked about his willingness to appear on the Iranian TV and speak about U.S. policies directly to the people of Iran. His desire for talking to Iranians come despite his respective government’s maximum pressure campaign implemented through sanctions, which amounts to war, or better to be called economic terrorism against the same people.

We have also been witnessing that the U.S. administration, as host to the UN, has created much difficulty for the chief Iranian diplomat and Iranian mission in the UN.

Not only that, the U.S. has blocked all social applications accounts of the Iranian broadcasting body, also denying entry to Iranian journalists during State Department and White House press conferences. This goes against the fact that over 10 U.S. media outlets have correspondents in Iran. The U.S. administration and some of its allies have over the years spent hundreds of millions of dollars out of the pockets of taxpayers to launch Persian TV channels with the aim to shape the public mind in Iran with their destructive inculcations.

Pompeo’s call for a trip to Tehran comes also despite the U.S. having sanctioned an Iranian conference, The New Horizon, barring American intelligentsia from freely travelling to Iran.

The irony is that with its unilateral sanctions, the U.S. administration will be having its secretary of state subject to its own sanctions if he visits Iran. It seems that first and foremost, U.S. statesmen would have to correct their logic and remove the existing paradoxes in their stance against Iran. It is after all a reality that they have been put in the passive stance in the face of our foreign minister’s informative interview with American media.

Signs of tension reduction appearing in Persian Gulf

1 → More than thirty years after the end of the Iran-Iraq war, several oil tankers have exploded again in the region in recent months. Tensions and maritime conflicts have re-emerged in the region by the U.S. and its regional allies’ destabilizing acts and the return of U.S. sanctions against Iran.

The White House’s unlawful withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA), designation of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist group, re-imposing sanctions on Iran and trying to drive Iran’s oil export to zero all are provocative and suspicious moves of the U.S. that have fueled the regional tensions.

Recently to reduce tensions in the region, officials from a number of countries have taken steps and traveled to Iran to mediate.

Trying to calm the region, Iran has tried to take steps by a series of new proposals to improve relations with Arab countries on the southern shores of the Persian Gulf.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif suggested on May 26 signing a non-aggression pact with Persian Gulf littoral states during his three-day trip to Iraq. The suggested plan proves Iran to be right since security in the region would be achieved via cooperation of all regional countries and a desirable and stable regional discipline is obtainable without interference of foreign countries. The plan can become operational step by step with the aim of building confidence among regional countries.

Some speculations show that Oman and Iraq are likely trying to ease tensions between Tehran and some Persian Gulf states. In this regard, Iran’s Ambassador to Kuwait also announced on July 30 that some countries have accepted to join Iran’s proposed non-aggression pact.

Alongside with acceptance of some countries to join Iran’s proposed non-aggression pact, it was announced that a joint Iran-UAE Coast Guard meeting had been held in Tehran after six years and some reports indicated that two UAE banks have announced their readiness to cooperate with Iran, the Khorasan newspaper reported last week.

Russia and Qatar welcomed the proposal in June, and it now appears that Kuwait has joined supporters. In this regard, Iran’s Ambassador to Kuwait Mohammad Irani, in an interview with Al Rai, said that some countries have accepted to join Iran’s non-aggression pact proposal.

He did not explicitly mention the names of the countries, but said in his remarks that the proposal was not specific to Kuwait and would include all countries in the region. He also mentioned that some countries have responded positively to this plan, and Iran is awaiting response from other countries.

Simultaneously, Special Assistant to the Speaker of the Iranian Parliament for International Affairs Hossein Amir-Abdollahian also referred to the recent visit of the Omani foreign minister to Tehran, saying that Yusuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah had positive and constructive ideas on the subject of Iranian-Arab talks and the reduction of tanker seizures and tensions.

An international news correspondent with Etemad newspaper wrote in a recent tweet quoting an Arab source saying: “In response to Washington’s request for joining an international coalition to protect commercial ships in the region, Kuwait stated that the situation in the region was



Russia’s plan and Iran’s proposal both seek to reduce tensions among the Persian Gulf states.

not like Saddam Hussein’s, former President of Iraq when Kuwait united with America against another regional state and will not allow its territory to be used to threaten Iran. Kuwait had earlier rejected America’s request for deployment of four B-52 bombers in Kuwait.”

In addition to Iranian foreign minister’s plan of a non-aggression pact, Russia also outlined a plan for “collective security in Persian Gulf” and presented it to the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly on 30 July 2019. Russia’s concept of collective security in the Persian Gulf has been distributed as an official document approved by the United Nations.

“In the current conditions, energetic and effective action is needed at international and regional levels in the interests of improving and further stabilizing the situation in the Persian Gulf, overcoming the prolonged crisis stage and turning this sub-region to peace, good neighborly relations and sustainable development,” the document says.

“Practical work on launching the process of creating a security system in the Persian Gulf may start by holding bilateral and multilateral consultations between interested parties, including countries both within the region and outside of it, UN Security Council, LAS [League of Arab States], OIC [Organization of Islamic Cooperation], PGCC [Persian Gulf Cooperation Council],” the document added.

In a letter to the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly, Russia said that it was “ready for cooperation

with all interested parties to implement this and other constructive proposals”.

Russia’s plan and Iran’s proposal both seek to reduce tensions among the Persian Gulf states. There is only one difference between them. In the Russian plan, it has been emphasized that the region’s security system will be strengthened only by neighbors in the Persian Gulf and when foreign military presence in the region is reduced.

The regional non-aggression pact is expected to pave the way for neighboring countries to build trust and establish constructive interaction.

Despite all pressures, diplomatic initiatives are being pursued by Iran and some regional and trans-regional countries to reduce tensions in the Middle East.

Tensions initially built up between the U.S. and Iran after President Donald Trump withdrew Washington from the 2015 nuclear deal and imposed severe sanctions against Tehran.

Despite U.S. policy of maximum pressure on Iran, the Trump administration claims that it is ready for talks with Iran but Tehran says it doesn’t trust the White House and will resist pressures, maintaining that there will be no talks with a party which has already violated many international agreements.

Tensions between Iran and the United States reached a record high after a U.S. spy drone violated Iran’s airspace last month and ignored Iran’s warnings before being targeted by IRGC air defense.

STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	254445.7
IFX	3374.36

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	46,849 rials
GBP	51,041 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: cbi.ir

COMMODITIES

Brent	\$65.02/b
WTI	\$58.37/b
OPEC Basket	\$63.79/b
Gold	\$1,432.40/oz
Silver	\$16.52/oz
Platinum	\$875.85/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

Cabinet OKs taking zeroes off currency

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** – Iranian cabinet approved a bill proposed by Central Bank of Iran (CBI) for eliminating four zeroes from the national currency, IRNA reported. The decision was made during a cabinet meeting on Wednesday, headed by President Hassan Rouhani.

According to the proposed bill, the national currency will change from Rial to Toman.

As reported, the decision was made in order to maintain the efficiency of the national currency and facilitate and restore the role of cash in domestic monetary transactions.



Reducing the costs of issuing banknotes and coins, as well as tackling the problems which people are facing in simple daily transactions, like counting and carrying large volumes of banknotes and coins and finally eliminating coins from the country's economic exchange cycle, are some other goals mentioned for this decision.

The government first put forward the plan for shifting the national currency from Rial to Toman earlier in December 2016.

However, it decided to postpone implementation of currency reconversion policy in 2016 due to some reasons including the expressed concerns about the time unfitting economic conditions which would ignite inflation and economic instability.

The policy basically seeks to facilitate monetary transactions among the Iranians and match the currency being transcribed in official documents and banking bills (rial) with the one utilized in real daily lives of Iranians (Toman).

Rial has practically been replaced by Toman in daily transactions as the result of the cumulative inflation over the recent years.

‘Projects with high physical progress prioritized for receiving facilities’

ECONOMY **TEHRAN**–Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Reza Rahmani said that for allocation of facilities his ministry attaches priority to the projects that have high physical progress, IRNA reported.

Speaking in a meeting with the board members of the committees of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) and Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) on Tuesday, the minister said that providing liquidity for industrial units is the main demand of these units from this ministry and it is also a top agenda for the ministry.

“In this due, the projects with high physical progress and also the active units which have proper status regarding sales market are attached priority for receiving bank loans”, Rahmani stressed.

As previously announced by Deputy Industry Minister Mohsen Salehinia, during the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 19, 2020) 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.

The current Iranian calendar year of 1398 is named as the year of “Pickup in Production” by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei. The realization of this motto toward Iran's self-reliance is in fact the only way to tackle the U.S. cruel sanctions on Iran's economy.

To this end, Iranian government has put supporting domestic producers a top agenda in the current year.

Providing the required working capital for the production units and offering them facilities is one of the major measures being pursued by the government to support these units.

Iranian energy minister visits Afghanistan to pursue economic co-op

ECONOMY **TERHAN**– Iranian Minister of Energy, who heads the Iran-Afghanistan Joint Economic Committee, visited Kabul on Tuesday to hold talks with senior Afghan officials in order to discuss expansion of economic ties especially in water and energy areas.

During his one-day visit, Reza Ardakanian met with the Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, the country's Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah and the Afghan minister of water and energy as well as the country's finance minister.

In the meeting with Ghani, the two sides discussed a variety of important issues including energy exchanges, joint ventures in water and related industries, environmental issues, railways, Afghanistan's participation in Chabahar Port and resolving banking issues.

■ Need for managing border waters
The two sides also stressed the need for close cooperation between the two countries for managing the water resources in the border regions of the two countries.

They emphasized the need for balanced and mutually beneficial development of the



border regions by optimal water resources management.

Increasing the level of trade between the two countries by utilizing Afghanistan's latent production and trade capacities was among other issues discussed in the meeting.

■ Activating Joint Economic Committee mechanism

After meeting with Ghani, Ardakanian held talks with the country's Chief Executive

Abdullah, in which the two sides called for a more active performance by the two countries' Joint Economic Committee in order to develop economic relations especially in water, energy and utilization of Chabahar Port capacities.

Ardakanian further met with Afghan Minister of Energy and Water Mohammad Gul Kholmi, to discuss the two countries relations in the fields of water and energy.

In the meeting with his Afghan counter-

part, Ardakanian voiced Iran's readiness for cooperation in Afghanistan's infrastructure projects and emphasized the need for exploitation of bilateral and international capacities in this regard.

The two sides also agreed on cooperation in other areas like investing in renewables and extending this cooperation to other countries in the region.

■ Joint Economic Committee Meeting to be held soon

Further in his visit, Ardakanian met with the Afghan Finance Minister Mohammad Humayun Qayumi who is also the co-chair of Afghanistan-Iran Joint Economic Committee.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed the two countries' latest state of bilateral relations in economic areas, including trade, transit and energy, and agreed to hold a joint economic committee meeting within a month.

The two sides also agreed on establishing a committee to act as a temporary framework for activating economic capacities before holding the next meeting of the Joint Economic Committee.

Iran's private sector ready to contribute to Iraq's reconstruction

ECONOMY **TEHRAN**– Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) hosted a gathering on Tuesday between representatives of Iran and Iraq's private companies active in the construction industry, the ICCIMA portal reported.

As reported, in the meeting which was attended by officials, businessmen, entrepreneurs and company representatives from both sides active in the construction industry, the two sides explored avenues of cooperation and contribution of Iranian private sectors in the reconstruction of Iraq.

According to the data provided by the Iraqi side, the Arab country's infrastructure has suffered nearly \$45 billion of damage during the Daesh groups' attacks in the country and the country requires \$88 billion of investment to reconstruct the damaged infrastructure.

In this regard, the Board of Directors of the Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce stated that Iran has the capacity to expand its presence in Iraq's infrastructure projects and to invest jointly with Iraqi parties.

Speaking in the meeting, Mohammad Amirzadeh, deputy head of ICCIMA, expressed the Iranian private sector's readiness for cooperation with Iraqi companies in reconstruction of Iraq and noted that Iran is well positioned in the maritime industry, road construction, engineering services, power supply technology and other industries and could have a significant



impact on the reconstruction process of Iraq by investing in the country.

Further in the event, the Secretary General of Iran-Iraq Chamber of Commerce Hamid Hosseini expressed hope that Iranian companies could form consortiums with private and state-run Iraqi companies in order to play a significant role in the country's infrastructure projects.

“Iranian companies have competitive advantages in Iraq's housing and engineering services sector and should use this opportunity for expansion of their presence in Iraq, though there are some difficulties along the way, especially considering the financial complexities imposed by the U.S. sanctions,” he said.

Iran and Iraq have been taking significant steps for boosting economic relations in the past few years.

The two countries are following up plans for increasing their bilateral economic trade to over \$20 billion.

Transport development fund set up in Iran

ECONOMY **TEHRAN**– Establishment of the Transport Development Fund of Iran as a state-run company was officially started by Iranian Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri as the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development was notified with the statute of the company. As reported by IRNA on Wednesday, the statute of the Transport Development Fund was ratified in a cabinet meeting on July 27 and the ministries of road and urban development, and finance and economic affairs, as well as the Budget and Planning Organization were notified accordingly.

According to the fund's charter, the Transport Development Fund is a state-owned corporation whose purpose is to finance and develop the country's transport sector as well as the freight and passenger transport services sector. The fund is also able to provide necessary facilities through representative banks for the private investors which are active in the transport areas.

The fund's initial capital is set to be 190 trillion rials (over \$4.5 billion) and its affiliated company is set to be in close coordination with the ministry of roads and urban development.

Earlier in June, Iran's Transport Ministry had announced that the government has allocated \$4.5 billion for establishing a transport development fund.

According to Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami, the



establishment of the transport development fund was envisioned by the country's Sixth Five-Year National Development Plan (2016-2021). The minister had noted that in the current Iranian calendar year's budget bill 200 billion rials (nearly \$4.76 million) has been allocated to this fund. In the past two decades, Iran's transportation infrastructure has gone through major transformation and every year the country is advancing more in this area.

Currently more than 80 percent of the country's roads are paved and the government is also hugely planning on expanding and developing the country's railway network.

Since the country have numerous neighbors with which it has close trade ties, the expansion of land export routes including railway and roads in the border regions of the country have become the Transport and Urban Development Ministry's top priority in the transportation area.

May Iranian economy resuscitate from doldrums

1 → The Governor of the Central Bank of Iran Abdolnaser Hemmati has repeatedly announced that the CBI has a good control over forex market and bubble of forex rates is getting smaller. “The illusion about any instability or inflation in domestic foreign exchange market, which was constantly spoken of, is broken for the nth time by the CBI management,” Hemmati said on April 24.

Regarding the mentioned direct correlation between forex rates, Iranians expect inflation to warm down, too.

“Now, it is time for the inflation rate to start its downward trend,” people expect.

But nothing is yet felt at supermarkets, chain stores, bazzars, etc. Some not remarkable and periodic reduction in prices of cars and housing units have occurred recently but the markets are facing a kind of recession.

Additionally, based on the latest report of the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI), consumer inflation registered a year-on-year increase of 48 percent in the Iranian month ending July 22 compared with the similar month last year.

The overall Consumer Price Index (using the Iranian year to March 2017 as the base year) stood at 179.7 in the fourth month of the Iranian year, indicating a 2.8 percent rise compared with the previous month. The goods and services CPI in the 12-month period ending July 22 increased by 40.4 percent compared with last year's corresponding period. SCI had put the inflation rate for the preceding Iranian month, which ended on June 21 at 37.6 percent.

What is going on then?

As a matter of fact, inflationary impacts of forex rates growth show their face very soon but the reverse process is a lazy to get started i.e. prices are more inclined to move on an uprising trend. Mehr news agency conducted an interview with Dr. Bahamm Arman, Iranian economist and a university professor to get a better view over the issue.

Minimizing the role of all the governments in determining forex rates, Arman said that in Iran, for years the economists have required administrations to modify inflation rate based on real forex rates but due to political issues the idea has been rejected. “However, in some specific periods, inflation rate sprang forward and skyrocketed to modify itself in accordance with real forex rates,” he said. Inflation's jump in the past year can be explained, accordingly, and due to the political conditions of the country in the said time, he added. The Iranian economist also referred to the role of the international investment banks in designating forex rates and prices of oil and commodities besides capital markets all across the globe, which operate under political demands of their governments. In better words, working under their governments' political demand, the global investment banks control flow of money across the world.

“In my opinion, what is going on in Iran, in particular the story about the forex rates, is comprehensively an internation-

al political trend which goes along with domestic economic structure of the country,” he elaborated. “The put embargo on exports of Iranian oil and other types of the imposed sanctions on the country's economy, those which restrict Iran's relations with international banks or financial markets are all parts of the same puzzle,” he added.

“A mixture of both political and economic factors is affecting Iran,” Arman said. In Arman's idea, the inflated forex rates should not be considered as a means to blame administration since, with previous modified forex rates, imports of various kinds of products were economical while producing them domestically was a costly procedure and non-economical.

“The unreal and modified forex rates had made Iran a safe haven for importers and smugglers of the basic goods such as sugar, vegetable oil, and wheat putting a heavy burden on the shoulders of domestic producers” the Iranian economist said.

Any predictions about the future of inflation rate in Iran should be regarding the volume of the attracted investments and the status quo of national currency i.e. its depreciation or reinforcement, Arman underlined. Furthermore, the Iranian economist underscored the current economic conditions of the US, where the inflation rate is under control, the unemployment is at the lowest rate in the past 50 years and economic growth is at an optimum level. “Dollar should be reinforced under Trump's tenure, his policy of ‘America First’ and levied tariffs of imported goods, however, the rate is curbed hovering around €1.11 to €1.14. Dollar is intentionally prevented from getting reinforced, since any increase in its value will lubricate imports of goods to the US and put jobs in the US at risk,” he said.

“The same story can be true for Iran in some ways,” he noted, “Rial depreciation can prosper domestic production and growth.” “Iranian farmers prefer to export their products when rial is weak to neighboring countries,” he added. The economist, meanwhile, urges the government to incrementally let the forex rates freely modify themselves and omit what is called in Iran ‘official forex rate’, which is around 42,000 rials for each dollar (while at the free market the rate stands at around 120,000 rials).

“The set governmental forex rate has ignited and facilitated corruption in domestic economy,” Arman underlined.

“The official forex rate must be allocated merely for imports of industrial machineries and any other types of required goods must be imported at free market forex rate,” he suggested.

“Rial depreciation has had repercussions on Iranian purchasing power but it has paved the way for domestic production of a wide range of products which had been imported previously,” Arman said. He also underscored that “it is vital for the government to make the nations aware of the fact that regarding the conditions of the country, populist approaches are not efficient nor practical.”

“How can it be possible that in a country [Iran], the price

of a bottle of mineral water is 2.5 time more than that of a liter of petrol?” he asked highlighting that the situation is neither normal nor realistic.

“To make the economy prosper under the present circumstance, the government should concentrate on those parts of the economy which have no link to the imposed sanction such as the housing sector,” he suggested.

“The government can start issuing bonds or establishing new public companies to supply the required liquidity for funding semi-finished development projects in Iran, while Iranian banks cannot fund such projects” Arman said.

“Domestic capital market, which is state-run, can also assist the government with the issue,” he said, “however, the capital market is not as powerful as it can be.”

“The total value of Iran's capital market is at \$80 billion, while that of Saudi Arabia stands at above \$600 billion, i.e. Iranian capital market can grow much bigger than it is now,” the economists added. “The government should engage domestic private sector in implementation of development projects via attracting their financial resource to the capital market,” Arman concluded. In accordance with what Arman said, high liquidity volume is recognized as one of the main factors propelling the forex rates and consequently the inflation rate in Iran. It makes the central bank to print notes and makes the government and other banks borrow from the central bank.

The CBI governor has said that as in the previous year, the main goals of the central bank are controlling liquidity volume and protecting domestic production in the hope for controlling the inflation rate.

