



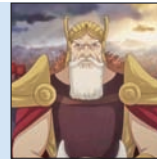
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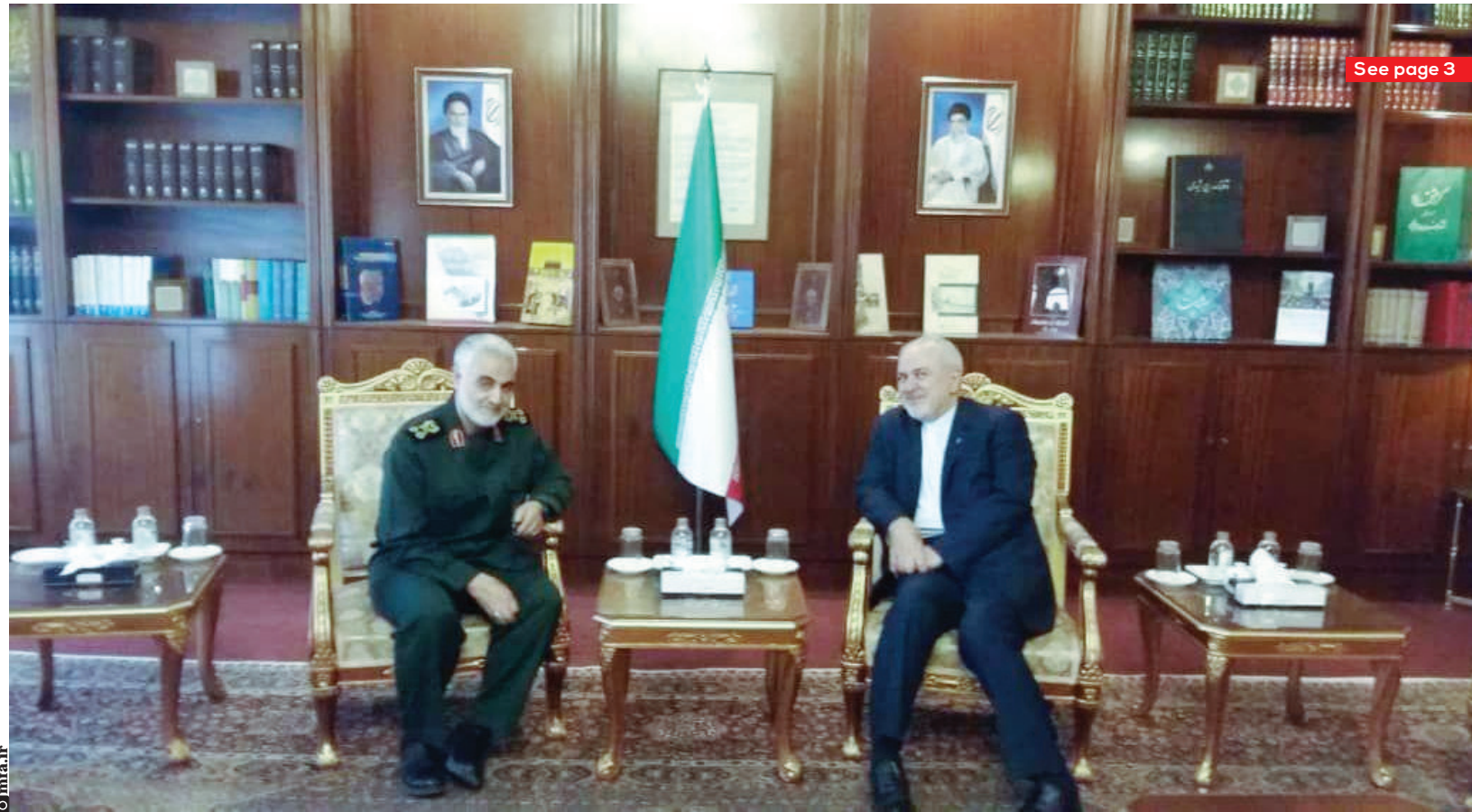


**Iranian paddler Kazemi aims for Olympic berth at Canoe Sprint World C'ships** **15**



**"The Last Fiction" world premiere set for Sept. 1** **16**

# Gen. Soleimani: Sanctioning Zarif attests to his 'deep impact'



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## Tehran hosting 2 international exhibitions

**TEHRAN** — The 28th International Exhibition of Home Furniture (HOMEX 2019) and the second International Exhibition of Paper, Cardboards, Cellulose Products, and Related Machinery (PCCM 2019) became operational at the Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds on Tuesday, IRNA reported.

As reported, some 300 Iranian and for-

eign companies are taking part in HOMEX 2019 to showcase their latest achievements and products in the home furniture industry. As for the PCCM, the exhibition brought together 100 companies, manufacturers and agencies active in the industry to present the latest technologies in this field while exchanging information and exploring collaborative cooperation. ➔ **4**

## Iran one step closer to create ministry of tourism

**TEHRAN** — Iran has moved a step closer to form a ministry of cultural heritage, handicrafts and tourism, as its Guardian Council, which is empowered to vet legislation in the Islamic Republic, gave its approval on Monday.

The Guardian Council approved a bill to form such a ministry in place of the existing Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization in a bid to boost the country's

tourism industry, Mehr reported.

The bill had already been agreed upon by lawmakers in the parliament (Majlis), but it lately gained the approval of the Guardian Council, the report said.

For the time being, tourism affairs in Iran is run by the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization, whose head is installed by the president and is acted as the vice-president. ➔ **10**

## No peace, security and stability without the end of the Israeli occupation: Jordan FM

**TEHRAN**— The Jordanian Foreign Minister, Ayman Safadi, stressed the centrality of the Palestinian issue and its settlement according to the two-state solution to end the Israeli occupation and its people's access to an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital.

Safadi said during a lecture at the Eleventh Conference of Turkish Ambassadors in Ankara, at the invitation of Turkish

Foreign Minister Moulood Chaochoglu, that "there is no comprehensive peace, security and stability without the end of occupation and the resolution of the conflict according to the two-state solution, that the conflict is the basis of tension in the region and resolved, including ending the occupation and ensure the establishment of an independent Palestinian state is a comprehensive peace clause." ➔ **13**

## Will Kushner become the Achilles' heel of the Republicans?

By Mohammad Ghaderi

**TEHRAN** — It seems that democrats are going to break their silence about the foreign policy mistakes of Jared Kushner, the senior advisor to the American President Donald Trump who is also his father-in-law.

Kushner's terrible mistakes in handling some of U.S. foreign policy issues is probably one of the main criticisms that democrats will address at Trump's administration, especially if people like Joe Biden and Kamala Harris get to the final round of U.S. presidential elections.

In fact, one of the main problems of Rex Tillerson, former U.S. Secretary of State with Trump was over Kushner's interference in the country's foreign policy; to the point that Tillerson was not even aware of some of meetings between Kushner and Saudi Arabia or Zionist officials.

By the way, the story doesn't end here! Kushner's footprint can even be traced back to the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, the journalist who was an outspoken critic of Saudi Arabia's regime. If this subject will finds its way into the presidential elections, Trump will be in a very big trouble.

Recently, Washington Post has requested Democrats of the congress (both members of the Senate and the House of Representatives) to investigate about the relationship between Kushner and Mohammad Bin Salman, the crown prince of Saudi Arabia.

According to Washington Post and New York Times, Kushner and Bin Salman had had a long, secret relationship that goes before the murder of Khashoggi. A relationship that led to very friendly relationships and following deals between the two sides. Some experts believe that Bin Salman had

told Kushner that Saudi is planning to murder Jamal Khashoggi.

Anyhow, leaking any information about Kushner's involvement in the murder of Khashoggi has always been a serious red line for Trump's administration.

Undoubtedly in near future more secret files and information will be accumulated and the media will expose many new security and political aspects of the relations between Bin Salman and Kushner.

This information will be very useful to democrats for attacking Trump's foreign policy in regard to Saudi Arabia. Many criticisms will also be addressed to Trump for giving his son-in-law the freedom to seriously meddle in the country's foreign policies. In this case, Trump cannot possibly excuse himself.

## Saudi Arabia's 'strategic plan' to take Turkey down

**TEHRAN**— Saudi Arabia has begun implementing a "strategic plan" to confront the Turkish government, after Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman decided he was being "too patient" with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in the wake of journalist Jamal Khashoggi's murder.