He has referred to supplying the required liquidity for production units, which incurred losses due to forex rates fluctuations, besides supplying required resources for importing basic goods as other major targets of the CBI. It should be noted that one of the other challenges of the Iranian administration in the current year is revising its budget deficit, while the US sanctions are set to close the artery of oil revenues.

Any decision about the method of supplying budget resources would have a direct influence on inflation rate. In case the government decides to borrow from the central bank, the consequences would be tough on inflation rate in both producer and consumer prices.

Without a doubt, sanctions can be an opportunity for Iran to reduce its reliance on oil revenues and move towards an exports-oriented and indigenous economy. It is vital for the country to get independent from the international bodies restricting flow of money into it and construct new and more tightened ties with regional countries based on mutual cooperation and agreements, which are not vulnerable to US-led sanction. This is for sure a bumpy one but under the aegis of proper planning and management, the country's economy has the chance to revive.

Daily gasoline output exceeds consumption by 15m liters: Zanganeh

E N E R G Y **TEHRAN** — Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said on Tuesday that the country's daily gasoline production is 15 million liters more than the consumption, IRNA reported.

"We are producing 15 million liters of gasoline more than the country's consumption demand, which we save and we have also started exporting it," Zanganeh told reporters after a Majlis Economic Committee meeting.

The official noted that in addition to gasoline, National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) is also producing extra levels of gas oil, and jet fuel and the country is in a very good position in terms of refined products.

For the first time on Wednesday, National Iranian Oil Products Distribution Company (NIOPDC) offered 10,000 tons of gasoline produced in Iran's Persian Gulf Star Refinery (PGSR) at the international ring of Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX).

According to the Managing Director of IRENEX Ali Hosseini, Afghanistan is the export destination for the 10,000-ton cargo of the first offering.



Since the U.S.'s withdrew from Iran's nuclear pact in May 2018, vowing to drive Iran's oil exports down to zero, the Islamic Republic has been taking various measures

to counter U.S. actions and to lessen its economy's reliance on oil.

In the past few years, Iranian think-tanks and energy experts have been repeatedly

stating that the country should increase its refining capacity in order to lessen the economy's reliance on crude sales. In this regard, one of the main strategies of the National Iranian Oil Company in recent years has been focusing on the country's refineries.

In early July, Zanganeh announced that the country's daily gasoline production exceeded 110 million liters to mark a new record in the country's gasoline production history.

The NIOPDC reports indicates that the country's daily gasoline production has witnessed a 5 million barrels increase in the past six months.

The increased in the gasoline output has been mostly due to the inauguration of the third phase of PGSR.

President Rouhani inaugurated the third phase of the refinery in a ceremony on February 18 participated by the oil minister.

The refinery in Bandar Abbas, the capital city of southern province of Hormozgan, is the first of its kind designed based on gas condensate feedstock.

Iran's Q1 hydropower output up 415% on year

E N E R G Y **TEHRAN** —The electricity output of Iran's hydroelectric power plants exceeded 12,000 megawatts (MW) in the first three months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21), 415 percent more than the figure for last year's same period, IRIB reported on Wednesday.

As reported by the portal of Iran's Energy Ministry (known as Paven), currently 17 hydroelectric power plants with a total capacity of 3,800 MW are under construction across the country, which, once completed, will generate an average of 7,700 gigawatt hour (GWh) electricity on an annual basis.

The increase in the country's hydroelectric output comes as heavy rainfalls in spring almost filled all the dams across the country.

In early July, the Head of Iran Water and Power Resources Development Company (IWPC), Behrouz Moradi, had put the country's hydroelectric power plants' output in the Q1 of the current calendar year at 4400 GWh, saying that so far IWPC has constructed over 12,020 MW capacity of hydropower plants across the country.

Director of Iran's Hydroelectric Power Plants Management Center Farbod Estiri had also said in June that

Iran's hydroelectric power plants are expected to produce 10,500 megawatts (10.5 gigawatts) of electricity in the current Iranian calendar year (March 2019-March 2020).

According to Estiri, since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20) up to mid-June, over 10.8 billion kilowatt hour (KWh) of electricity was produced by the country's hydroelectric plants.

The figure was reported to be 1.8 billion KWh in the last year's same time span.

In late April, Deputy Distribution Coordinator of Iran's Power Generation and Distribution Company (known as TAVANIR), Mahmoud Reza Haqifam, announced that recent heavy rainfalls in Iran has increased the electricity output of the country's hydropower plants by up to 5,000 megawatts.

"In the peak consumption hours of the day, between 9,500 MW and 10,000 MW of electricity is charged to the network by hydropower plants," Haqifam said.

Iran's current power generation capacity stands at about 81 GW of which the share of hydroelectric power stands at 19.87 percent.

Currently, 54 hydroelectric power plants with a total capacity of over 12000 megawatts are operating in Iran, with an average annual output of about 6,000 GWh.



Oil rises for fifth session as stockpiles fall and market awaits Fed

Oil prices rose for a fifth day on Wednesday, supported by a drop in U.S. inventories and investor expectations that the U.S. Federal Reserve will lower borrowing costs for the first time since the financial crisis more than a decade ago. As reported by Reuters, Brent crude futures, the international benchmark for oil prices, were up 40 cents, or 0.6 percent, at \$65.12 a barrel by 0842 GMT.

U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude gained 20 cents, or 0.3 percent, to \$58.25 a barrel.

Central bankers in the United States began their two-day meeting on Tuesday and were expected to cut interest rates, with President Donald Trump having reiterated his call for the Fed to make a large cut.

"The move has long been anticipated and represents a double boon for oil prices — on one hand it should encourage U.S. oil demand and on the other it will apply downward pressure on the dollar,"

said PVM Oil Associates analyst Stephen Brennock.

Oil stockpiles fell again last week, along with gasoline and distillate inventories, data from the American Petroleum Institute industry group showed on Tuesday.

Crude inventories fell by 6 million barrels to 443 million barrels in the week ended July 26, against a forecast for a drop of 2.6 million barrels in a Reuters poll of analysts.

"The outlook for another draw in U.S. crude inventories and renewed outages in Libya is supporting oil prices," said UBS oil analyst Giovanni Staunovo.

Libya's Sharara oilfield, the country's largest, shut down on Tuesday after a problem with a valve on the pipeline linking it to the Zawiya oil terminal.

Tensions in the Middle East remain high, providing another bullish catalyst for prices,



with the U.S. formally asking Germany to join France and Britain to help to secure the Strait of Hormuz after the seizure of a British tanker by Iran. Germany has expressed skepticism about the request.

BP finance chief Brian Gilvary said the British company has not taken any of its oil tankers through the Strait of Hormuz since a July 10 attempt by Iran to seize one of its vessels.

Market participants are also closely watching the U.S.-China meeting in Shanghai as both countries seek to end a year-long trade war, though expectations are low for progress after combative remarks from President Trump.

The meeting comes as a survey showed that China's factory activity shrank for a third month in a row in July, underlining the growing strains placed by the trade war on the world's second-biggest economy and one of the biggest oil consumers.

Analysis: China puts Iranian crude into strategic petroleum reserves in June

Iranian crude oil imported by China in June was injected into storage tanks used for maintaining strategic petroleum reserves, S&P Global Platts reported citing sources with knowledge of the matter.

The barrels of predominantly Iranian Heavy and Iranian Light grades were sent to bonded storage at the coastal sites of Tianjin, Huizhou and Jinzhou, highlighting how discounted and refinery-compatible Iranian grades continue to find favor in China.

China imported 855,638 mt or 209,060 bpd of crude from Iran in June, latest data from the General Administration of Customs showed. This amounts to roughly three VLCCs, all of which were sent to SPR sites through state-run companies or storage operators, the sources said.

The June imports from Iran were 59.1 percent lower year on year and have fallen from a five-year high of 792,380 bpd in April, hit by the withdrawal of sanction waivers by the U.S. on May 2, and Washington's efforts to bring Iranian oil exports down to zero.

The sources said Iranian barrels have been moving into SPR since at least November 2018, when the U.S. re-imposed sanctions but gave waivers to Iran's biggest crude and condensate buyers, including China.

The storage sites at Tianjin, Huizhou and Jinzhou are some of the newest built under China's second phase of expansion for its SPR. These include 20.1-million-barrel above ground storage in Tianjin commissioned in 2014, 18.9-million-barrel underground storage at Jinzhou in northern Liaoning province commissioned in 2017 and a 31.4-million-barrel facility at Huizhou in southern Guangdong province that started in 2018.

In June, VLCCs that discharged Iranian crude cargoes in China included the 317,367 dwt Horse, and the 317,534 dwt Stream, both owned by the National Iranian Tanker Company, and they arrived at Tianjin's Xingang port, cFlow, Platts trade flow software, showed.



The total volume of Iranian crude sent to China's SPR was not available, but data showed deliveries were more concentrated between November-December 2018 and June-July 2019, and some in between.

China has shown a preference for medium sour Middle Eastern grades for building its SPR because they are more compatible with the country's refinery configurations.

It has a long-term plan to build national petroleum reserves equivalent to 90 days of net import cover, in line with the International Energy Agency's guidelines for oil importing countries.

China's net crude imports were at 9.91 million bpd in H1 2019, up 8.8 percent year on year, official data showed.

The last time China announced official SPR data was in December 2017, when the National Bureau of Statistics said volumes had reached 37.73 million mt of crude as of

mid-2017, or 276.56 million barrels, up from 33.25 million mt recorded in mid-2016.

As of mid-2017, nine SPR storage sites were in use with the second phase still in progress, and the third-phase of China's SPR sites will start commissioning in 2021. Due to limited storage availability at the SPR sites, the government can lease commercial tanks for SPR as well.

China posted a 25 percent year-on-year increase in crude imports at the end of 2018, implying an unprecedented rate of SPR filling due to geopolitically driven purchases of crude and gold, Bernstein Research senior analyst Neil Beveridge said earlier this year. He had estimated China's SPR to be close to the 2020 target of around 550 million barrels, and expected import growth to remain in the high single digits to meet the 90-day target. China's Iranian imports in June made Iran the country's 11th largest crude supplier.

Earlier this month, the U.S. imposed sanctions on state-owned Zhuhai Zhenrong Company Limited for allegedly violating U.S. restrictions on Iran's oil sector, but it wasn't clear how much crude Zhuhai Zhenrong imported and when.

A portion of the Iranian barrels imported by China was equity oil for its previous investments in Iran's upstream sector.

China National Petroleum Corp., or CNPC, had suspended its operations at the South Pars gas field project in Iran, and minimized support and services to two Iranian oilfields where it had interests, after the US re-imposed sanctions on Tehran in 2018, according to regulatory filings by its subsidiary PetroChina on April 29.

CNPC has indirect interests in three oil and gas projects in Iran — the South Pars gas field project, the Masjid-i-Sulaiman (MIS) oil fields in which CNPC obtained a 75 percent interest in 2005, and the North Azadegan oilfield in which CNPC obtained 100% interest in 2009, according to the filings. CNPC had shipped about 2.3 million mt of crude from those fields in 2018.

Researchers predict global energy needs will increase 25% by 2050

By Art Jahnke

As our climate heats up in coming decades, Ian Sue Wing, a BU associate professor of earth and environment, worries the increased energy needs for air-conditioning could ramp up greenhouse gas emissions. "That's what keeps me up at night," he says.

Many of the consequences of climate change are well reported in the press: rising seas, more severe storms, droughts and floods, and increasing numbers of heat-related illness and deaths. Now Ian Sue Wing, a Boston University College of Arts & Sciences associate professor of earth and environment, Bas van Ruijven, a former visiting scholar at the Frederick S. Pardee Center for the Study of the Longer-Range Future, and Enrica De Cian, a professor at Ca' Foscari University of Venice in Italy, project another troubling outcome: a significant increase in global energy needs, largely anticipated to arise from cooling and air-conditioning usage.



In a new paper published in Nature Communications, Sue Wing, De Cian, and van Ruijven (now a scientist at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis in Laxenburg, Austria), warn that by 2050, even a modest warming of our climate could increase the world's energy needs by as much as 25 percent. And if greenhouse gas emissions continue unabated, we could demand up to 58 percent more energy than would be needed in a stable climate.

Anthony Janetos, chair of BU's Climate Action Plan Task Force and a CAS professor of earth and environment, says the findings underscore the need for rapidly deploying zero-carbon options for generating energy, so that climate change itself—and all the air-conditioning that will be used to cool a warmer world—doesn't end up accelerating the demand for more fossil fuel-generated electricity.

"We've known for a long time that energy demand would grow as a function of population growth and economic development," says Janetos, who is also director of the Pardee Center for the Study of the Longer-Range Future. "But for the first time, this paper has given us estimates of the growth in energy demand as a function of climate change itself — a potentially disruptive positive feedback."

Sue Wing says earlier research that focused on areas like the United States suggested that a warming climate might actually reduce energy consumption. But when the research team coupled statistical models of energy demand with global temperature projections under warming scenarios (simulated by 21 independent climate models and 5 different scenarios for economic and population growth), the results showed substantial increases in energy needs.

But understanding that calculation is complicated, Sue Wing says, because the influence of climate change on an area's energy demand depends on the interaction of two uncertain drivers: how the area's population and income are projected to grow, and how its prevailing local temperature patterns are projected to change.

"In tropical areas, as the climate warms, it is simply going to get hotter," says Sue Wing. "In order for people in tropical areas to keep cool, they are going to have to use more electricity. But as you move toward the poles, things become more complicated."

Increasing energy

That's because in temperate zones, a warming climate will increase the energy used for cooling during summer but reduce the energy used for heating during winter.

"In the tropics, we see a positive effect—energy increase—but as you move away from the tropics, we see a positive and a negative effect," he says. "When you add up the two positives and the negative, you could in principle get a negative ... but what we actually see is a substantial positive" — a significant net increase in energy usage.

The researchers' calculations project that by 2050, the global demand for energy resulting from socioeconomic development will be two to three times what it is today, growing by a factor of 1.4 to 2.7 in industrialized nations, and by a factor of 2 to 4 in poorer but rapidly developing countries in the tropics. Moderate warming would increase the global baseline amount of energy demands by 11 to 17 percent, while vigorous warming would increase it by 25 to 58 percent.

Regionally, demands for energy could increase by more than 50 percent in the tropics and southern parts of the United States, while Southern Europe and China could see increases greater than 25 percent. Total energy consumption may actually decline in northern Europe, Russia, Canada, and the US Pacific Northwest, but by a much smaller amount than the increases projected for other locations.

The energy supplies

These findings highlight two important unanswered questions: how much of the additional demand will be satisfied by increases in energy supplies versus behavioral changes like conservation, and whether producing the needed additional energy might add to emissions of greenhouse gases, setting in motion a vicious circle that could accelerate global warming.

"At this point, we don't know," says Sue Wing, who explains that the outcome depends on the choices made today by businesses and private citizens. "To cool my house, I could buy a bigger air-conditioner and it would use more electricity," he says. "Or if higher demand makes electricity more expensive, I could choose to open my window or run a fan."

How we choose to generate the additional electricity for cooling will also have big implications for the climate. The International Energy Agency estimated that in 2018, two-thirds of global energy needs were met by oil and gas, while less than 10 percent was provided by solar and wind. Hydro and nuclear energy produced about 25 percent of global electricity.

"That is the focus of our research right now," says Sue Wing.

"What happens will not just influence the climate, it will influence energy markets, and it will influence the ways we think about energy policy. It can change the economic and political relationships between countries."

By 2050, whether renewable sources can be scaled up quickly enough to make a difference — and what that might cost — is still an open question.

"We could use coal, or we could use renewable sources, and those two choices mean very different things for our future. With coal, (an increase in demand) will mean more greenhouse gas emissions. That's what keeps me up at night."

(Source: phys.org)

Are you calling us Terrorist?

By Abdullahi Junaid

KATSINA/ NIGERIA— Recently, the desperate and murderous Nigerian Govt under the administration of western puppet bloodthirsty tyrant Buhari, declared Islamic Movement under the leadership of his eminence Sheikh Zakzaky as “terrorist” which shows the govt blunder and failure clearly, this declaration was objected and confronted by many rationale and conscious people from in and outside Nigeria.

Before then, let’s go back to history and see Islamic Movement record.

By now Islamic Movement is more than 40 years from its emergence but we have no single record of violent neither assaulting of our enemies nor attacking public properties despite the fact that our enemies are not hidden to us.

In every holy month of Ramadan, Sheikh Zakzaky used to distribute food stuffs to his neighbourhood and charity, even this last Ramadan though the Sheikh is in illegal custody, he directed his relatives to do so, and they did. There are still eyewitness of this. Whoever is doubting can go and ask the right and rationale people living in Gyallesu where Sheikh Zakzaky was residing. Is this a criminality?



During 2011 election riot raised by the supporters of the then loser current President Buhari under his direction, where they used to burn Christian’s shops and residents in mostly cities of Kaduna state, there were tens of Christians that were saved in Sheikh Zakzaky resident in order not to be killed or harmed by the thugs,

During workers strike in clinics and majority hospitals, medical teams among the followers of Sheikh Zakzaky across the country used to attend the affected hospitals and give emergency and first aid assistance.

On 2014 During the attack by the then President Good luck Ebele Jonathan on peaceful protesters in solidarity with oppressed Palestinians, where 30+ of our members including 3 biological children of our leader Sheikh Zakzaky were brutally and mercilessly killed by the soldiers barbarians, some of their personnel were captured by us, and been later released due to the mercy of our leader Sheikh Zakzaky.

During our religious duty “Arba’een trek” in solidarity with Imam Hussain, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (S), Govt attacked us at Kano point, where 30+ from us attained martyrdom, one from the attackers was arrested and later released after finding that he was innocent, “he was used by force and sent into us” by Govt agency, he was released under the direction of our leader Sheikh Zakzaky.

Those kind of examples that happened at different times and occasions are many.

The worst among all is that, Nigerian Soldiers attacked our leader on December 2015 were 1000+ children, men and women of our members were brutally and mercilessly killed including additional 3 biological children of our leader, his biological sister who was 70+ was locked into room and set ablaze, resident of our leader was demolished.

Sheikh Zakzaky was dragged on the corpses of his killed children. Despite all these atrocities, we followed legal and peaceful channel and sued Nigerian Govt into court, the federal high court made a verdict that Sheikh Zakzaky must be freed and continue detaining him is illegal and unconstitutional.

This murderous Govt refuse to obey court order and free our leader, we happened to be on the street taking placards and pictures of our martyrs enlightening the public about the heinous crime against humanity meted on us by Buhari led Govt and demand the release of our leader Sheikh Zakzaky, joint of security operatives came many times and attacked us with live ammunition, killed many of us on the street and sometimes went on with the corpses, hundreds of our protesters are arrested and kept in custody without trial despite the injury in their body.

Despite these atrocities we remain peaceful and still following legal channel to see our leader free.

In these predicaments that we found ourselves, who has the audacity to blame us if we carry arms?

It is well known to every right thinking person that any human being has a limitation of resisting oppression, but despite all these we still remain peaceful and now this murderous govt has an audacity to declare us as “Terrorist” despite all the atrocities meted on us. Do you want to us to let our spiritual leader dying slowly in your illegal gulag? I can’t understand how bunch of idiots those that are leading this administration are, if you don’t know, Sheikh Zakzaky is our red line.

Please! To those right thinking people, who is supposed to be called a “Terrorist” between Nigerian Govt and Followers of Sheikh Zakzaky?

Based on my assumption any Government that cannot simply obey court order is not supposed to be called a Govt but “Terrorist Organization”

Killing of peaceful protesters is never an achievement but a heinous crime against humanity.

I want to inform the general public that nobody has a capability to proscribe us no matter what will be the consequence.