The plan is detailed in a confidential report based on open- and closed-source intelligence prepared by the kingdom's ally, the United Arab Emirates.

The intelligence report is one of a monthly series written by the Emirates Policy Centre, a think tank with close links to the Emirati government and security services.

Entitled "Monthly Report on Saudi Arabia,

Issue 24, May 2019", the report is of limited circulation and intended for the top Emirati leadership. It does not appear on the think tank's website. A copy has been obtained by Middle East Eye.

It reveals that in Riyadh in May, orders were given to implement the strategic plan to confront the Turkish government.

The aim of the plan was to use "all possible tools to pressure Erdogan's government, weaken him, and keep him busy with domestic issues in the hope that he will be brought down by the opposition, or occupy him with confronting crisis after crisis, and push him to slip up and make mistakes which the media would surely

pick up on".

Middle East Eye contacted the Emirates Policy Centre for comment, with no reply by the time of publication.

### Restricting influence

Riyadh's aim is to restrict Erdogan and Turkey's regional influence.

"The kingdom would start to target the Turkish economy and press towards the gradual termination of Saudi investment in Turkey, the gradual decrease of Saudi tourists visiting Turkey while creating alternative destinations for them, decreasing Saudi import of Turkish goods, and most importantly minimising Turkish regional role in Islamic matters," the report says. ➔ **13**



## ARTICLE

Manijeh Rezapoor  
Tehran Times journalist

## Online galleries inevitable in global art market

Art aficionados and people in general these days are too busy with routine tasks and just coping with day-to-day life in many large populated cities where the frantic pace of living leaves scant spare time to spend a few minutes in art galleries enjoying exhibits.

However, with the development of technology, online activities have come along to help art lovers in this regard, providing the chance to visit artworks online by means of online galleries, which are spreading rapidly these days.

With one quick search, one can find great numbers of free online galleries as well as websites offering artworks around the world.

Online galleries are very popular these days around the world. They let visitors buy, sell and browse original arts at any time and any place with ease. It is very exciting for modern art buyers and collectors to be able to move around online, choosing art galleries and picking what they want.

It is also true that online galleries have made the process of buying and selling easier for the artists. Sales can take place directly between the buyers and the artists through the website links and email addresses provided beneath the works.

Graphic designer Yazdan Saadi says he believes online galleries have turned out to be the permanent art market in the world these days and Iran is no exception. "One cannot deny the [impact of the] sale of artworks carried out by online galleries," he told Tehran Times about his opinion of online galleries and its pros and cons.

"I believe the greater the number of art galleries that work in Iran, the better it could be. Since an artist can introduce himself/herself throughout the online market more easily and his/her works can be seen more widely, while more works could be sold this way," he added.

He also said that he thinks the art market must be up-to-date and that artists can have the opportunity to reflect life in their artworks, and online sales can speed up this process these days. ➔ **16**



## ARTICLE

Ali Babaei  
Doctor in Law, Central Bar  
Association of Iran & IBA Member

## INSTEK: Truth or promise?

At the moment we are witnessing some developments in the field of INSTEK, we should say that it has been established for a long time, but we still do not see any action under its structure and regulations. In addition, when the SPP mechanism was not implemented, it was initially expected that INSTEK would be able to meet at least some of the expectations of the parties, but in practice so far it has not been successful and only remains to be negotiated. After the United States withdrew from the treaty, the survival of its members depends entirely on the international treaty and its obligations, to fulfill such obligations.

In the present article, we will examine the courses of the SPV, SATEMA, and INSTEK with respect to their timing in order to clarify their dimensions to the readers.

1- U.S. exit from JCPA and Europe's Request for Iran's Remaining

When the United States unilaterally withdrew from the JCPA in May 1989, Europe sought a way to keep the Islamic Republic of Iran committed to the JCPA agreements. The Europeans emphasized that although the United States withdrew unilaterally, it was still legally binding on international law and that the other members had no intention of quitting and dissolving it and would therefore continue to live as an international agreement. Even European countries, while backing Iran's decision to adhere to its negotiation obligations, have criticized US unilateral policies and publicly stated that mechanisms are in place to trade European countries with Iran and that Iran must wait because it respects Iran's views. They will. When it became clear that Iran did not intend to leave, the European governments showed their eagerness to fulfill this promise.

Over time, however, Iran expressed dissatisfaction with European delays about their promises and granted two months to fulfill their promises, but European officials demanded four months in their statements, saying that the timing should never be multiplied. Consider deadlines, because it is time-consuming to set up mechanisms and achieve these ideals! ➔ **27**



Ministry of Defence

## Iran unveils new smart bombs

**TEHRAN** — Iran on Tuesday unveiled three new precision-guided smart bombs, in a ceremony with Defense Minister Brigadier-General Amir Hatami, according to the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting Website.

The unveilings come amid tensions between Iran and the United States along with Britain in the Persian Gulf.

The new air-to-air missiles revealed by Tehran are called the "Yasin" and the "Balaban" as well as a new series of the "Qaem" missile and were developed jointly by the ministry and Sa Iran (Iran Electronics Industries). ➔ **2**



## Larijani: Zarif laid bare Washington's wrong path

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani said on Tuesday that Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has laid bare the United States' wrong path.

In reference to the United States' newly imposed sanctions on Zarif, Larijani noted the foreign minister for his efforts to improve Iran's ties with other countries.

On July 31, the United States declared sanctions on Zarif, a move which was interpreted as a declaration of sanctions on diplomacy, which the Trump administration repeatedly claims it seeks with Tehran.



Zarif himself told a press conference on Monday that while he was in New York recently, the Americans told him that unless he agreed to go to the White House to meet President Donald Trump, or would be sanctioned in two weeks.

Zarif visited New York in mid-July to participate at the annual session of the UN Economic and Social Council (UNOSOC).

The chief diplomat said the U.S. decided to sanction him when he revealed that the B-Team, among them White House national security advisor John Bolton and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, is trying to lure Trump into a war with Iran.

In another part of his Tuesday speech, Larijani said the United States has had no success in its "maximum pressure" campaign against Tehran even as American sanctions have impacted the Iranian economy.

Washington has been tightening the screws on Tehran's main source of income, aiming to cut Iran's oil sales to zero, after Trump reimposed sanctions on the Islamic Republic last year.

"The Americans have not achieved any success against Iran. They wanted to bring oil sales down to zero but they did not succeed," Larijani said.

While the sanctions resulted in a decline in Iran's oil sales and created some economic pressure, the Americans failed to achieve their primary goals, the speaker remarked.

Washington withdrew last year from an international nuclear deal signed with Tehran in 2015. It is ratcheting up sanctions in efforts to bring Iran to negotiating table for a new deal to curb the country's missile capabilities and its anti-Israeli policy in the region.

Lately, the U.S. has raised the ante by ordering military reinforcements, including a strike group, B-52 bombers and Patriot missiles, to the Middle East to confront unspecified Iranian threats.

A series of suspicious attacks on oil tankers in the Persian Gulf and deliberate intrusion of U.S. aircraft into the Iranian airspace have brought tensions to a head. In June, Trump claimed that he had called off a military strike in response to Iran's downing of a sophisticated American drone.

Larijani said, "The American adventurism has posed us a new problem every single day which has impacted our economy, so a clear analysis of their actions is needed."

"Through economic pressure, they want to have Iran stuck in internal problems. They have ratcheted up pressure on people to stir economic discontent," he said.

## MP warns against trans-regional military presence in Persian Gulf

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — The military presence of trans-regional countries in the Persian Gulf region is a full example of foreign interference, an Iranian parliamentarian warned on Tuesday.

Iran is strongly against any further complications of affairs in the region, and any measure which adds to the complications



of regional developments will not help peace and security, said Ali Najafi Khoshroudi who sits on the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee.

"We have always highlighted that we don't embrace foreign forces in the region, and the presence of foreign militaries in the region is a clear example of interfering in other countries' affairs," Fars quoted him as saying.

On July 29, Mohsen Rezaee, the secretary of the Expediency Council and the former chief of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), said that despite the malicious efforts by the U.S. and UK to claim control over the Strait of Hormuz with escalating tensions in the Persian Gulf region, Tehran will not allow such a thing to happen.