What we are doing is our religious duty, and nobody can stop us from practicing our religious.

Finally, i want to this murderous govt to be rest assured that we will continue to protest demanding the release of our leader Sheikh Zakzaky until the demand is granted.

A narrative of the Democratic primary election battle

By Alireza Hosseini

TEHRAN—Debate continues among members of the Democratic Party. The dispute is heightened as the latest polls show Joe Biden has been able to outlast other Democratic candidates. Joe Biden seems to have had a successful showing in the second Democratic debate!

7 takeaways from the Democratic debate’s first night

As CNN reported, A handful of low-polling moderates hoped to break through in a crowded Democratic field during Tuesday’s debate by confronting the top-tier candidates on stage, Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren and Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders. Warren and Sanders withstood the attacks — and counterpunched much harder. The two most progressive candidates in the 2020 Democratic field struck inspirational tones, with Warren urging Democrats to be “the party of big, structural change.” And they won over the crowd as they debated with moderate critics who tried to question their electability and the feasibility of their ideas, but failed to knock either candidate on their heels even once. In the process, they could have eased primary voters’ fears that their policy proposals would make ripe targets for President Donald Trump and the GOP in a general election.

For their part, moderates pushed back as they tried to define themselves on health care and decriminalizing the border.

Mostly, though, their highlighting of ideological differences within the party offered Warren and Sanders a tune-up for higher-stakes showdowns this fall against the Democratic front-runner, former Vice President Joe Biden. Here are seven takeaways from Tuesday night, the first of the two nights of CNN’s Democratic debate in Detroit:

1. Warren and Sanders swat away their critics

Former Maryland Rep.

John Delaney’s argument for pragmatism midway through the debate teed Warren up — and she landed a haymaker.

“I don’t understand why anybody goes to the trouble of running for president of the United States just to talk about what we really can’t do and shouldn’t fight for,” Warren said.

The crowd erupted. Before the debate ended, Delaney’s Wikipedia page had been updated to say he’d died at Warren’s hands in Detroit.

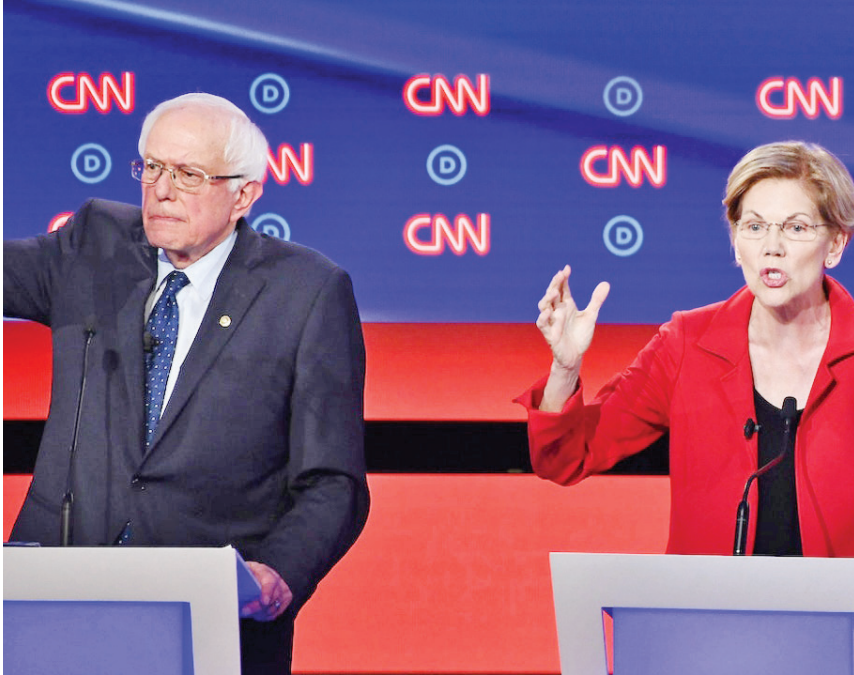
It wasn’t the only time Warren took on Delaney. Early on, she called his attacks on “Medicare for All” proposals “Republican talking points.”

Then there was Sanders’ retort when Ohio Rep. Tim Ryan told him that “you don’t know that” as he questioned the coverage Medicare for All would provide. “I do know. I wrote the damn bill,” Sanders shot back.

The visuals were memorable, too. Sanders at one point threw his hands up at Hickenlooper. Warren rubbed her hands at the thought of implementing her 2% wealth tax on Delaney’s \$65 million personal fortune.

Delaney, Ryan, former Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper and Montana Gov. Steve Bullock all went at Sanders and Warren from the right. Delaney began the debate by comparing the two to failed Democratic nominees George McGovern (1972), Walter Mondale (1984) and Michael Dukakis (1988).

The problem facing the moderates is that their arguments largely consisted of dire warnings about the political conse-



quences of moving too far left. They didn’t offer Democratic voters an alternative vision for a post-Trump America. It’s why none of them landed real blows on Warren or Sanders all night. If anything, sparring with the low-polling quartet served to sharpen Warren and Sanders for the fights against stronger opponents ahead.

2. No daylight between Warren and Sanders

The top two-polling progressives in the Democratic field were positioned on stage next to each other Tuesday night. But they showed no appetite for a fight with each other. Instead, Warren and Sanders largely stood together, beating back moderate critics all night.

The two are courting different voters right now, but eventually, one of the them will need to consolidate progressive support to win the Democratic nomination. Still, Tuesday night showed that the time to turn against each other could be months away.

Both are considered top-tier candidates who poll viably and are raising money effectively, and both appear to believe it’s far too early to take such a risk.

3. ‘Dark psychic force’

Author Marianne Williamson provided one of the night’s most memorable moments when she addressed the water crisis in Flint, Michigan, with a stirring condemnation of environmental racism — and other candidates’ approach to talking about it.

“This is part of the dark underbelly of American society, the racism, the bigotry, and the entire conversation that we’re having here tonight — if you think any of this wonkiness is going to deal with this dark psychic force of the collectivized hatred that this President is bringing up in this country, then I’m afraid that the Democrats are going to see some very dark days,” she said.

“We need to say it like it is,” Williamson said. “It’s bigger than Flint. It’s all over this country. It’s particularly people of color. It’s particularly people who do not have the money to fight back, and if the Democrats don’t start saying it, why would those people feel they’re there for us? And if those people don’t feel it, they won’t vote for us and Donald Trump will win.”

The answer was a reminder of how pow-

erful the perspective of a political outsider can be in presidential races. Williamson is a low-polling long-shot, but generated buzz with her condemnation of “wonkiness” on racism.

4. Seeking a middle ground on health care

The debate began with a battle over health care dominated by Sanders and Warren defending Medicare for All against Delaney, Hickenlooper and Montana Gov. Steve Bullock, who cast it as politically fraught in a general election. Former Texas Rep. Beto O’Rourke and South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg sought middle grounds — and their answers on health care underscored where they are trying to fit into the Democratic field. O’Rourke touted a plan called “Medicare for America.”

“I would enroll uninsured Americans in Medicare, and allow those who are dissatisfied with their private insurance to opt into Medicare — while retaining private insurance for those who wish to keep it.” Our plan ensures everyone is enrolled in Medicare or can keep their employer-sponsored insurance,” he said. Buttigieg argued for a similar approach — and said Democrats should stop worrying about being called socialists by Republicans over the health care policies they back.

“If it’s true that if we embrace a far-left agenda, they’re going to say we’re a bunch of crazy socialists. If we embrace a conservative agenda, you know what they’re going to do? They’re going to say we’re a bunch of crazy socialists,” he said. “So let’s just stand up for the right policy, go out there and defend it.”

5. Arguments for reparations

Asked about racism, O’Rourke was the first Democrat on stage to argue for a step toward reparations.

“The very foundation of this country — the wealth that we have built, the way we became the greatest country on the face of the planet — was literally on the backs of those who were kidnapped and brought here by force,” he said. O’Rourke said he backs legislation by Texas Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee that would create a commission to study reparations.

It was an effective moment for O’Rourke — who, like Buttigieg, Williamson and Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar — didn’t end up playing a part of the memorable clashes with other candidates, because they didn’t fit into

the progressives-vs.-moderates theme that Warren, Sanders and their critics established early on.

Williamson also had a moment as she defended her plan to offer \$200 billion to \$500 billion in reparations. “We need to recognize when it comes to the economic gap between black and whites in America, it does come from a great injustice that has never been dealt with,” she said.

6. Trying to make moments

Klobuchar struggled more to get into the action. She didn’t attack Warren and Sanders the way others did, and there are reasons for her approach — Klobuchar could end up a viable contender for the vice presidential nomination. But she did stake out moderate ground in her opening statement.

“You’re going to hear a lot of promises up here, but I’m going will tell you this,” she said. “Yes, I have bold ideas but they are grounded in reality. And, yes, I will make some simple promises. I can win this. I’m from the Midwest. And I have won every race, every place, every time.”

Buttigieg’s best moment came when he made the case for structural reform to the American political system — the issue on which his proposals have been the furthest-reaching in the Democratic field. “Of course we need to get money out of politics, but when I propose the actual structural democratic reforms that might make a difference — end the electoral college, amend the Constitution if necessary to clear up Citizens United, have D.C. actually be a state, and depoliticize the Supreme Court with structural reform — people look at me funny, as if this country was incapable of structural reform,” Buttigieg said.

“This is a country that once changed its Constitution so you couldn’t drink and changed it back because we changed our minds and you’re telling me we can’t reform our democracy in our time. We have to or we will be having the same argument 20 years from now.”

7. Ideological split on decriminalizing the border

Mirroring the debate on health care, progressives and more moderate candidates split on the question of whether to decriminalize crossing the border illegally. Warren said the current law “has given Donald Trump the tool to break families apart.

“Sanders also said he would decriminalize crossing the border.

But more moderate candidates said they would retain laws against crossing the border illegally. “We can argue over the finer points of which parts should be handled by civil law and criminal law,” Buttigieg said.

He later added: “If fraud is involved, that’s suitable for the criminal statute. If not, it should be handled under civil law.”

O’Rourke said he would waive green card fees, give so-called “Dreamers” — undocumented immigrants who were brought into the US as children — citizenship, ease the process of seeking asylum and aid struggling Central American countries.

“Then, I expect that people will come here, follow our laws, and we reserve the right to criminally prosecute them if they do not,” he said.

Hickenlooper said: “I agree that we need to secure borders. There is no question about that. The frustration with what’s going on in Washington is they are kicking the ball back and forth. Secure the borders and make sure whatever law we have doesn’t allow children to be snatched from parents and put in cages.”

Yemeni civilians could only stand so much suffering

TEHRAN (FNA) — Now is the time to survey the wreck of the world with an air of concern. The United Arab Emirates is withdrawing its troops from war-torn Yemen in coordination with key ally Saudi Arabia.

War is easy. The hard part is cleaning up the mess afterward. The World Bank estimates that Yemen’s reconstruction needs are around 30 billion US dollars. The World Bank has been conducting this work in cooperation with other multilateral organizations including major donor nations like the US, UK and China.

To this end, Saudi Arabia claims to be willing to help reconstruction. Well if there is any honesty in this offer, they need to end the conflict first. If they fund reconstruction, they shouldn’t politicize aid, or disrupt and centralize the supply of humanitarian assistance, and/or indulge in debt-trap diplomacy and post-war order.

The only way out of the current stalemate is also a renewed call for political negotiations, redemption, and recover. For that call to be effective, the US must back the ongoing ceasefire to allow humanitarian aid into the country, give up on hosting one-sided political talks, and help the UN in its reconstruction and development efforts in Yemen.

In this man-made crisis, a political process to end the fighting and the humanitarian catastrophe that the world does witness today is a must. Unless there is outside pressure of a substantial kind on the Saudis, civilians will continue to suffer. While airstrikes and bombings are the primary cause of civilian deaths, many more have died from the impact of the blockade, drought, disease, starvation and preventable deaths.

In the grand scheme of things, those who turned Yemen

into a failed state are now required under international law to take responsibility for its reconstruction and peace efforts. They must help the UN to improve humanitarian and commercial access into the country, including the full functioning of all ports and airports. They must help the UN to repair public service infrastructure such as schools, water provision and hospitals, which have been damaged.

The importance is to keep in mind that the sun always shines after the storm.

No doubt the UAE troop withdrawal creates an opportunity to end the war and a chance for the UN to make peace a reality. This is unsurprising. The world community can facilitate further withdrawal and force the Saudis and their affiliated militias to drop their objections and reverse any policy that might prolong the counterproductive conflict that time forgot.

The bottom line is this: Keeping several thousand troops in Yemen over the long-term is a bad idea. Out of the salvage of their yesterdays, the people of Yemen have lost their patience and are longing for peace and for repairing the losses of the war, including civil status and legal freedom, food, clothes and tools, access to land and help to education.

The blunt reality is that, on this specific question the UAE is doing the right thing. Irrespective of the political theater in Riyadh and its western backers, there is no national-security interest in Yemen for outside players to begin with. Everything else — claiming Iran’s presence, playing peacekeeper between the warring factions, restoring ousted President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi to power, and pressuring Ansarullah to negotiate their own surrender - are all distractions and counterproductive.



Sanctions have been part of U.S. foreign policy since the beginning of the Republic: Nephew

By Javad Heirannia

TEHRAN — Richard Nephew, who served as the lead sanctions expert for the U.S. team negotiating with Iran, is of the opinion that “Sanctions have been part of U.S. foreign policy since the beginning of the Republic.”

The fellow at the Center on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University, says that it is harder to see U.S. pressure on Iran “adding up to a resolution of the problems the United States identified in choosing to impose those sanctions, in no small part because Iran may feel that it is unnecessary to respond to only the concerns of one country and an adversary at that.”

Following is the text of the interview:

■ What is the history of the using of sanction in U.S. foreign policy?

A: Sanctions have been part of U.S. foreign policy since the beginning of the Republic. They’ve been applied against a range of other states and actors, including countries that are now firm U.S. allies like the United Kingdom. To this end, it is worth noting that sanctions have also been a part of many foreign policies. The difference now, I think, is the degree to which the United States can operationalize its global economic position to implement sanctions. But, arguably, other superpowers -- for their time -- had similar power.

■ What is the importance of sanction in U.S. foreign policy?

A: It is an important tool in the conduct of foreign policy for creating leverage to resolve problems. All countries seek to build leverage as they enter into negotiations or deal with conflicts. Sometimes, the leverage is through sanctions. Other times, it is through violence or building up coalitions of partner countries.

■ Which preconditions needed for success of sanctions in U.S. foreign policy?

A: In my opinion, the conditions are: 1) a clear, well-articulated strategy with identified objectives; 2) a clear understanding of the target of sanctions, its vulnerabilities, and its interests so that sanctions can be tailored to their purpose; 3) international support and, better, cooperation in implementing sanctions; and, 4) a clear linkage to negotiations so that the leverage generated by sanctions can be applied toward a diplomatic settlement.

■ For success of sanctions on Iran, you have emphasized on international support and consensus. Do you think without the international



support, U.S. imposing sanctions on Iran will not be successful?

A: I think that it is much more difficult. I think the United States can generate pressure on Iran and has already done so. I think it is harder to see this pressure adding up to a resolution of the problems the United States identified in choosing to impose those sanctions, in no small part because Iran may feel that it is unnecessary to respond to only the concerns of one country and an adversary at that.

■ Dollar is a useful instrument in imposing sanction by U.S. What is your opinion about this? Can dollar remain as a useful instrument in imposing sanction be U.S. in the future?

A: The dollar is less a useful instrument than it is a resource that countries, banks, and companies want to use. By threatening to withhold access to the dollar (and, more importantly, access to the United States economy), the United States can make it harder to

resist its policy choices. The key factor in its continuing utility is the degree to which people, companies, and banks want to do business in the United States and how ready they are to walk away from that in order to do business with U.S.-sanctioned targets. Thus far, we are not seeing that in large scale. As time moves on, we may.

■ Regardless of the result, INSTEX is a try by Iran and other countries for rounding the SWIFT and dollar base mechanism. Do you think that dollar base mechanism will weak in the future?

A: It may, but it won’t be because of INSTEX. INSTEX may work or it may not, but the value of the dollar -- and, again, more importantly, the value of the US economy and access to it -- remains high for international business. So long as that remains important to international business, it will be hard for foreign companies, banks, and governments to ignore U.S. policy demands.

UK to avoid confrontation with Iran under Johnson: Expert

IFP-An expert of international politics has predicted a road fraught with difficulties for the incoming UK prime minister in the quest for Brexit, saying Boris Johnson seems hardly likely to look for confrontation with Iran.

In an interview with Khabar Online, Ali Bigdeli has shed light on the elements of UK Prime Minister Johnson’s policies on Iran, and the challenges that the new British leader will have to face in the coming months.

He believes the new UK Prime Minister will not be looking for a conflict with Iran, but London’s withdrawal from the European Union and its possible pullout from the Iran nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), may “increase the probability of formation of the international coalition that Trump dreams about.”

What follows is the full text of the interview:

■ All former UK leaders, except Tony Blair, have been afraid of overt or unquestioning support for Washington despite an implicit collaboration with the US policies. But Boris Johnson is said to have no compunction about following the US and will not be concerned about it. What is your evaluation? Will the new UK prime minister take part in the US campaign of maximum pressure on Iran?

A: Considering his far-right leanings and the similarity of his and Trump’s policies, the new UK prime minister has somehow informed Iran of his approach. Johnson did not take any stance on Iran or even on the oil tankers crisis in his first speech after assuming the office. He had two objectives in this regard; One reason was that he didn’t want to give credibility to the issue of the captured oil tankers, because he sought to show himself indifferent to this crisis. The second reason that made him avoid talking about this crisis was that Boris Johnson didn’t want his policies to be overshadowed by the crisis at the beginning of his tenure.

■ You mean Britain is looking for direct confrontation with Iran in the short term?

A: No. One should wait to know about details of the UK’s decision and see what policies it will adopt. The UK economy’s current situation is chaotic, and it seems hardly likely that the UK would be after confrontation with Iran. But on other subjects such as the Brexit, I believe that the new UK prime minister will be following the policies of the current US administration and Trump, and will take steps to fulfill the



old dream of Trump who favours lack of integrity of the European Union. Johnson has also pledged that he will pull the UK out of the European Union within a hundred days, with or without a deal, as this action will affect the European unity. However, we should remember that Brexit without a deal will be a very tough and risky job, and an unreasonable expectation in some way. Johnson would not be able to win adequate political support even within the Conservative Party to carry out the plan for a no-deal Brexit, but the point is that such development is meant to fulfill the interests of the current US administration, since Trump would not like a powerful centre in the West, like the EU, to stand against his demands. Trump has always tried to make the EU meet failure, particularly at the present time that the EU wants to stand against the unbridled US sanctions.

■ How would the rise of far-right parties in Europe affect the future developments given the current circumstance?

A: This issue has concerned the European countries, particularly France and Germany. French President Emmanuel Macron is deeply worried about the rise of radical right parties, because it may result in a victory for Marine Le Pen in the future. In the ceremony marking the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I, during which Trump said supporting the far-right parties will once again turn Europe into a hell. On the other hand, we see that Trump has recently criticized France for its new policy of tax on big American technology companies and has slammed Macron’s measure as foolishness. These cases would aggravate the differences and cause the US to support radical parties in Europe in

retaliation.

■ How could Johnson maintain a balance between the European partners and the US when it comes to Brexit?

A: Theresa May who was initially an advocate of Brexit was expecting that Britain’s \$30-billion market in the European Union and the UK labour forces working at the European countries would be maintained after the British exit from the union, and hoping to direct those capacities towards the US. But Trump did not reach out to Theresa May during their last two meetings, because May lacked the elements of a Conservative and ultimately ran into trouble at the UK Parliament. Therefore, Boris Johnson’s outspoken stance on Brexit and the issue of UK withdrawal from the EU may have been taken in coordination with Trump, which will be a very dangerous plan, and I believe that Johnson is unlikely to meet success in this approach.

■ Supposing that Johnson could pull the UK out of the European Union, how would it affect the relations between Iran and Europe?

A: Iran will lose one of the JCPOA parties anyway, and as a result, France and Germany will be left alone, as the US pressures on these two countries could prove more effective and increase the probability of formation of the international coalition that Trump dreams about.

■ What will happen to the UK-proposed naval coalition? Will the UK strengthen its naval presence in the Persian Gulf?

A: I think it was a posturing by Jeremy Hunt which got nowhere. Although Denmark and France welcomed the idea at first, the European states realized its consequences later. Even Germany

announced that it would agree on the plan once it is ratified by the European Union.

■ At a time of heightened tensions in the Persian Gulf, we see the Arab countries have remained silent and avoid taking any specific stance. What is their purpose?

A: You may remember that a United Arab Emirates’ official had announced that the US is like a lion in dealing with the Arab countries, but behaves like a rabbit in the face of Iran, which was a very harsh criticism. The Persian Gulf Arab states are beginning to regret relying upon the US, and the recent developments as well as Iran’s measures have made them retreat and refuse to take stances. This fact applies to Israel as well, as they (Arab states) try to refrain from sharp comments. In conclusion, I can say that the Arab countries’ expectations of the US have ended in failure, forcing them to stay silent and keep an eye on the future. Reliance on Israel and huge arms purchases have also brought them nothing.

■ Is it possible that the recent developments would affect the Europeans’ decision to create the financial mechanism, known as INSTEX?

A: What should be taken into account is that the Europeans are unable to meet Iran’s demands because of the US, and we should not expect them to take any step towards the sale of Iranian oil or the removal of banking obstacles either. The JCPOA Joint Commission meeting will be also overshadowed by the situation in Britain, while the G7 summit will be held in Paris. We should wait and see what happens in the future.

■ How do you think will the future shape the relations between Iran and the US and Europe? And what developments will the region witness?

A: Considering the current situation, a war or skirmish will be unlikely, but the tensions are not expected to ease either. The situation is such that Iran and the US have remained on the zero point. Moreover, Washington has no plans for attacking Iran, because they don’t want to repeat their past mistakes. All these factors make it more difficult to make a forecast on what will happen in the already vague future. Also, Iran is neither demanding negotiations, nor does it look for a war. The lack of a definite strategy also complicates the situation further. Maybe one of the beacons of hope helping Iran will be the defeat of Trump in the presidential election, which is extremely unlikely. All in all, it is possible for Iran to continue with the current situation.

How plans for restraining Iran backfired

1 → The capture of the American drone and U.S. inability to give a firm response crucially changed Iran’s position in the region and gave Iran a winning edge. After this, Americans tried to impede Iran’s progress by using Britain.

London, who was dealing with its own internal elections, seized an Iranian oil tanker to support the U.S. Following this incident, London received loads of internal criticism for blindly following U.S. in this game, Iran lost a ship, but Britain lost much more because the country claims to be an international influencer.

After this, other players in the region, including some Arab countries became aware of Iran’s new strategy of active resistance. This was a great distress to these countries as they realized if the West puts extra pressures on Iran or attack the country, they will also have to suffer the consequences.

The West political and economic war against Iran was supposed to crush the country, but Iran’s active resistance changed all these plans. West which was trying to restrain Iran, got restrained itself; now they can neither increase tensions by taking the risk of starting a new war, nor can they tolerate the humiliation of being passive and having their powerful image ruined.

Recent incidents not only changed the power balance in the region, but it was also a test for the war option. The capture of American drone showed that, U.S., contrary to all its advertisements, is extremely afraid of starting a war, especially now that Donald Trump is on the verge of the new round of presidential elections. The incident also proved another point, that Iran is not afraid of war.

The West policy for restraining Iran backfired on them, and put Tehran in a position to restrain the West. Finally the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has best describe this situation by saying “there will be no war and no negotiations.” The drone incident proved the first part of this statement and Iran’s firm stand so far has proved the second part.

Andrew Leung: Trump needs deal with China for re-election

TEHRAN (FNA) — Andrew Keung, political analyst, says the US President’s move to call Huawei threat to the US national security made him further isolated, as the US corporations which play a major role in the US presidential election, described the measure against the absolute capitalism guaranteed under the US constitution.

In an exclusive interview with FNA, Andrew Leung said, “Even though now Trump is down to his own rhetoric, he is not giving up everything. He now claims the US national security depends on the US financial security, therefore 5G [which may make Huawei dominant in the US tech-market] will be a national security concern for the US.”

Andrew Keung is an International and Independent China Strategist. He was Hong Kong’s de facto ambassador to the UK and 14 European countries. He gives strategic advice on China to hedge funds, banks and governments.

Below is the full text of the interview:

■ There is a full scale trade war between the US and China. How do you view the war?

A: The war between the US and China is not only a trade war, but also is extended to many other fields. The tariffs were for the trade war, but in addition to that, both countries traded allegations and accusations against each other. Also, the US has made problems with regard to the student visas. By that, the Chinese students are permitted to study only a limited number of courses in the American universities. They are also banned from doing researches in the American universities. The US also attacked the Chinese technology, waging a technological war on China. This was what happened to Huawei, whose access to the American technology and market was restricted. Considering what is happening by the American warships in the South China Sea, it can be said the US is also engaged in a military war against China. Furthermore, Washington is in an ideological war with China, targeting the Chinese great culture. The US also discourages its allies in Europe and Americas, such as the UK and Canada, to have relations with China. Therefore, it is more than simply a trade war.

■ Donald Trump called Huawei a threat to the US national security, and banned the US companies from selling parts to the Chinese tech giant; later he lifted the ban. If Huawei was a threat to the US national security, why were the bans lifted?

A: Let’s not forget Huawei introduced the technology, which made Huawei more than just a company. Huawei had offered a big stake of the shares of the 5G infrastructure to the US corporations, but they missed the opportunity. The US Administration’s ban on Huawei was rather a ban on 5G, to limit their access to the US market. 5G connects everything; it is the Internet of things, and it makes things doable which were impossible before. Over the years, Huawei had won the trust of the global market, and it met all the standards. Its offices were operational in all the countries outside the United States. But inside the US, in every places you go, Google and Apple are the main suppliers of the technological services. Of course they did not want to see Huawei dominant in their country.

■ Do you believe the trade war would affect the next US Presidential election?

A: President Trump is under pressure for his re-election. Therefore, he is adopting policies which mainly have domestic purposes. In case of Huawei, there was a complete isolation of President Trump, as the Silicon Valley companies could not sell their products to one of their main clients, which was against the capitalist policies pursued in the US. Even though now Trump is down to his own rhetoric, he is not giving up everything. He now claims the US national security depends on the US financial security, therefore 5G will be a national security concern for the US. However, he obviously needs a deal with China for his re-election in 2020.

■ China and Russia agreed to do bilateral trades in their own national currencies. Do you believe this move to dump the US dollar will confront Washington’s hostile policies against China?

A: China is making this move in retaliation to the Tariffs. On the other hand, Russia has been the target of the US sanctions. Considering the energy market, which is the gas exported from Russia to China, this will have a huge impact on the dollar and consequently on the US economy, a major counter-attack in the framework of the trade war.

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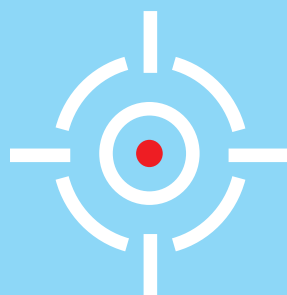
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SpaceX, Lockheed, Blue Origin, others get new NASA moon contracts

NASA on Tuesday announced new contracts with 10 companies to help send people back to the moon by 2024, as well as to Mars afterward.

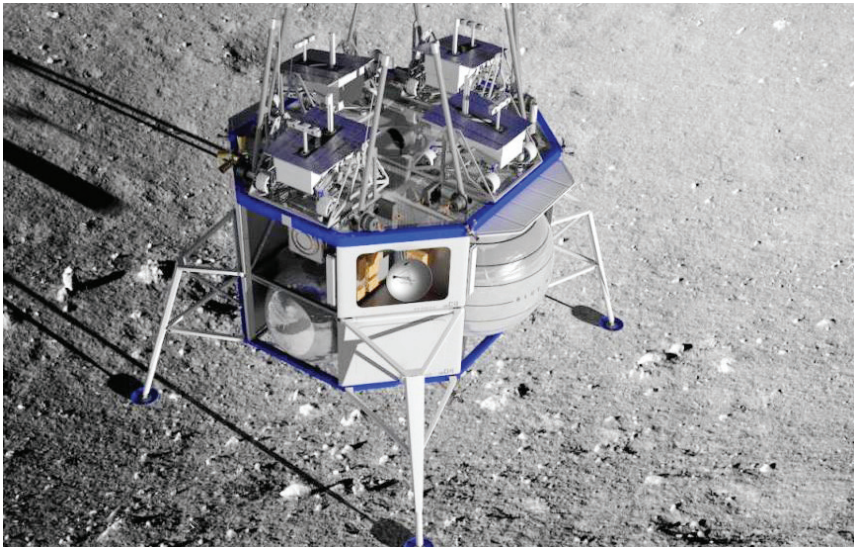
The landing contracts, which include new deals with SpaceX, Lockheed Martin, Sierra Nevada and Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin, will see each of the companies work with NASA to accomplish both space exploration goals.

NASA, as part of the deals, provides expertise, facilities, hardware and software at no cost. The public-private partnerships and the way they are structured are vital to accelerating space exploration, NASA said in a news release.

At Kennedy Space Center in Florida, a partnership with SpaceX will study how rockets can best land on the moon -- specifically how the rocket exhaust, or plume, interacts with moon rocks and pebbles. That could be important to keeping the rocket stable and standing upright.

Also working with Kennedy, Lockheed Martin will test robotic systems for growing plants and crops in space. NASA said robotic space farming could be a key to developing space stations, or platforms.

Sierra Nevada Corporation, of Sparks, Nev., will work with NASA on two entry, descent and landing projects. For example, they will capture infrared images of their Dream Chaser spacecraft as it re-enters



Earth's atmosphere traveling faster than the speed of sound.

All of NASA's major space centers are being tapped for projects. SpaceX also will work on transfer of rocket fuel in orbit, an important step in the development of the company's Starship space vehicle.

Blue Origin will test materials for rocket engine nozzles for lunar landers, and on a new fuel cell power system for the company's Blue Moon lander. The

system would be aimed at providing uninterrupted power during the lunar night, which lasts for about two weeks in most locations, according to NASA.

NASA centers will partner with the companies, which range from small businesses with fewer than a dozen employees to large aerospace organizations, to provide expertise, facilities, hardware and software at no cost. The partnerships will advance the

commercial space sector and help bring new capabilities to market that could benefit future NASA missions.

The companies signed non-reimbursable Space Act Agreements, requiring them to stick to projects NASA has deemed important to the nation's Moon-to-Mars exploration approach.

Lightweight soundproofing materials will be tested for use in rocket nosecones in a partnership between Glenn Research Center in Cleveland and Aerogel Technologies of Boston.

Lockheed, in a partnership with NASA Langley Research Center in Hampton, Va., will also work on perfecting new techniques for metal construction of spacecraft that operate in extreme heat, such as solid-state processing that uses friction or impact to fuse metal types together -- rather than traditional forging and melting.

The testing of a compact hydrogen generator for inflatable heat shields, which could help deliver larger payloads to Mars, comes in a deal with Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala., and Anasphere Inc. of Bozeman, Mont.

Another heat shield test will feature a new seamless weave for a carbon fabric shield, with Bally Ribbon Mills of Bally, Pa., and Ames Research Center in California's Silicon Valley.

(Source: UPI)

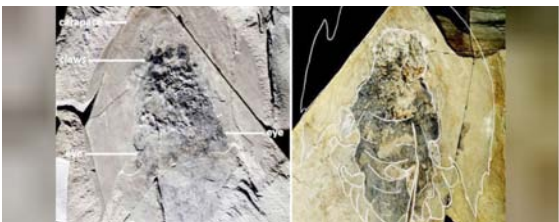
Hundreds of fossils of strange primordial predator unearthed in Canada

Hundreds of fossils of a primordial sea creature with rake-like claws and a head resembling a famous fictional spaceship have been unearthed in Canada, providing a wealth of information about an important predator from a key time in the evolution of life on Earth.

Scientists on Tuesday said the creature, called Cambroraster falcatus, was a distant relative of today's arthropods - the diverse group of animals including insects, spiders and crabs - and lived during the Cambrian Period 506 million years ago, when all animal life lived in the oceans.

"Most animals in the Cambrian Period were small, typically a few centimeters long at most. By comparison, Cambroraster was a giant, at up to a foot long (30 cm)," said paleontologist Joe Moysiuk of the Royal Ontario Museum and University of Toronto, lead author of the research published in the journal Proceedings of the Royal Society B.

Cambroraster was excavated in Kootenay National Park in the Canadian Rockies from a rock formation known as the



Burgess Shale that has yielded fossils of a wondrous array of Cambrian animals. The Cambrian was a time of evolutionary experimentation when nearly all major animal groups first appeared and numerous oddballs came and went.

"With its huge head, small body and upward facing eyes, Cambroraster superficially resembles a horseshoe crab, although in detail they are quite different animals," Moysiuk said. "Just like horseshoe crabs, we think Cambroraster spent its time hanging around near the sea floor, feeding

on organisms buried in the mud."

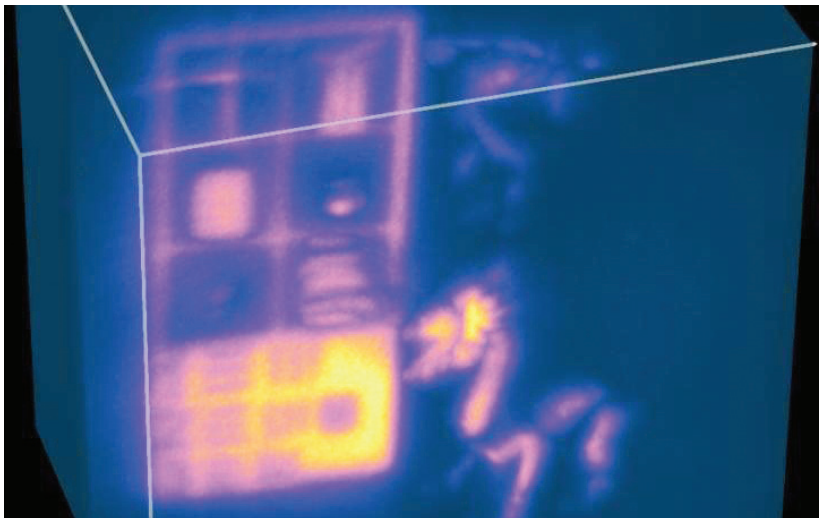
Its large head was covered by a shield-like carapace whose shape reminded the scientists of the Millennium Falcon spaceship of "Star Wars" fame. At the front of its body were two large claws with a succession of parallel outgrowths like a series of rakes, letting it sift through seafloor mud and strain out any prey. Tooth-like plates surrounded its circular mouth. It may have dined upon worms, small fish and larvae.

It belonged to the same group - radiodonts - as the apex predator of the time, called Anomalocaris, a dangerous hunter reaching three feet (one meter) long that may even have targeted Cambroraster.

Radiodonts, among the earliest offshoots of the arthropod lineage, are usually known from fragmentary remains. But the scientists found such a large number of beautifully preserved and complete Cambroraster fossils that they achieved a breakthrough in the understanding of this significant extinct group.

(Source: Reuters)

New camera can film moving object from around a corner



Scientists have developed a way to film moving objects around an opaque corner.

The camera device uses a laser to isolate and measure the light particles bouncing off the target object. The particle data is processed by a combination of advanced sensors and algorithms, revealing the movements of the object around the corner.

"People talk about building a camera that can see as well as humans for applications such as autonomous cars and robots, but we want to build systems that go well beyond that," Gordon Wetzstein, an assistant professor of electrical engineering at Stanford University, said in a news release. "We want to see things in 3D, around corners and beyond the visible light spectrum."

The new camera is an updated version of a similar camera designed and built by Wetzstein and his research partners a few years ago. The latest iteration can detect light particles bouncing off a wider array of surfaces and can measure their movements more precisely from farther away, allowing the camera to process out-of-sight movements.

Researchers hope their technology could help the navigational systems of autonomous cars and robots.

The hardware used to build the novel camera systems is already common among autonomous car vision systems, but current systems can only monitor out-of-sight objects that are really, really reflective, limiting their usability.

For the new camera system, scientists integrated a laser 10,000 times more powerful than those used in autonomous

car vision systems. The laser scans the wall opposing the target object. Little of the light reflecting off the moving object is intact by the time it is intercepted by the camera's laser, but there is enough photonic data for the camera's high-powered processing system to reconstruct an image of the moving object.

"When you're watching the laser scanning it out, you don't see anything," said David Lindell, a graduate student in electrical engineering at Stanford. "With this hardware, we can basically slow down time and reveal these tracks of light. It almost looks like magic."

Scientists based the camera's image processing algorithm off of algorithms used to interpret seismic waves and reconstruct 3D images of underground geologic structures.

"There are many ideas being used in other spaces -- seismology, imaging with satellites, synthetic aperture radar -- that are applicable to looking around corners," said Matthew O'Toole, an assistant professor at Carnegie Mellon University. "We're trying to take a little bit from these fields and we'll hopefully be able to give something back to them at some point."

Researchers plan to continue improving their technology by testing the system in autonomous research cars. Scientists also hope to adopt their technology for alternative applications, like medical imaging, as well as make their system robust enough to function in bad weather.

(Source: UPI)

Electricity produced by saltwater flowing over thin layers of rust



Researchers have developed a new way to generate electricity by moving saltwater across thin films of iron oxide, or rust.

The discovery, detailed this week in the journal PNAS, could pave the way for new forms of sustainable power production.

It's not the first time saltwater and metal compounds have come together to produce electricity, but previous iterations have relied on chemical reactions -- the conversion of two or more chemicals into a new compound -- to produce power. Batteries offer the most obvious example of this formula.

The newest recipe for electricity is reaction-free. The kinetic energy of the flowing saltwater is converted into an electric current. The phenomenon, known as the electrokinetic effect, has been previously observed in atom-thick layers of carbon arranged in a hexagonal lattice, also known as graphene.

"A similar effect has been seen in some other materials," Tom Miller, a professor of chemistry at the California Institute of Technology, said in a news release. "You can take a drop of saltwater and drag it across graphene and see some electricity generated."

Because graphene is difficult to synthesize at larger scales, Miller and his research partners decided to develop a film that was cheaper and easier to produce. The iron oxide films they produced in the lab are easier to make.

"It's basically just rust on iron, so it's pretty easy to make in large areas," Miller said. "This is a more robust implementation of the thing seen in graphene."

Rust grows naturally on iron alloys, but scientists needed to ensure the rust layers formed uniformly. Researchers deployed a technique called physical vapor deposition to turn iron oxide into a vapor that could be deposited as a thin layer on a substrate. The technique allowed scientists to deposit a layer of iron oxide measuring just 10 nanometers across, roughly 10,000 times thinner than a human hair.

When scientists released flowing saltwater across the film, they were able to produce several tens of millivolts and several microamps per square centimeter of surface area.

"For perspective, plates having an area of 10 square meters each would generate a few kilowatts per hour -- enough for a standard U.S. home," Miller said. "Of course, less demanding applications, including low-power devices in remote locations, are more promising in the near term."

Ions in the saltwater attract electrons in the iron beneath the rust layer. As the water moves along the surface, the electrons are pulled along for the ride, creating an electric current.

The technology could be used to produce energy in places where saline solutions are already in motion, like in the ocean or inside the human body.

"For example, tidal energy, or things bobbing in the ocean, like buoys, could be used for passive electrical energy conversion," he says. "You have saltwater flowing in your veins in periodic pulses. That could be used to generate electricity for powering implants."

(Source: UPI)

Rice University says it has a cheaper plan to guard Houston from hurricanes

For about a decade, two of Texas' top universities have pushed dueling plans to protect the Houston-Galveston region from hurricanes.

A concept championed by Texas A&M University at Galveston appears to be winning out as the federal and state governments pursue a plan similar to one proposed by A&M oceanographer Bill Merrell in early 2009, months after Hurricane Ike smashed ashore at Galveston Island.

But that project by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Texas General Land Office, which calls for the installation of beachfront sand dunes and massive storm surge barrier gates, won't become reality for at least 15 years -- and probably much longer. That leaves plenty of time for a worst-case hurricane to devastate the densely populated, highly industrialized region -- a reality that's coming into sharper focus as sea levels rise and the ocean warms.



The so-called coastal barrier system also carries a significant price tag -- as much as \$20 billion -- and a significant part of the system may guard against only a modest, 100-year storm.

In the meantime, Rice University is pushing a plan that it says could become a reality faster and more cheaply than the coastal barrier system. While the "Galveston Bay Park Plan" isn't designed to protect as much land as the coastal barrier system, the chief representative for the university's Severe Storm Prediction, Education and Evacuation from Disasters Center says it would offer a significantly higher level of protection than the coastal barrier system for the most populated and industrialized areas in Houston and Galveston.

The park plan, conceived in 2015, calls for the use of clay dredged from the Houston Ship Channel, where a \$1 billion deepening and widening project is in the works to accommodate more and larger ships, to create a 25-foot-tall levee along the shipping lane, which is the nation's busiest. Additional dredged material would be piled behind it to form parkland. The dike would connect to an existing levee at Texas City, which would be raised to 25 feet from 17 feet.

A significant amount of dredged material has been disposed of along the channel, forming marshy islands and a wildlife management area. That means it would not have to be built entirely from scratch.

A large storm surge gate -- much like ones called for in the coastal barrier system -- also would be installed and would be closed only when big storms threatened the area. Like the coastal barrier system, the park plan also calls for a "ring" levee around the city of Galveston to protect it from incoming and outgoing storm surge, which is the deadliest effect of hurricanes. The new north-south levee, which would cut through Galveston Bay, would be punctuated by smaller gates to allow boats to pass through.

Longtime Texas environmental attorney Jim Blackburn, the co-director and primary spokesman for the SSPEED Center, said that it could be completed as early as 2027 for \$3 billion to \$6 billion. It's an amount he said is low enough that it could be funded locally, without having to wait on money from Congress as the coastal barrier system will almost certainly have to do. The system would not, like the barrier system, protect beachfront properties on Galveston Island and Bolivar Peninsula because it would be situated further inland.

But Blackburn said it would protect the vast majority of the area's sprawling petrochemical complex and the entire western side of Galveston Bay, which is densely populated and fast-growing. And the park plan's overall level of protection would be much higher than the coastal barrier system, he said. It would guard against something like a 250-year storm and a 25-foot storm surge -- about 10 feet above the highest recorded surge for the area. A weaker Category 4 hurricane -- classified as a storm with wind speeds of 130 to 156 mph -- would probably be totally contained, he said. And it would make a big dent in a Category 5.

"We have seen sea level rise and storm scenarios that get you to 33 feet" of surge, Blackburn said. "It's not inconceivable that this is not high enough, but it is by far and away beyond anything that we've ever seen and I think it's the right starting place."

He also noted the plan is multipurpose, unlike the coastal barrier system. "The idea that we would spend all that money on the coastal spine and really have only one utility out of that is something we were at least trying to integrate into our design differently," Blackburn said.

It's unclear whether the park plan will gain traction with the private funders and government agencies that would need to be on board before the project can move ahead. But last week, the governing body of the Port of Houston Authority, which is working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on the dredging project to deepen and widen the ship channel, gave staff the green light to talk with Rice about the potential for such a symbiotic arrangement -- a small but meaningful first step.

(Source: UPI)

Pakistan aims to send first astronaut into space by 2022

Pakistan said last week it aims to send its first astronaut into space by 2022 and will begin selecting candidates next year.

Neighbor and long-time rival India put its first astronaut into space in 1984 as part of a Soviet-led mission. It launched a rocket into space last week on Monday in an attempt to safely land a rover on the moon, its most ambitious mission yet.

Pakistan's program, announced 50 years after the U.S. Apollo 11 mission put the first man on the moon, marks a new departure after focusing on developing communication satellites.

"This will be the biggest space event of our history," Science and Technology Minister Chaudhry Fawad Hussain said in a tweet.

A selection committee would begin choosing candidates in February, he said.

Pakistan's National Space Agency SUPARCO (Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission) was set up in 1961. It launched its first communication satellite 50 years later with help from a subsidiary of China Aerospace and Technology Corporation.

(Source: Reuters)

Artificial lake ready for inauguration in Tehran

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — A small, man-made lake is set to be officially opened to the public in northern Tehran. Honar Lake and the second phase of Honar Garden are ready to be inaugurated by the end of the current Iranian calendar month Mordad (August 22), Mehr reported on Wednesday.



The projects, run by Abbasabad Lands Rehabilitation Company, will be inaugurated within a month, Hamid Javani, executive deputy of the company announced on Wednesday. The third phase of Honar Garden is expected to come on stream by spring 2020, he added. Both projects, being implemented under the supervision of Tehran Municipality, are located on Abbasabad Lands and include a cafe gallery, an amphitheater, museums, handicraft exhibitions and some other recreational facilities, the report said. Abbasabad Lands include several gardens such as Book Garden and Honar Garden which are part of implementing Tehran's comprehensive upstream development plan.

An ancient Egypt-to-Black Sea route? Adventurers to test theory

BELOSLAV (Bulgaria) (AFP) — Were the ancient Egyptians able to use reed boats to travel as far as the Black Sea thousands of years ago? A group of adventurers believe so, and will try to prove their theory by embarking on a similar journey in reverse. In mid-August the team of two dozen researchers and volunteers from eight countries will set off from the Bulgarian port of Varna, hoping their Abora IV reed boat will take them the 700 nautical miles through the Bosphorus, the Aegean and as far as the island of Crete. The team is specifically seeking to prove a hypothesis lent credence by Herodotus, the expedition's German leader, Dominique Goerlitz, told AFP. The ancient Greek historian wrote: "Egyptians sailed through the Black Sea to get materials that they could not have from the east Mediterranean." Goerlitz, 53, and his team say they drew inspiration for the design of the 14-metre (46-foot) boat from ancient rock drawings from upper Egypt and the Caucasus. The construction was carried out with the help of volunteers and two members of the Aymara indigenous community from Bolivia's Lake Titicaca, Fermin Limachi and his son Yuri. It is no accident that the Abora IV bears a striking resemblance to the famous Ra II reed boat that Norwegian adventurer Thor Heyerdahl used in his 1970 attempt to cross the Atlantic -- Limachi's father helped build that vessel too. Large bundles of totora reed were lashed together with ropes to form the main body of the vessel before it was equipped with a wooden mast and two reed compartments for sleeping.



ROUND THE GLOBE

Tajik National Park

Spanning over 2.6 million ha in area, Tajik National Park encompasses almost the entire Pamir Mountains, which is the third highest mountain ecosystem in the world after the Himalaya and Karakorum Mountains. The Pamir Mountains lie at the center of the 'Pamir Knot', the term used by geographers to describe the tangle of the highest mountain ranges on the Eurasian continent.



Huge tectonic forces stemming from the collision of the Indian-Australian plate with the Eurasian Plate have progressively thrown up the Himalaya, Karakoram, Hindu Kush, Kunlun and Tien Shan -- all radiating out from the Pamir Mountains. Along with the Karakoram Mountains, the Pamir region is one of the most tectonically-active locations in the world. A UNESCO World Heritage, the Tajik National Park stands out as a very large protected area, with a stark treeless landscape of exceptional natural beauty. The outstanding scenic values are enhanced by the land-form juxtaposition of heavily-glaciated high peaks and high plateaux with an alpine desert character. The property contains a number of superlative natural phenomena, including: Fedchenko Glacier (the longest glacier in the world outside of the Polar Regions); Lake Sarez (a very high, deep lake impounded just over a century ago by a severe earthquake which generated a huge landslide forming the Uzoi Dam, the highest natural dam in the world); and Karakol Lake, likely to be the world's highest large lake of meteoric origin.

(Source: UNESCO)

Japanese expertise to enliven UNESCO-tagged palace in Tehran

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — Japanese experts are to make another face of Tehran's UNESCO-registered Golestan Palace in a special program dedicated to the 90th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Premises and monuments of the palace complex will, for the first time, be subject to a 3D projection mapping project on August 1 and 2, director of the World Heritage site Masoud Nosrati said on Tuesday, IRNA reported. The projection technology is applied to turn objects, often irregularly shaped, into a display surface for video projection using specialized software. This way, a two- or three-dimensional object is spatially mapped on the virtual program which mimics the real environment it is to be projected on. People are given free entry to the palace for the event that is organized in close collaboration with the Embassy of Japan, Nosrati added. A destination for domestic and international travelers, Golestan Palace is located in the heart and historic core of Tehran. The palace complex is one of the oldest in the Iranian capital, originally built during the Safavid dynasty in the historic walled city. Following extensions and additions, it received its most characteristic features in the 19th century, when the palace complex was selected as the royal residence and seat of power by the Qajar ruling family. At present, Golestan Palace complex consists of eight key palace structures mostly used as museums and the eponymous gardens, a green shared center of the complex, surrounded



by an outer wall with gates. UNESCO has it that the complex exemplifies architectural and artistic achievements of the Qajar era including the introduction of European motifs and styles into Persian arts. It was not only used as the governing base of the Qajari Kings but also functioned as a recreational and residential compound and a center of artistic production in the 19th century. Through the latter activity, it became the source and center of Qajari arts and architecture.

Kordasht Bathhouse; a tourist destination famed for intricate interior design



TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Photos depict exterior and interior views of the historical Kordasht Bathhouse, a tourist destination famed for intricate geometrical arrangements and spectacular wall paintings, July 27, 2019. Located in Jolfa, northwestern East Azarbaijan province, the bathhouse dates from over four centuries ago, the time of Safavids. Its required water is obtained from the Aras River and after being warmed finds its way to different pools there. Entrance to the bath is possible through a staircase leading to the first vestibule, bringing visitors to an octagonal shaped changing room that has a domed roof supported by eight decorated columns. A hallway connects the changing room to another octagonal room that contains the main pool. This room has a waterway that directs hot water into the pool and the room receives natural light via ducts in the ceiling. The monument is considered as one of the largest and most beautiful baths surviving in Iran. According to Encyclopedia Britannica, Iranian architects of the early 17th century sought to achieve a monumentality in exterior spatial composition (an interesting parallel to the interior spaciousness created at the same time by the Ottomans); a logical precision in vaulting and a coloristic brilliance that has made their domes and portals of justly famous.



China's Song Tao visits National Museum of Iran

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — Song Tao, the head of the International Liaison Department of the Communist Party of China, toured the National Museum of Iran on Tuesday. Tao, who was accompanied by a high-ranking delegation, visited parts of the complex including the Museum of Ancient Iran (Muze-ye Iran-e Bastan) and the Museum of the Islamic Era (Muze-ye Dowran-e Eslami), which were opened in 1937 and 1972, respectively. Tao arrived in Tehran on Sunday upon an official invitation of the secretary of the Expediency Council, Mohsen Rezaei. The Chinese official and his accompanying delegation held meetings with Expediency Council's head and secretary, parliament speaker and a host of other high-ranking officials of the country.



Currently, China hosts two separate collection, on loan from the National Museum of Iran, representing the [long-lasting] relationship between Iran and China. A total of 15 centuries-old celadons is on show at Beijing's Palace Museum. Titled "Longquan of the World: Longquan Celadon and Globalization", the exhibition will also showcase objects on loan from Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar, Japan, Syria, Egypt, the United Kingdom, and other countries and regions. Another collection is on show at a Beijing exhibit that opened its doors to the public on July 13 at the National Art Museum of China, under the name "The Asian Civilization Exhibition". The loan objects include clay works, Achaemenid inscriptions, Sassanid sculptures and glassworks.

China bans citizens from traveling to Taiwan as individual tourists

In its latest effort to increase pressure on Taiwan, Beijing said it will suspend a program that allowed individual tourists from 47 Chinese cities to travel to Taiwan, citing the current state of relations between the two sides. The ban is effective from Aug. 1, according to a statement Wednesday from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and means that Chinese nationals can only travel to Taiwan as tourists if they're part of tour groups. The scheme had been in place since 2011 under the more China-friendly administration of former President Ma Ying-jeou. The ministry's statement didn't provide any further

details as to the reason for the ban. The unexpected move comes as China attempts to isolate Taiwan and Tsai Ing-wen, it's independence-leaning president. The move may also be aimed at hurting her re-election chances in January's presidential election. China Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying declined to answer a question about the decision, asking reporters at a briefing in Beijing on Wednesday afternoon to talk to the relevant department for Taiwan affairs. The Mainland Affairs Council in Taipei declined to comment immediately when contacted. "This is a shock to all of us. We are all very worried about

it," Benny Wu, chairman of the Taipei Association of Travel Agents, said by phone. "This will have a huge impact on Taiwan's tourism and economy. Hotels, restaurants will all be affected." Spending by foreign tourists accounted for about 2.2% of GDP in 2017, the last year for which data is available, according to the tourism bureau. China was the largest single source of people visiting Taiwan and accounted for almost one third of total visitors to the island in May 2019, according to a Bloomberg calculation based on data published by Taiwan's tourism bureau.

(Source: Time Magazine)

Tests to begin on Ampaire electric hybrid passenger airplane

If you're catching a Mokulele Airlines commuter flight around Hawaii's islands later this year, you might spot one of the world's first hybrid commercial aircraft soaring through the skies. That's right, Los Angeles-based aviation company Ampaire has announced it'll start testing aircraft partly powered by electricity on some commercial routes later in 2019. In what will likely be seen as a significant step toward improving the environmental credentials of air travel, Ampaire has retrofitted existing aircraft with electric powertrains, hoping to cut down CO2 emissions and address high operating costs. The Ampaire Electric EEL, a reconfigured twin-engine Cessna 337 Skymaster,

is Ampaire's first commercial product. It's been modified to fly with one conventional combustion engine and one electric motor. While the initial flights, operated in partnership with Hawaii-based Mokulele, are being scheduled as a proof of concept, it's hoped the aircraft will get official FAA certification by 2021 to allow it to enter full commercial service. **First step** Ampaire CEO Kevin Noerteker says the development will help "jump start" the market and pave the way to an "all-electric" future. He acknowledged that building an electric-only aircraft from scratch is highly expensive, suggesting that hybrids are a

cheaper way to start reducing emissions quicker. "The Cessna 337 modification is a first step," he said in a recent statement. "The next may be a hybrid or fully electric retrofit of a nine- to 19-passenger commuter/cargo aircraft. As batteries and powertrains mature, we will shift our focus to clean-sheet designs such as our nine-passenger, zero-emissions Tailwind concept." The Cessna 337 Skymaster is a six-seater aircraft that's been in operation since the early 1960s, so hardly the most modern of aircraft. It tends to serve small, commuter-based airlines. Members of the public won't be able to book tickets on the test flights, but it

might not be long before we're catching these flights, Ampaire says there's been a lot of interest from carriers. Other companies are also interested in electric aircraft. To name just a few, at this year's Paris Air Show, Israeli aviation company Eviation Aircraft said US carrier Cape Air is going to be the first customer for its electric airplane, dubbed Alice, ambitiously scheduled for 2021 certification. Meanwhile, big name company Airbus is working on the E-Fan X hybrid-electric project and also created a concept aircraft with a design that mimics a bird of prey, with plans to make it a hybrid-electric turbo-propeller aircraft.

(Source: CNN)

Iranian researchers use nanotechnology for herbal extraction

TECHNOLOGY
d e s k

TEHRAN—Iranian researchers at the Yasuj University of Medical Sciences have found a technique to synthesize a nanoadsorbent in order to measure constituent elements of plants for medical purposes, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

Antioxidants are natural combinations, which can fight chemicals in body. During recent year, the researchers focus on Phenolic compounds, which has strong antioxidant combination.

Several plants produce Phenolic compounds in their tissue and its measurement is very important.

Phenolic Timol and Carvacrol are two common Phenolic combinations in local herbs like Thymus daenensis Celak, Satureja khuzestanica, Salvia officinalism, Stachys pilifera Benth.

Using synthesis techniques of nanoadsorbent is a low-cost and simple way in order to discover the constituent elements of plants, said Arash Asfaram, member of the medical herbs research



Several plants produce Phenolic compounds in their tissue and its measurement is very important.

center of the Yasuj University of Medical Sciences.

According to the SceinceDirect, Phenolic compounds, ubiquitous in plants are an essential part of the human diet, and are of considerable interest due to their antioxidant properties. These compounds possess an aromatic ring bearing one or more hydroxyl groups and their structures may range from that of a simple phenolic molecule to that of a complex high-molecular weight polymer.

Fruits, vegetables and beverages are the major sources of phenolic compounds in the human diet. The food and agricultural products processing industries generate substantial quantities of phenolics-rich by-products, which could be valuable natural sources of antioxidants.

The applications of nanotechnology for treatment, diagnosis, monitoring, and control of biological systems have recently been referred to as nanomedicine.

Nahid-1 satellite passes final tests: minister

TECHNOLOGY
d e s k

TEHRAN—The home-grown Nahid-1 telecommunication satellite has passed final tests, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Minister Mohammad Javad Azari-Jahromi wrote in Persian on his Twitter account on Tuesday.

"No stop on development track!" reads the tweet, IRNA reported on Wednesday.

Nahid-1 has been manufactured at the Iranian Space Agency (ISA). It is a geosynchronous satellite, which is located in geosynchronous orbit, with an orbital period the same as the earth's rotation period, Iran Science Watch website reported.

Nahid-1 uses photovoltaic solar panels in orbit and uses the Ku band - the portion of the electromagnetic spectrum in the microwave range of frequencies from 12 to 18 gigahertz - for communication.

During a speech in February, Azari-Jahromi announced that despite the sanctions that have slowed down



the country's space technology development, there are no specific problems and the national space program is well progressing.

"The U.S. tries definitely to impede Iran's space technology and the European countries do not have any cooperation with Iran and our absolute message is that space technology improves lives of Iranians and people worldwide," he said.

Anti-narcotics police to use remote-sensing satellite services

TECHNOLOGY
d e s k

TEHRAN—The Iranian anti-narcotics police chief, Mohammad Massoud Zahedian, and the Iranian Space Research Center (ISRC) director Hossein Samimi, signed an agreement on Tuesday for using remote-sensing satellite services to control drug trafficking, IRNA reported.

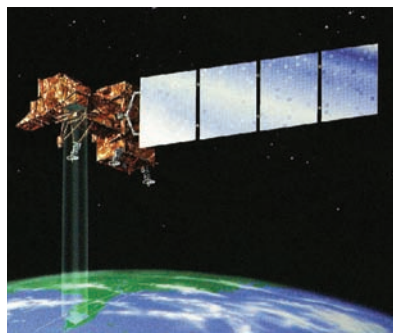
The two sides plan to collaborate on different fields of science, research, and technology, including remote-sensing.

This cooperation, which is supported by the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Ministry, is a great step toward conducting further joint projects, Samimi said during the event.

The space research center has developed several plans in order to benefit more from space technology, he said.

Remote sensing and its application

Remote sensing is the process of acquiring information, detecting, analyzing, monitoring the physical characteristics of an area by recording it is reflected and emitted radiation energy without having any physical contact with the



object under study. This is done by capturing the reflected radiation/energy. Satellites play a huge role in the development of many technologies like world mapping, GPS, city planning, etc. The major field the remote sensing is used for are weather, forestry, agriculture, surface changes and biodiversity.

Remote Sensing technologies are used to determine various physical properties of land and also what it is being used for (land use).

Stop robocalls to your phone for good

Help is on the way to keep your phone from constantly ringing, but there are steps you can take right now.

The number of robocalls ringing our phones at all hours of the day has reached an all-time high, and because of that those calls are also getting a lot of attention from the government and technology companies. Most recently, the House passed a bill that will all but stop robocalls. The FCC passed a proposal that gives carriers the permission to be more aggressive when blocking spam calls. Apple even added a feature to iOS 13 that lets you block all unknown callers from ever ringing your phone.

Robocalls convey a prerecorded message to your phone that often urges you to do something. Sometimes it's a message from a candidate running for office or a call from your bank advertising a new service. Even more worrisome are the scammy robocalls -- posing, say, as the "IRS" -- that intend to trick people out of their money. It'll be some time before the FCC's proposal is implemented so, you're not going to see a dramatic decrease in unwanted calls overnight.

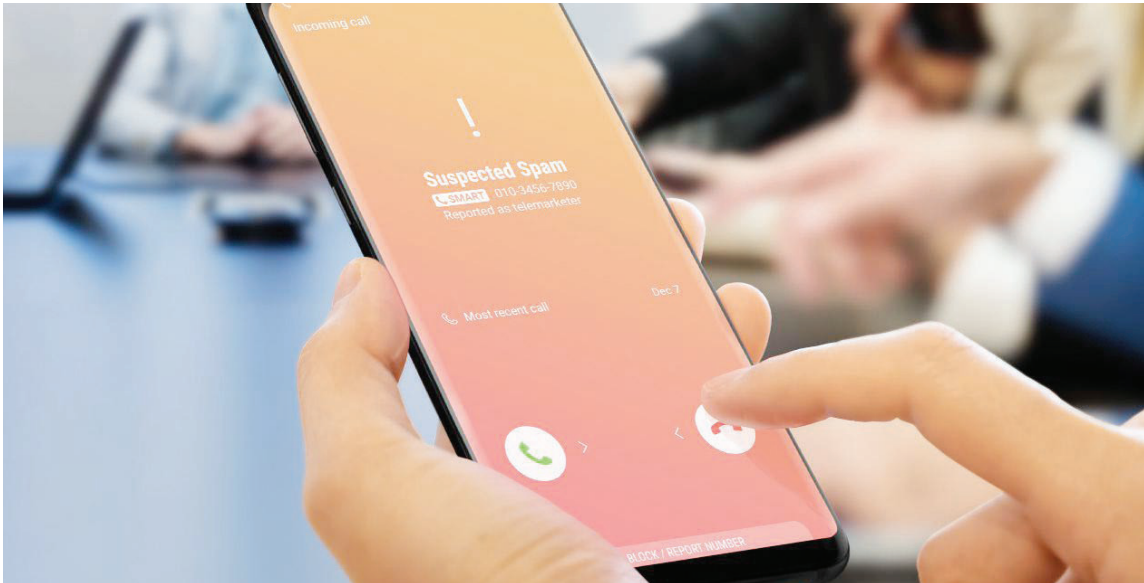
Not every automated solicitation call counts as illegal. Calls from political campaigns, debt collectors and charities are all permissible. What's not allowed are the calls from the fake IRS agents or the companies that claim you won a free vacation to the Bahamas.

While it's not possible to entirely end robocalls from reaching your phone, there are some steps you can take to reduce the number of calls you receive. If someone calls you and claims to be with XYZ company, hang up and call the company yourself. Use the company's website to find an official number. If you do answer a call and hear a recording such as "Hello, can you hear me?" just hang up. The same goes for a call where you're asked to press a number before being connected to a representative. When you answer a call and interact with the voice prompt or by pressing a number, it lets the spammer know your number is real. They can then sell your number to another company, or begin targeting your number more frequently.

Arguably, Google's Call Screen feature goes against the FCC's advice, as not only do you answer the robocall, but there's interaction with the caller from your phone number, which will likely lead to more calls. Even though Google's Call Screen feature is incredibly fun and entertaining to use unless you know the phone number is legit -- it's best just to not answer.

Apple recently announced iOS 13 with a ton of new features. One of those features is the option to route calls from unknown numbers straight to voicemail. According to the feature listing on this page, Siri will allow calls from numbers found in Contacts, Mail, and Messages to go through. Anything else will go to voicemail, and assuming the caller is legit, they can leave a message. If you find yourself receiving a lot of spam text messages, you can forward the message to the number 7726 (spells SPAM). It won't block the number from texting you right away, but it will allow your carrier to look into where it came from and put an end to it.

All four major wireless carriers offer some sort of



call blocking feature to customers. Some are free, while others charge for something that should be free.

AT&T's Call Protect app is available for iOS and Android. The free version blocks calls from "likely fraudsters" and labels telemarketing calls. You can add numbers to a block list in the app, as well. The paid version provides caller ID for unknown numbers and offers mobile security features that are unrelated to robocalls. The premium version of Call Protect costs \$3.99 per month. Verizon's Call Filter offers spam detection, spam filter, and the option to report numbers for free. You can pay \$2.99 a month (or \$7.99 a month for three or more lines of service) for caller ID, spam lookup, and a personal block and spam list. Call Filter is built into most Android devices out of the box (which you've probably been prompted about) but is also available in the App Store for iOS users.

T-Mobile's Scam ID is free to all customers and includes Scam Block. The ID portion of the service will alert you that an incoming call is likely spam, while Block will block the call from ever reaching your phone. You need to activate the Block feature, either through the Scam Block app or by dialing #662# from your phone. You can pay \$4 for Name ID to see the names of incoming callers.

Sprint's Premium Caller ID feature costs \$3 a month and will identify all incoming callers and block robocalls. There isn't an app to install, the feature is built into "select" phones and the Sprint network. Check with your wireless provider to see if they offer a similar service.

Use a third-party app

If your provider doesn't offer an app or service to cut back on robocalls, or it's just too expensive, there are plenty of third-party apps available. You want to find an app that works on your device, offers automatic call blocking and spam alerts for suspicious calls and can

easily report a number if a call slips through.

Hiya is a free app I have used on Android and iOS for some time now with success. It's the same company that powers AT&T's Call Protect app, as well as Samsung's built-in call block and spam protection service. Samsung Galaxy users can enable the built-in service in the Phone app under Settings > Caller ID and Spam Protection. Setup is painless, and it offers an easy way to report a number.

Nomorobo is the service that Verizon uses for its Fios users, but it also has a phone app. The service is free for VoIP users and costs \$2 per month for mobile users. Additional services that offer similar capabilities include YouMail and RoboKiller.

The recently released Firewall app is only available on the iPhone, and does a fantastic job of keeping calls from your phone. In the event you need to make a call that you'd rather not use your real phone number for, the \$4 a month subscription provides unlimited single-use fake phone numbers.

Another option is to sign up for a free Google Voice phone number. Instead of giving out your real number for random services, you could then use your Google Voice number -- and once the robocalls start coming in, use the block feature. Just know that blocking calls may end up being a lot of work, as robocallers are constantly spoofing different phone numbers.

None of the above solutions are perfect, and likely won't be until carriers integrate the technology required check for caller ID spoofing, so right now you have to do some extra work to keep the number of robocalls you receive to a minimum. Between being proactive with unknown calls to your number, and using a service (paid or free), you can reduce the number of unwanted calls and spam you receive on your phone.

(Source: cnet.com)

Smart city, challenges and opportunities in Iran

1 → These challenges include disagreements between scientists and policymakers and the inability to communicate the challenges of urban sustainability and urban development. Although smart cities have many potential solutions to tackle problems in developing countries, these potentials are never fully utilized, and even some of the smart city potentials increase the gap between proposed solutions and the real world.

The reason for this may be that many of these strategies are not suitable for developing countries like Iran, and they are more likely to be imported. Only 12% of researchers in this area live in developing countries, and only 8% of the governments that have made policy in this regard are from developing countries. Consequently, the proposed strategies for smart cities are more compatible with the conditions of the developed countries, especially Western countries, and are incompatible with the social and economic conditions in our countries.

However, it's not possible to take the opposite path to the advancement of technology. Perhaps the correct solution is not in the unconditional acceptance of this imported technology, nor in its unconscious rejection. But the solution may be that, without waste of time, we should localize the principals of the smart city, and implement these strategies seriously in policy and planning. Of course, this will not be the case, except researchers, policymakers, and planners adapt to the pace of technological advancement, and today they find a solution for the future problems.

Researchers develop technology to harness energy from mixing of freshwater and seawater

Researchers from Stanford University in California have developed an affordable, durable technology that could harness energy generated from mixing freshwater from seawater.

Outlined in paper, recently published in American Chemical Society's ACS Omega, they suggest that this "blue energy" could make coastal wastewater treatment plants energy-independent.

"Blue energy is an immense and untapped source of renewable energy," Kristian Dubrawski, a postdoctoral scholar in civil and environmental engineering at Stanford and study coauthor said in a statement. "Our battery is a major step toward practically capturing that energy without membranes, moving parts or energy input."

The researchers tested a prototype of the battery, monitoring its energy production while flushing it with alternating hourly exchanges of wastewater effluent from the Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant and seawater collected nearby from Half Moon Bay. Over 180 cycles, battery materials maintained 97 percent effectiveness in capturing the salinity gradient energy. The technology could work in any location where fresh and saltwater intermix, but wastewater treatment plants offer a particularly valuable case study. Wastewater treatment is energy-intensive, accounting for about three percent of the total US electrical load. The process -- essential to community health -- is also vulnerable to power grid shutdowns. Making wastewater treatment plants energy independent would not only cut electricity use and emissions but also make them immune to blackouts -- a major advantage in places such as California, where recent wildfires have led to large-scale outages. Every cubic meter of freshwater that mixes with seawater produces about .65 kilowatt-hours of energy -- enough to power the average US household for about 30 minutes. Globally, the theoretical amount of recoverable energy from coastal wastewater treatment plants is about 18 gigawatts -- enough to power more than 1,700 homes for a year.

The Stanford group's battery isn't the first technology to succeed in capturing blue energy, but it's the first to use battery electrochemistry instead of pressure or membranes. If it works at scale, the technology would offer a more simple, robust and cost-effective solution. The process first releases sodium and chloride ions from the battery electrodes into the solution, making the current flow from one electrode to the other. Then, a rapid exchange of wastewater effluent with seawater leads the electrode to reincorporate sodium and chloride ions and reverse the current flow. Energy is recovered during both the freshwater and seawater flushes, with no upfront energy investment and no need for charging. This means that the battery is constantly discharging and recharging without needing any input of energy.

While lab tests showed power output is still low per electrode area, the battery's scale-up potential is considered more feasible than previous technologies due to its small footprint, simplicity, constant energy creation and lack of membranes or instruments to control charge and voltage. The electrodes are made with Prussian Blue, a material widely used as a pigment and medicine, that costs less than \$1 a kilogram, and polypyrrole, a material used experimentally in batteries and other devices, which sells for less than \$3 a kilogram in bulk. The Woolsey Fire that engulfed Malibu in November 2018 was of biblical proportion. Wildfires like this are now practically guaranteed, so better access to more water is needed.

There's also little need for backup batteries, as the materials are relatively robust, a polyvinyl alcohol and sulfosuccinic acid coating protects the electrodes from corrosion and there are no moving parts involved. If scaled up, the technology could provide adequate voltage and current for any coastal treatment plant. Surplus power production could even be diverted to a nearby industrial operation, such as a desalination plant.

"It is a scientifically elegant solution to a complex problem," Dubrawski said. "It needs to be tested at scale, and it doesn't address the challenge of tapping blue energy at the global scale -- rivers running into the ocean -- but it is a good starting point that could spur these advances."

To assess the battery's full potential in municipal wastewater plants, the researchers are working on a scaled version to see how the system functions with multiple batteries working simultaneously. More than 780 million people worldwide lack even a basic drinking-water service and by 2025, half of the world's population will be living in water-stressed areas. The population itself is set to hit 10 billion by 2050 and a staggering 10.9 billion by 2100, according to a UN report released last month. And on top of that, global warming caused by humanity since the industrial revolution has been found to be without parallel in the past two thousand years. It's a foregone conclusion that conditions on Earth will get worse before they get better, so the usefulness of this technology is clear.

(Source: forbes.com)

MAHAK hosts WHO representatives

High rank representatives of the World Health Organization (WHO) along with the representatives of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education of Iran visited MAHAK Pediatric Cancer Treatment and Research Center (MPCTRC) on 31, July 2019.

The visitors had a tour in oncology, chemotherapy and pain management wards of MPCTRC. After the tour, a session was held at MAHAK conference hall with the presence of the chairman of MAHAK Hospital and the representatives of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education of Iran.



The session opened with an introduction of MAHAK through which the visitors were informed about MAHAK's numerous fields of performances. Later, Dr. Azim Mehrvar, Head of MPC-TRC raised a crucial issue and opened up a discussion regarding the present challenges of MAHAK which are the result of the imposed sanctions.

Dr. Mehrvar mentioned the current challenges as scarcity of high-quality drugs and impossibility of transferring money to and from Iran for purchasing medicines in addition to the increase in the costs which have made medication supplies very costly.

Afterwards, Dr. Christoph Hamelmann, WHO representative in Iran appreciated the cooperation of MAHAK with different UN agencies such as the UN Global Compact and United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and stated that MAHAK has a an important role in pediatric cancer research and treatment in the region.

WHO representative in Iran, in response to the mentioned issues, stated that WHO; Food and Drug Administration (FDA); and the Ministry of Health and Medical Education of Iran are working on projects to ease the process of supplying medications for patients in Iran so that such humanitarian supplies become exempted from sanctions.

Moreover, Dr. Naoko Yamamoto, WHO's Assistant Director-General for Universal Health Coverage and Health Systems, praised MPCTRC for its performance and hoped as the result of the cooperation of WHO and other UN Agencies the imposed problems by sanctions will be resolved.

MAHAK is proud of all the organizations and individuals who are concerned about the cancer-stricken children and always stay beside this charity organization so that comprehensive supportive and treatment services will be delivered to these patients and their families.

(Source: WHO)

WORDS IN THE NEWS

AIDS orphans in Africa

(May 14, 2001)

More than twelve million children in sub-Saharan Africa have been orphaned by AIDS according to a new report published by the international charity Christian Aid. Rachel Harvey reports. The statistics are **dramatic** and **depressing**. More than 25 million people in Africa are living with HIV or AIDS; 8.5 per cent of the population in sub-Saharan Africa have the virus - many of those are parents, grandparents, **aunts** and **uncles**. The result - 12 million children **orphaned** by the disease. And in its report, entitled «No **Excuses**», Christian Aid says that figure will **inevitably** rise, perhaps to as high as 43 million by the year 2010. The Charity says an entire generation is growing up without parents, without teachers and without a future.

Christian Aid is calling on rich nations to do more to help **tackle** the AIDS crisis and to **alleviate** the poverty which runs alongside it. It says **an immediate commitment** of three billion dollars annually is needed to provide basic healthcare and HIV/AIDS **prevention strategies** across sub-Saharan Africa. If not, it says, the **prospects** for economic development on the African continent look **bleak**. There are signs that AIDS is **moving up the international political agenda**. The UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, has said the global fight against AIDS is his top priority. And just last week the United States President, George Bush, promised to contribute 200 million dollars to a new international AIDS fund. The question is whether **effective action** will be taken quickly enough to prevent the next generation of AIDS orphans.

■ Words

dramatic: something that is sudden and noticeable is dramatic
depressing: something that makes you feel sad and disappointed is depressing

aunts and uncles: formally, your aunts and uncles are the sisters and brothers of your parents - your mother and father. But the people who are married to your aunts and uncles are also your uncles and aunts

orphaned: someone whose parents have died is orphaned

excuses: excuses are reasons why something has been done, has not been done or will not be done

inevitably: if something inevitably happens or will happen, it is the only possible result

tackle: if you tackle a problem, you deal with it in a determined way
alleviate: if you alleviate an unpleasant situation, you make it less serious

an immediate commitment: if you make an immediate commitment, you promise to do something without delay

prevention strategies: plans to stop something from happening

prospects: the possibilities or chances of something happening

bleak: a situation which looks bleak is unlikely to improve

moving up the international political agenda: becoming more important to governments and organizations

effective action: taking steps to achieve successful results

(Source: BBC)



DOE strongly rejects reproduction of carbureted motorcycles

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — While the **d e s k** production of carbureted-engine motorcycles has come to a halt in the country, some motorcycle manufacturing companies are trying to put the highly polluting vehicles into production again, but the Department of Environment (DOE) strongly opposed.

The Tehran motorcycle fleet consists mostly of carburetor-equipped motorcycles which are typically less fuel efficient and emit more emissions compared to newer, fuel injection technology.

In order to tackle the problem, the national working group for air pollution mitigation, affiliated to the DOE, made a proposal to bring production of the pollutant carbureted-engine motorcycles to halt some two years ago. The cabinet of ministers approved the proposal on June 22, 2016 which went into effect as of September 2016. While there are still about 1 million motorcycles in the capital the law was hoped to cease the production of the polluting models and encourage fuel injection technology and manufacture of electric motorcycles.

“Unfortunately, some are seeking illegal ways to issue license plate for 12,000 carbureted-engine motorcycles, so we sent a letter to First Vice-President Es’haq Jahangiri, expressing serious opposition to the request,” deputy environment chief Masoud Tajrishi said.

Some are trying to override air pollution mitigation laws and regulations, he said,



adding, recently, they succeeded to delay the implementation of two articles of the clean air law, one of which was scrapping old motorcycles and the other one was discarding clunker vehicles from operation.

Unfortunately, as the government fell short of these two provisions of the Clean Air Act, some have dared to re-propose their requests after years, he lamented, ISNA reported on Tuesday.

According to the clean air law, no license plate for carbureted-engine motorcycle should be issued unless a clunker carbureted mo-

torcycle is scrapped.

The clean air law constituting 35 articles has been drawn up by the Department of Environment as an integrated approach to curb air pollution, which was passed by the parliament on July 16, 2017. The law singles out inefficient vehicles, substandard fuels, industrial activities, and dust storms as the major sources of air pollution in the country and tasks different organizations with specific actions in line with the objective.

Noting that some are unfortunately using economic and unemployment problems as an

Artificial insemination failed on cheetah in captivity

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — Female Asiatic cheetah, Delbar, being kept in captivity at Tehran's Pardisan Park, has undergone artificial insemination some 100 days ago, but it turned to be unsuccessful, 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 the possibility of natural mating of Asiatic cheetah couple Kushki and Delbar has declined in the past years, ISNA quoted Shahabodin Montazemi as saying on Wednesday.

Kushki's sperm introduced into Delbar's cervix for the purpose of achieving a pregnancy about 100 days ago, but it seems to be failed due to no changes in her appearance, he explained.

“Nonetheless, the method didn't prove to be effective much worldwide, but we took our chance,” he said.

The result could have been announced earlier, but it involved running a scan using anesthetics which was risky putting her in a state of high anxiety, he noted.

“Asiatic cheetah's artificial insemination was first performed in Iran, which was not successful. However, given that the DOE is planning on captive breeding of cheetahs as one of its main priorities, it would not overlook any chance of reproduction and conservation of the valuable species.”

Other possible scientific measures to breed Asiatic cheetahs will be put on agenda in the near future, he added.

“All of our information on captive and semi-captive breeding



of cheetahs relates to African cheetahs. Apart from information obtained from the Pardisan Park breeding experience, we have no other reliable data on the regeneration of Asiatic cheetah subspecies,” Montazemi explained.

So, it was a precious experience for future conservation plans, regardless of the outcome, he noted.

“Important factors such as sperm quality, age, biological factors, and ultimately the low chance of cheetah birth greatly reduce the probability of female cheetah's pregnancy by artificial insemination.”

“However, we should not miss out on regeneration of the endangered Asiatic cheetah,” he suggested.

“We have not yet reached a final conclusion on new breed-

ing program, and we are closely scrutinizing the matter with domestic and foreign experts, but transferring Pardisan Park cheetah for mating and regeneration is one of the options we are conducting feasibility studies about.”

In addition, implementing another method such as invasive artificial insemination (surgery and direct insertion of sperm into the fallopian tube) is also planned for Delbar, which will be postponed after assuring the cheetah's health, he stated.

“The DOE's main goal is to protect the Asiatic cheetah in the natural habitats, and the cheetah breeding program comes after it because we can keep the cheetah alive to re-introduce it to nature in the future and enhance the genetic diversity of the subspecies,” he concluded.

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.

National congress on wildlife diseases, conservation to be held

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — Tehran **d e s k** will play host to the first national congress on wildlife diseases and conservation which will be held in the Iranian calendar month of Azar (November 22- December 21), Mehr reported on Wednesday.

Through the event, participants will be trained on the wildlife issues and will be acquainted with new scientific studies in related fields, Iman Memarian, head of Tehran Zoological Garden said.

Wildlife diseases (occurrence-monitoring-surveillances), the role of wildlife in the biological cycle of zoonosis, the role of domestic animals' infectious diseases on the occurrence of wildlife diseases, rescue operations and crisis management in wildlife, threats and damages due to climate change on ecosystems and habitats, threats and mutual effects of human and wildlife, threats of non-indigenous and invader species on the environment, new ways of protecting wildlife

are among the issues to be discussed in the event, he explained.

Currently, all who are active in the field of aforementioned issues and subjects can send their latest works and articles to the congress's website for revision, he added.

Wildlife diseases management plays an important role in protecting animal species and preventing the endangered ones from extinction, especially in few remaining populations. Undoubtedly, connecting event-re-

lated circles, monitoring and surveillance of wildlife diseases will make the process more efficient.

Therefore, the first national congress on wildlife diseases and conservation aims at gathering wildlife researchers from inside and outside the country in one place, investigating the current status of protection and diseases, and identifying challenges of this field, and finally, finding practical solutions to improve the surveillance system in the wild.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

← → ↻

Some 50 people die in traffic-related accidents per day

Everyday 40 to 50 people in the country lose their lives on a daily basis in traffic-related accidents, an official with traffic police has said.

Police has taken all necessary measures to decrease the number of traffic related deaths, and considering the current conditions of roads and the budget there is nothing much left to do, Fars news agency quoted Mohammad Hossein Hamidi as saying on Saturday.

Revising the traffic laws and adopting stricter laws, improving road conditions and increasing vehicle safety are essential to decrease the number of road crashes, Hamidi noted.

PREFIX/SUFFIX

“hema-, haema-, hem-, hemat-, hemato-, hemo-”

■ **Meaning:** blood

■ **For example:** *Hemolysis* refers to the breakdown of red blood cells.

PHRASAL VERB

Hive something off

■ **Meaning:** to sell one part of a business

■ **For example:** The trend for television companies to hive off their advertising departments.

IDIOM

Bury the hatchet

■ **Explanation:** When people who have had a disagreement decide to forget their quarrel and become friends again

■ **For example:** I didn't agree with my colleague's decision, but for the sake of peace, I decided to bury the hatchet.

جان باختن ۵۰ نفر در تصادفات رانندگی کشور در هر روز

رئیس پلیس راه راهور ناجا گفت: روزانه بین ۴۰ تا ۵۰ نفر در تصادفات رانندگی کشور کشته می شوند.

به گزارش روز شنبه خبرگزاری فارس، سردار محمدحسین حمیدی با اعلام خبر فوق اظهار داشت: اقدامات پلیس به حد نهایی خود در کاهش تلفات تصادفات رسیده و با وضعیت فعلی اعتبارات، سفرها و ... نمی‌توان بیش از این تصادفات رانندگی را کاهش داد وی تأکید کرد: اصلاح قوانین و افزایش بازدارندگی آنها و اصلاح وضعیت راه و افزایش ایمنی خودروها از جمله ضروریات برای تداوم کاهش کشته های تصادفات رانندگی است.

Nigeria police orders clampdown on Shia group after ban

TEHRAN— Nigeria's police chief Tuesday ordered a clampdown on a Shia group after it was banned by the government following a spate of bloody protests.

"Any person engaged or associating, in any manner that could advance the activities of the proscribed Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN), shall be treated as a terrorist, enemy of the state, and a subversive element and shall be brought to justice," Mohammed Adamu told senior officers.

"The import of this is that all forms of procession or protest by IMN is now illegal and thus banned," Adamu said in comments released on Facebook.

He called for members of the public to provide information "that will aid in the identification of the locations of the IMN members and their mentors".

The government Sunday announced it was banning the Shiite group after obtaining a court order declaring its activities "acts of terrorism and illegality".

The IMN has staged almost daily protests in the capital Abuja in recent months



calling for the release of its detained leader Ibrahim Zakzaky.

At least six protesters, a journalist and senior police officer were killed last

Monday as security forces clashed with demonstrators.

According to AFP, Human Rights Watch warned Tuesday that the ban "may portend an even worse security force crackdown on the group" and urged the authorities to reverse it.

Zakzaky has been in custody since he was arrested in December 2015 following violence that rights groups say saw the army kill some 350 of his followers.

In October last year, the IMN and human rights groups said more than 40 people were killed when the security forces opened fire on protesters.

The IMN has looked to ramp up pressure on the authorities amid fears for the health of the group's leader.

Zakzaky has been held along with his wife Zeenah Ibrahim despite the federal high court ordering their release in 2016.

The government refused and filed fresh criminal charges, including culpable homicide that is punishable by death.

N. Korea tests more missiles despite efforts at diplomatic solutions

TEHRAN— North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles early on Wednesday, the South Korean military said, only days after it launched two similar missiles intended to pressure South Korea and the United States to stop upcoming military drills.

The firings follow launches on July 25, North Korea's first missile tests since leader Kim Jong Un and U.S. President Donald Trump met on June 30 and agreed to revive stalled denuclearization talks.

The series of missile tests raises the stakes for U.S. and South Korean diplomats criss-crossing the region this week in the hope of restarting talks aimed at persuading Pyongyang to give up its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs.

"North Korea's actions do not help ease military tensions, nor do they help keep the momentum for talks that are under way," South Korean Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha told reporters in Seoul before leaving for a Southeast Asian security forum in Bangkok.

Kang urged North Korea to halt the missile launches. U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and the top U.S. North Korea negotiator were also headed to the Asso-

ciation of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum in the Thai capital, where Pompeo said he was holding out hope that U.S. officials could meet North Korean counterparts.

Trump and Pompeo both played down last week's launches and Pompeo has continued to express hope for a diplomatic way forward with North Korea.

The latest launch comes ahead of newly appointed U.S. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper's first official visit to Seoul, which the Pentagon said on Tuesday was scheduled as part of a tour through Asia in August.

U.S. military forces in South Korea were aware of Wednesday's launch, a spokesman said.

Wednesday's launches were from the Wonsan area on North Korea's east coast, from which last week's missiles had been fired, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said in a statement. It said it was monitoring in case of more launches.

The JCS said later the North had fired ballistic missiles that flew about 250 km (155 miles) and appeared to be similar to those of last week.

The missiles, dubbed the KN-23, are designed to evade



missile defense systems by being easier to hide, launch, and maneuver in flight, experts said.

Kim described the two KN-23s launched last week as having a "low-altitude gliding and leaping flight" pattern that would make them hard to intercept, Reuters reported.

Bomb kills 34 civilians in Afghanistan

TEHRAN — A roadside bomb in Afghanistan has killed at least 34 people and wounded 10 others, with the casualties being mostly women and children.

A passenger bus traveling on the Kandahar-Herat highway hit the roadside bomb, according to an official in Farah Province, Muhibullah Muhib.

Muhib said all the passengers aboard the bus had been civilians, most of them women and children.

No one has yet claimed responsibility for the attack. The Taliban, however, often conduct such roadside bomb attacks.

Farooq Barakzai, a spokesman for Farah's governor, said the toll could rise.

According to Press TV, Afghanistan continues to be gripped by violence even as the Taliban are negotiating with the United States government about a potential end to the war and militancy that began when America and its allies invaded Afghanistan 18 years ago.

Just on Tuesday, the United Nations

(UN) said civilians were being killed and wounded at a "shocking" level in Afghanistan. It said that at least 3,812 Afghan civilians had been killed or injured in the first half of 2019 in the war in Afghanistan. Child casualties represented almost one-third of the overall total of civilian casualties.

Israel will face demographic death without two-state solution: Palestinian PM

TEHRAN — Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh says the Israeli regime will suffer a "democratic death" if it refuses to support a two-state solution to the decades-long conflict between the two sides.

"Israel stands today before a big challenge — either the two-state solution or a demographic death," Shtayyeh said in an address to a meeting of the Socialist International organization in Ramallah on Tuesday.

He also noted that the Palestinians currently make up the majority population between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, estimating that there are at total of 6.8 million Palestinians in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the occupied lands compared to 6.6 million Israelis.

"For the first time since 1948, the demographic balance is in favor of the Palestinians," he said. "The Palestinians are 200,000 more than them."

The Palestinian premier further stressed that the Israelis



have to choose between the so-called two-state solution or no peace. "Either the two-state solution or a racist regime

in practice and law," he added.

Elsewhere in his speech, Shtayyeh called the administration of U.S. President Trump "stupid" for thinking that it could make the Palestinian people surrender by recognizing Jerusalem al-Quds as Israel's "capital," transferring its embassy from Tel Aviv to the occupied city and cutting financial assistance to the Palestinian Authority.

The Palestinians, he said, would not accept less than the minimum of freedom, independence and the establishment of their sovereign state along the 1967 lines with Jerusalem al-Quds as its capital, he added.

"What is happening is dangerous for the future of Palestine, the region and the world," he said.

Shtayyeh also lashed out at Jason Greenblatt, Trump's Middle East envoy, for claiming at last week's UN Security Council meeting that the Palestinians have aspiration, not right, to East Jerusalem al-Quds as their capital. Press TV reported.

Sudan's junta orders schools closed as tensions mount

TEHRAN— Officials in Sudan have ordered the shutdown of schools across the country amid an escalation of tensions over the killing of five students.

Snipers allegedly shot dead the five high school students while they were taking part in a protest rally against fuel and bread shortages in al-Obeid City on Monday.

Late on Tuesday, authorities ordered all schools nationwide to suspend classes.

"Orders have been given to governors of all states to shut kindergartens, primary, and high schools from tomorrow (Wednesday) until further notice," the official SUNA news agency said, following a directive issued by

the ruling military council.

On the streets in the capital, Khartoum, crowds of students rallied, waving flags and chanting, "The people want to fight for the rights of martyrs."

"We keep silent all the time and they kill us," said Enas Saifeddine, a 16-year-old high school student. "The five students

of al-Obeid were killed because they were asking for something basic like food, water, and electricity."

The killings, which have caused outrage across the country and beyond, are attributed to the tribal paramilitary group known as the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), press TV reported.

UN censures Bahraini regime over execution of two dissidents

➔ He added, "We are also very concerned about the future of other detainees, who remain on death row in Bahrain and are at risk of imminent execution. We call on the Bahraini government to halt all pending executions, and ensure a re-trial of these and other defendants whose rights may have been violated."

"We fully support the call by the UN experts for the Bahraini authorities to establish an official moratorium on all executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty," Colville noted.

Al-Arab and al-Malali were executed at the notorious Jaw Prison, south of the capital Manama, after private meetings with their families.

They were arrested separately in February 2017. The two men were both tried in a mass hearing with 58 other defendants, and convicted in January 2018 on charges of terrorism. They were sentenced to death. In May 2019, the Court of Cassation upheld the death sentence.

According to Press TV, thousands of anti-regime protesters have held demonstrations in Bahrain on an almost daily basis ever since a popular uprising began in the country in mid-February 2011.

They are demanding that the Al Khalifah regime relinquish power and allow a just system representing all Bahrainis to be established. Manama has gone to great lengths to clamp down on any sign of dissent. On March 14, 2011, troops from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates were deployed to assist Bahrain in its crackdown.

On March 5, 2017, Bahrain's parliament approved the trial of civilians at military tribunals in a measure blasted by human rights campaigners as being tantamount to imposition of an undeclared martial law countrywide.

Bahraini monarch King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifah ratified the constitutional amendment on April 3, 2017.

Several Saudi mercenaries killed as Yemeni missiles hit kingdom's Najran

TEHRAN— Several Saudi-sponsored militiamen loyal to Yemen's former president, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, have been killed when Yemeni army forces and their allies launched a missile strike against their camps in Saudi Arabia's southern province of Najran.

The media bureau of the Houthis Ansarullah movement announced in a statement that Yemeni missile defense units fired five domestically-manufactured Zelzal-1 (Earthquake-1) missiles and artillery rounds at positions of Saudi mercenaries in al-Sadis area of the region, located 844 kilometers (524 miles) south of the Saudi capital Riyadh, on Tuesday afternoon.

The statement added that the missiles hit the designated targets with great precision, leaving a number of Saudi-paid militiamen killed and injured.

Earlier in the day, scores of Saudi mercenaries were killed and injured when Yemeni troops and fighters from allied Popular Committees struck their positions in Moraba'a al-Shaja'a area of the same Saudi region.

Separately, Yemeni forces and their allies launched a barrage of artillery rounds at the strongholds of Saudi mercenaries in the Qa'atabah district of the southern Yemeni province of Dhale, leaving a number of the Riyadh-backed militiamen dead and injured.

Several Saudi mercenaries were also killed and wounded when a bomb explosion struck them in al-Jarrah area of Yemen's southern province of Ta'izz.

Israel approves 6,000 new homes for Israeli settlers in West Bank

TEHRAN— Israel approved the construction of 6,000 new homes for Israeli settlers and 700 new homes for Palestinians in an area of the occupied West Bank where it has full control.

The announcement by an unnamed Israeli official on Wednesday came ahead of an expected visit to Israel by United States envoy Jared Kushner to discuss a White House plan for an Israeli-Palestinian peace accord.

The approvals are for the West Bank's Area C, which is under Israeli security and civilian control and where its settlements are located. It accounts for more than 60 percent of the West Bank, the Palestinian territory that would form part of a future Palestine state under the so-called two-state solution.

It was not immediately clear if all of the homes will be new construction or if some already exist and are receiving retroactive approval.

Settlements are illegal under international law and are major stumbling blocks to an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement. They are built on land the Palestinians see as part of their future state.

U.S. peace envoy for Afghanistan set to resume talks with Taliban

TEHRAN — U.S. special representative for peace in Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad, will resume peace talks with the Taliban soon, sources with knowledge of the issue said on Wednesday.

Khalilzad who has, since late last year, held eight rounds of talks with the Taliban to end the 18-year war in Afghanistan, is scheduled to travel to Qatar's capital of Doha from Kabul, via Pakistan.

"I'm off to Doha, with a stop in Islamabad. In Doha, if the Taliban do their part, we will do ours, and conclude the agreement we have been working on," Khalilzad said on Twitter.

Khalilzad, an Afghan-born American diplomat, was appointed last year to negotiate a political settlement with the Taliban, who now control more territory than at any point since their ouster nearly 18 years ago.

He arrived in Kabul in July and held meetings with President Ashraf Ghani, top security officials, senior opposition leaders, diplomats, and civil society members to discuss the peace process before striking a deal with the Taliban.

"Wrapping up my most productive visit to Afghanistan since I took this job as Special Rep. The U.S. and Afghanistan have agreed on next steps," he said on Twitter, adding that a negotiating team and technical support group were being finalised.

TEHRAN — The United Kingdom has reported securing record defense orders in 2018, making it the "best year ever" for British arms exports.

The UK's Department for International Trade (DIT), in a report published on Tuesday, said the country won defense orders worth 14 billion pounds (\$17bn) in 2018, up from nine billion pounds (\$11bn) in 2017 and the highest since 1983.

The report attributed the rise to the sale of Typhoon jets to Qatar and F-35-related components to the United States. The deal to sell 24 Typhoons to Qatar, finalized in September, was worth five billion pounds (\$6bn).

The record orders in 2018 made the UK the largest arms exporter in the world after the U.S.

Washington's share of the global defense market was 40 percent, while London's stood at 19.

Russia, the world's third-largest arms exporter, has 14 percent market share, while fourth-placed France has nine percent, the report said.

Countries in the Middle East, including Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), accounted for nearly 80 percent of British defense exports last year.

The report comes amid mounting controversy over the UK's arms sales to Saudi Arabia, one of Britain's biggest arms purchasers and the leading weapons importer in the world.

In June, the UK court of appeal concluded the British government broke the law by allowing arms sales to Riyadh because the weapons may have been used in a devastating

war in Yemen.

The Saudi-UAE-led military coalition intervened in Yemen in 2015 to restore the internationally-recognized government of President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi, who was swept from power by the Houthis the previous year.

The United Nations has described the five-year conflict as the world's worst humanitarian crisis, as it has killed tens of thousands of people and pushed the impoverished country to the brink of famine.

The court ruling does not halt Britain's arms exports to Saudi Arabia, but it means the granting of new licenses will be suspended.

Earlier this month, the British government asked the country's Supreme Court to overturn that judgment.

UK says 2018 was 'best year ever' for its arms exports

on performance in sport, which could never be achieved by other women," the tribunal said.

"Thus, with the participation of a female athlete with '46 XY DSD' in the 'protected class women', a basic principle of top-class sports, namely fair competition, is disregarded from the outset."

Semenya on Tuesday expressed her disappointment at being ruled out of defending her title, adding: "This will not deter me from continuing my fight for the human rights of all of the female athletes concerned."

She later tweeted: "People can be mean. Don't take it personally. It says nothing about you, but a lot about them."

Semenya followed that up on Wednesday by saying: "Determined spirit is unstoppable."

(Source: AFP)

Iran’s Khalili, Firouzpour win gold medals at Freestyle Cadet World

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Rahman Mousa AMOUZAD **d e s k** KHALILI (IRI) won his second-straight Cadet World title, winning the 48 kg bracket evening in Sofia, Bulgaria.

Amouzad Khalili completed the feat with a dramatic 4-4 win on criteria against 2019 Cadet Asian bronze medalist Kamronbek KADAMOV (UZB) in the finals.

Last year, Amouzad Khalili claimed gold at 45 kg. He is also a 2018 and 2019 Cadet Asian champion.

Also winning gold for Iran was Amirhossein Biglar FIROUZPOURBANDPEI (IRI), who added to his 2019 Cadet Asian championship from earlier this year.

In the 80 kg finals, Firouzpour Bandpei dominated Arslan BAGAEV (RUS), using two takedowns and two leg laces for an 8-1 victory, unitedworldwrestling.org reported.

2018 Youth Olympic Games champion Umidjon JALOLOV (UZB) won his second Cadet World medal in as many attempts. In 2017, he won a silver medal at 42 kg.

A two-time Cadet Asian champion, Jalolov earned a spot atop the podium with a 3-1 decision over two-time Cadet Asian bronze medalist Mahdi Mehrdad VEISI (IRI) in the 55 kg gold-medal finals.

Azerbaijan and Russia also picked up gold medals on Tuesday.

At 65 kg, Dzhabrail GADZHIEV (AZE) met up with Bатыrbек TSKHOVREBOV (RUS) in a rematch of the 2019 European Youth Olympic Festival finals. The last time they wrestled, Gadzhiev defeated the Russian for the EYOF gold medal.

This time, Gadzhiev notched another victory against Tskhovrebov with a 6-4 decision for the Cadet World title.

For the gold medal at 110 kg, Arsamag ZASSEEV (RUS) picked up a 10-0 tech fall in less than a minute over Giorgi CHIKHRADZE (GEO) to win his first international tournament.



Iranian GM Tabatabaei becomes first Iranian to win Master Open in Biel



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iranian **d e s k** grandmaster Mohammad Amin Tabatabaei became the first Iranian player to win the Master Open in the 52nd International Chess Festival in Biel.

In the Master Open, Tabatabaei led alone with seven points. He won his game against GM Jeffery Xiong (USA, starting number 1), who had 90 more elo points, as the only player of the top section.

GM Tabatabaei received his grandmaster title in 2018 and is currently the world number 3 of the U-18. Alexander Donchenko from Germany and American Gata Kamsky finished

in second and third place both with 6.5 points. Santosh Gujrathi Vidit from India won the Grand Master Tournament.

The Biel International Chess Festival is an annual chess tournament that takes place in Biel/Bienne, Switzerland.

It consists of two events, the Grandmaster Tournament, held with the round-robin system, and the Master Open Tournament (MTO), held with the Swiss system.

The Grandmaster Tournament has taken place since 1977. The city of Biel hosted three Interzonal Tournaments, in 1976, 1985 and 1993.

Iran’s Behnam Yakhchali joins Nanjing Monkeys



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — The Iranian **d e s k** 24-year-old guard Behnam Yakhchali has joined Chinese basketball club Nanjing Monkeys.

Yakhchali has joined the Chinese club from Petrochimi of Iran.

He played eight years for the Iranian basketball team.

He is accompanying Iran national basketball team in Russia’s training camp as part of preparation for the 2019 FIBA World Cup in China.

The Chinese Basketball Association has been a good destination for

the Iranian players in the recent years, as Samad Nikkhah Bahrami, Hamed Haddadi and Mehdi Kamrani have already played in CBA.

Nanjing Monkeys play in the Southern Division of the CBA. The club joined the league ahead of the 2014–15 CBA season as Jiangsu Tongxi Monkey King, after spending their first seven campaigns at the lower levels of the country’s basketball hierarchy.

The team were renamed the Nanjing Tongxi Monkey King after the 2016–17 CBA season.

Tajikistan march on, Iran suffer 2nd loss at CAFA

Tajikistan moved to within touching distance of the trophy with a superb win over Islamic Republic of Iran, as Uzbekistan dented Afghanistan’s title aspirations while greatly enhancing their own on an action packed Matchday Four of the 2019 CAFA U-16 Championship in Tajikistan.

The hosts continued their impressive unbeaten run with an excellent 3-0 win over Iran, and Uzbekistan won by the same margin against fellow contenders Afghanistan, while Turkmenistan claimed their first points of the competition in the late match against Kyrgyz Republic.

The CAFA U-16 Championship Tajikistan, which serves as preparation for this year’s AFC U-16 Championship 2020 Qualifiers, sees each team play five 70-minute matches with the final round of games to be held on Thursday.

■ TAJIKISTAN 3-0 IR IRAN

Tajikistan continued their superb run of form and ensured they will only need a single point against Afghanistan on Thursday to guarantee the title, comprehensively overcoming IR Iran to win 3-0 in Dushanbe.

Iran had been looking to bounce back from Monday’s 1-0 defeat to Afghanistan, but a pair of first-half goals from Kabir Salimshoev gave Hossein Abdi’s charges a deficit they never looked likely to overturn.

Salimshoev struck in the 15th and 27th minutes for the hosts, with the promising Sunatullo Azizov continuing his purple patch in front of goal by netting the third in the third minute of second half stoppage time, eliminating Iran from the title calculations.



The commanding margin of Tajikistan’s victory takes their tally to 10 points with a +8 goal difference after four matches, meaning they could potentially win the title even with a narrow defeat to Afghanistan on Thursday.

■ AFGHANISTAN 0-3 UZBEKISTAN

Uzbekistan ensured they will remain in contention until the last day of the tournament, powering to a comfortable 3-0 over in-form Afghanistan at a scorching Hisor Central Stadium.

The loss is a significant blow to Afghanistan’s hopes of winning the title, with Wahidulah Wahidi’s side now three points and a significant goal difference gap behind Tajikistan, who they will meet in their final match on Thursday.

With the mercury touching 40 degrees in Hisor, Azamat Abduraimov’s side raced into a third minute lead through Abukhodir Luhasnov before Nasaf youngster Alisher Khayrullaev celebrated his promotion to the starting line-up in the 19th minute by steering in his second goal in two days.

The impressive Rustam Turdimurodov added a third in the 48th minute and Uzbekistan showed an improved second-half display from the one against Kyrgyz Republic on Monday, keeping their hopes of lifting the trophy alive.

Both on seven points, Uzbekistan and Afghanistan remain in mutual contention to win the title, with Afghanistan – who face table-topping Tajikistan on Thursday – retaining the power to directly influence their fate.

■ TURKMENISTAN 1-0 KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

The final match of the day provided the first points of the competition for Turkmenistan, who ended their three-match losing streak with a 1-0 win over Kyrgyz Republic.

With both sides already out contention for top honours, it was a battle for pride at Dushanbe Central Stadium, and a 55th minute goal from midfielder Muhammeali Kishikov ensured Turkmenistan emerged victorious.

The win lifts them off the bottom of the table, with Batyr Shyhyev’s side climbing to fifth, while Thursday’s match against Iran provides Kyrgyz Republic with their final chance to leave Tajikistan with a win.

(Source: the-afc)

Boualem Khoukhi focused on title challenge

Qatar international and AFC Asian Cup 2019 winner Boualem Khoukhi has set his sights on claiming this season’s AFC Champions League title after joining his Al Sadd SC teammates for pre-season training in Spain.

The recent subject of an on-off transfer to domestic rivals Al Gharafa, Khoukhi arrived in Europe at the weekend determined to focus on his side’s upcoming AFC Champions League Round of 16 tie against Al Duhail SC.

With the two-legged Continental show-

down set to start next week, Khoukhi has been quick to outline his targets for the competition and the positive impact he believes new head coach Xavi will have on his charges.

“Our goal for the next season is to compete for the AFC Champions League title,” he told Al Sadd’s official club website.

“We have two difficult matches against Al Duhail in the Round of 16, and we are currently preparing for these matches which will be huge, especially as we are looking to win the title.

“We have a new coach (Xavi) and we know him well. We hope he enjoys a very successful coaching career, one which comes after we gained a great deal of experience from him as a player (with Al Sadd). We (now) want to learn from him as a coach.”

On a personal level, Khoukhi enjoyed a stellar 2018-19 campaign with both club and country, but despite his previous successes, the former Al Arabi favourite is still hungry for more.

“Last season was one of the best of my career,” declared the 29-year-old.

“I played well, won the Qatar Stars League title, competed in the AFC Champions League with Al Sadd and then won the AFC Asian Cup with Qatar.

“We will, though, work to get more titles, and we are excited to do that and bring joy to our fans.”

Al Sadd are scheduled to face Al Duhail over two legs in the AFC Champions League Round of 16 on August 6 and 13, before tackling them once again in the Qatar Super Cup on August 17.

(Source: the-afc)

Iranian athletes win 37 medals at 2019 Pyeongchang World Taekwondo Hanmadang

MNA — The national taekwondo team of Iran has won 37 medals of 2019 Pyeongchang World Taekwondo Hanmadang in South Korea.

The 27th edition of biggest annual Korean martial arts event, the World Taekwondo Hanmadang was held in PyeongChang, South Korea in two section of male and female on 26 -31 July 2019.

Iran’s representatives won 16 gold, 10 silver and 11 bronze medals in World Taekwondo Hanmadang.

Practitioners competed in 12 events and 59 fields for domestic participants and 54 for those from overseas. The festival brings together nearly five thousand people from 57 countries.

The world Taekwondo Hanmadang, which shows the essentials of the martial art such as breaking, self-defense and poomsae, is a contest held every year by Kukkiwon. It introduces the cultural superiority of Taekwondo and promotes the martial art as a valuable Korean culture.

Komeil Ghasemi honored for winning gold at 2012 Olympics

TASNIM — Iranian heavyweight freestyler Komeil Ghasemi, who has been recently awarded the 2012 Olympic Games gold medal, was honored on Wednesday.

Ghasemi was honored at the Khane-ye-Koshti (Wrestling House) in Tehran and members of Iran freestyle national team were in attendance.

Uzbek freestyle wrestler Artur Taymazov was stripped of his London 2012 Olympic gold medal last week after re-analysis of stored samples.

Ghasemi has become the new gold medalist, Bilyal Makhov from Russia remains silver, and Tervel Dlagnev from USA is the newest bronze medalist.

Winning starts for Iraq and Palestine

Hosts Iraq got their campaign up and running with a 1-0 win over Lebanon, while Palestine also claimed a single-goal success against Yemen as the 2019 WAFF Championship got underway in Karbala on Tuesday.

■ IRAQ 1-0 LEBANON

A second-half goal from Hussein Ali helped hosts Iraq make a winning start, with Srecko Katanec’s side overcoming Lebanon 1-0 at Karbala International Stadium.

Ali’s decisive 58th minute strike followed a commanding first-half performance from Iraq, who entertained a large and enthusiastic crowd throughout the opening period but failed to find an opening goal.

Iraq’s ascendancy continued after the break and finally bore fruit just before the hour mark, with a goal bound initial effort from Alaa Abbas saved by Lebanese goalkeeper Mahdi Khalil, before Ali found the back of the net with a follow-up attempt.

In their first competitive fixture under Romanian head coach Liviu Ciobotariu, Lebanon pushed for an equalizer but Iraq held firm to take all three points from the tournament opener.

Hosting the competition for the first time, Iraq are aiming for their first WAFF Championship title since their 2002 success in Syria.

■ YEMEN 0-1 PALESTINE

Palestine also made a successful start to the competition, as debutant Yaser Hamed Mayor scored in a 1-0 win over Yemen in Tuesday’s late kick-off.

The Palestinians started brightly, creating several early scoring opportunities and it came as little surprise when Spanish-born Hamed Mayor capped his first appearance for Palestine with the opening goal in the 26th minute.

Following a cross from Islam Batran on the right flank, veteran defender Abdallatif Al Bahdari got his head to the ball, directing it towards Hamed Mayor who nodded the ball home.

Consistent forays forward meant Palestine were unlucky not to add to their lead in the remaining minutes of the opening period, before Yemen began to show more promise after the interval.

Yemen’s best chance at finding an equalizer came via Omar Ali’s 82nd-minute free-kick, but goalkeeper Rami Hamada produced a fine save to seal three early points for Palestine, who claimed their first international win of 2019.

The two winners on opening night will come face to face when the five-team Group A continues on Friday with Iraq facing Palestine, while Syria’s campaign will begin against Lebanon.

(Source: the-afc)

Kovac forced to apologize over Sane comments

Bayern Munich head coach Niko Kovac has been forced to apologize to Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola for discussing a potential move for Leroy Sane following criticism from the Bavarian club’s CEO, Karl-Heinz Rummenigge.

City winger Sane is a known transfer target for Bayern and, speaking earlier this week, Kovac had said he was “confident” the Bundesliga champions would be able to secure a deal for the Germany international.

Rummenigge was critical of the comments and, following Bayern’s 6-1 win over Fenerbahce in the Audi Cup, Kovac apologised.

“I might have been a bit too outspoken,” Kovac told German broadcaster ZDF following the 6-1 Audi Cup win over Fenerbahce. “I’ve already contacted Pep.

“I have explained the situation to him. I have apologized because, of course, I know that [Sane] is a City player. I’d like to think that’s it. Pep took my point and the world will keep on turning.”

“I not only want to apologies to Pep, but also to the club.” (Source: ESPN)

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Test a person to see if you find a reason for rage.

Imam Ali (AS)

Iranian Artists Forum to screen collage film “Mosaic of Seven Colors”

A R T TEHRAN — The Iranian Artists Forum plans to screen the collage film “Mosaic of Seven Colors” directed Mina Salimi, an Iranian graduate of Goldsmiths, University of London, on Sunday.

“Mosaic of Seven Colors” uses collage for the first time in Iranian cinema to narrate a story,” the forum said in a press release published on Wednesday.



A poster for director Mina Salimi collage film “Mosaic of Seven Colors”, which will be screened at the Iranian Artists Forum in Tehran.

Written by Salimi, the story of the film begins from the Safavid period during the 16th century and stretches into contemporary life.

The movie is about Mahdokht, a writer who encounters obstacles in her way to author a book on the Safavid period. Based on an ancient tradition for the first day of the New Year, she goes to the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque built during the Safavid period in Isfahan to spend the day. She suddenly hears a voice behind a tile at the mosque, which leads her to a story from “The One Thousand and One Nights”. The event happens again on the next days and Mahdokht faces a serious situation.

Salimi has used scenes from the TV series “Sheikh Bahai” by Shahram Asadi and “Lighter than Darkness” by Hassan Fat’hi to make her film, which has been shot on location in Isfahan.

A review session will also be organized by critic Arash Khoshkhu and writer Hesam Maqamikia following the screening of the film that will begin at 7 pm.

Masud Delkhah Aria Tavassoli, Mostafa Beheshti, Aria Zolfagari and Salimi herself star in the movie

IRIB doc chronicles history of U.S. involvement in regime change

A R T TEHRAN — The Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) has produced a documentary series that studies the history of the U.S. actions aimed at altering or replacing foreign governments.

The 10-episode series “Days of Freedom” directed by Vahid Faraji reviews how the U.S. has meddled in the affairs of different countries over the years via economic sanctions, coups d’état, war and psychological warfare.

The story in the documentary begins with the U.S.-designed 1953 coup against the government of Mohammad Mosaddeq in Iran. It then continues with several interventions in other countries, including Congo, Vietnam, Indonesia, Chile, Afghanistan and Iraq.

The IRIB is scheduled to broadcast the first episode of the documentary, which has been made over the past two years, on Thursday.

Miley Cyrus latest star to abandon Woodstock 50

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) — Miley Cyrus was reported on Tuesday to have pulled out of the troubled Woodstock 50 festival, joining a string of other big names who say they will no longer take part in the official event meant to mark the anniversary of the landmark 1969 music festival.

Cyrus, one of America’s biggest pop stars, was one of the headliners for the event planned for Aug. 16-18, which has been mired in financial and permit problems.

Variety and Rolling Stone cited sources close to the situation as saying Cyrus would no longer take part. Representatives of the “Wrecking Ball” singer did not return requests for comment.

Rapper Jay-Z withdrew last week, along with former Creedence Clearwater Revival frontman John Fogerty as Woodstock 50 organizers sought a third venue, this time at a small amphitheater in Columbia, Maryland.

In the past few days Dead & Company, Carlos Santana, and rock bands the Lumineers and the Raconteurs have also pulled out, their representatives told Rolling Stone magazine.

Poet Hossein Ahi dies at 66

A R T TEHRAN — Poet Hossein Ahi who was well-known for his religious compositions and the literary programs created for the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), died on Tuesday. He was 66.

The poet was suffering from cancer of the lymph nodes for the past few years, his son Hafez told the Persian news agencies on Tuesday evening.

Ahi was born in 1953 in Tehran. He was interested in different languages of Arabic,

Middle Persian (Pahlavi) and German.

He published his first book of poetry under the title “Rhythms of the Persian Language” when he was only 18.

His first TV program was also named “Caravan of Poetry and Music” which was aired on IRIB Channel 2 in the 2000s.

“Watching the Secret” was his popular radio program for several years.

“Dictionary of Literary Phrases”, “Principles of the Persian Language” and “Study of Khayyam” are among his noteworthy credits.



Poet Hossein Ahi in an undated photo.

Arash Abbasi selected for Sediciorto Intl. Film Festival jury



Iranian director Arash Abbasi was selected as a member of the jury for the 16th Sediciorto International Film Festival in Italy.

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian director and playwright Arash Abbasi has been selected as a member of the jury for the 16th Sediciorto International Film Festival in Italy, the Iranian Youth Cinema Society announced on Wednesday.

The festival, which will take place in Forlì, Italy, from October 4 to 13, aims at offering visibility to young authors and at presenting an opportunity for meeting and exchange among film industry professionals.

Earlier in 2016, Abbasi was invited to the Italian city of Bologna to stage his play “The Lady” during an Iranian

cultural festival titled “Heart of Persia”.

Teatri di Vita, an international center for theater and contemporary arts in Bologna, was the main organizer of the festival.

In autumn 2017, Abbasi’s troupe Moj collaborated with Italian theater expert and choreographer Claudia Castellucci in a joint performance.

He also directed Sanam Naderi in the Italian language monologue, “La Signora”, about a 40-year-old pregnant woman who wants to start a trip but she hesitates, at the Qashqai Hall of Tehran’s City Theater Complex in 2016.

Yamagata festival to screen docs from Iran

A R T TEHRAN — The Iranian films “Exodus” and “The Gracefully” will be competing in the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival in Japan during October.

The films will be screened in the New Asian Currents section of the festival, which is held biennially in Yamagata.

Directed by Bahman Giarostami, “Exodus” is about migrant workers from Afghanistan who have lined up to leave Iran as the renewed U.S. sanctions have sparked a

recession, but first, they must endure interrogations at an immigration center in Tehran.

“The Gracefully” directed by Arash Es’haqi tells the story of an 80-year-old man who was known in his youth for having danced at local ceremonies and celebrations dressed as a woman. Dancing publicly was banned after the revolution and he now lives as a farmer taking care of cows. This film captures one man’s continued pursuit of happiness through dancing.



A scene from “Exodus” directed by Bahman Kiarostami.

Disney star Cameron Boyce died of epilepsy, coroner says



This April 25, 2019 file photo shows actor Cameron Boyce at WE Day California in Inglewood, Calif. (AP/Richard Shotwell)

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Los Angeles County coroner’s office says Disney actor Cameron Boyce died unexpectedly from epilepsy.

An autopsy report released Tuesday states the “Descendants” star was found unresponsive at home on July 6, and later pronounced dead at the scene.

Boyce’s family said previously that the 20-year-old died due to an ongoing medical condition for which

he was being treated, but did not reveal specifics.

The family statement called Boyce one of the world’s brightest lights, and described his family as heartbroken over his sudden death.

Disney Channel canceled the red-carpet premiere of “Descendants 3” after Boyce’s death, and said Friday’s telecast will be dedicated to Boyce’s memory.

New Julia Alvarez novel, “Afterlife,” coming next April



In this Jan. 24, 2006 file photo, writer Julia Alvarez poses for a photo in a farm Altigracia in Jarabacoa, Dominican Republic. (AP/Ramon Espinosa)

NEW YORK (AP) — Million-selling novelist Julia Alvarez’s next book is a story of identity and immigration that she felt compelled to write.

“Afterlife” will be published next April, Algonquin Books announced Tuesday. The novel centers on a literature professor whose grief for her late husband and encounter with an undocumented migrant raise questions about who she is and about her background as an

immigrant. Alvarez said she wanted to explore what happens to a person who values the life of the mind when she discovers “that the world demands more of her than words.”

Alvarez is known for the best-sellers “How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents” and “In the Time of the Butterflies.” She has also published poems, essays and children’s books. In 2013, she was awarded a National Medal of Arts.