"Americans and the British have been fanning the flames of war in the Persian Gulf region to pretend they have control over the Strait of Hormuz and the movement of vessels. Of course, we do not allow this to happen. In the meantime, we expect cooperation from our friends in China," Rezaee said in a meeting with a senior Chinese delegation headed by Song Tao, the director of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC).

Rezaee added that Iran is not seeking war but will defend itself, while the Americans want conflict and seek to increase the tensions.

"Persian Gulf security is our security and we have to respond to their attacks and destabilizing actions in order to maintain security," he said, adding, "We want free shipping and security in the Persian Gulf."

"We live in the energy region of the world. Any kind of insecurity and conflict in this region would carry harm to global peace and security," Rezaee said, pointing to the new developments in the region.

# Rouhani : Iran won't talk to a criminal committing economic terrorism

President says war with Iran will be 'mother of all wars' and peace 'mother of all peace'

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — President Hassan Rouhani said on Tuesday that peace with Iran will be "mother of all peace" and war with Iran will be "mother of all wars".

Rouhani made the remarks as he visited the Foreign Ministry for a meeting with Foreign Minister Zarif, who was sanctioned by the U.S. on July 31, his deputies and other top ministry officials.

"Security for security, peace for peace. You cannot harm our security and expect security for yourself. Peace for peace and oil for oil," Rouhani said in an open reference to the administration of Donald Trump which has launched an economic war on Iran by banning a total ban against Iran's oil exports and deployed aircraft carriers, B-52 bombers, F-22 fighter jets, and tens of hundreds of troops in the Persian Gulf region under the pretext that it wants to counter possible threats by Iran.

Rouhani added, "Today, you are aware that we are powerful and capable to do what we have said. You are aware that we shot down your modern drone by missile which was built by Iran in the Defense Ministry of the 11th and 12th governments and shot precisely by the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps."

The IRGC shot down an unmanned U.S. surveillance drone on June 20 after it breached Iran's airspace. The IRGC brought the drone down by firing a surface-to-air missile at it.

**"Constructive interaction is basis of foreign policy"**

Rouhani also said that constructive interaction is a difficult thing to do and is the basis of foreign policy.

"Confrontation with the world is the easiest thing to do. Insulting and speaking against the world is not a skill," he said.

**"Foreign minister represents the entire Iran"**

Pointing to U.S. sanctions on Zarif, Rouhani said that the Iranian foreign minister is more "popular" and "powerful" than ever. "You have been mistaken if you sanctioned our foreign minister to cause division," he said.

Foreign minister is the "representative of the entire Iranian nation and not a group or faction."

In separate statements on July 31, the U.S. Treasury and State Department announced



imposition of sanctions against Zarif, a move which was interpreted as a total rejection of diplomacy repeatedly claimed by the Trump administration.

**"Trump was right that Iranians never lost a negotiation"**

Rouhani also said that Trump was right when he said that "Iranians never lost a negotiation" in a tweet message in July.

He noted that Trump was deceived by his team and he quit the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA.

Rouhani added that the Trump administration does not deserve talks for his economic terrorism against Iran.

"They said that they seek to negotiate with Iran without any condition. However, they would have abandoned economic terrorism and become polite if they had been wise enough and sought to negotiate," the president stated.

Rouhani insisted that the U.S. must remove all sanctions if it seeks to negotiate

with Iran.

Rouhani called the U.S. sanctions against Iran an instance of "economic terrorism" and branded those who enforce such sanctions as "criminal" whom Tehran cannot negotiate with.

"If America wants negotiations it must lift sanctions before anything else so that it would not be a criminal against the rights of humans. We cannot talk to a criminal," Rouhani remarked.

The president told Trump, "If you want the path laid out for negotiation you must repent."

Pointing to Iran's action in reducing nuclear commitments, he said the timing of the move was right and nobody can criticize Iran legally and politically.

On May 8, exactly one year after the U.S. abandoned the multi-nation nuclear agreement and reimposed sanctions on Iran, Tehran said its "strategic patience" is over and announced a partial withdrawal from

**Rouhani tells the Trump administration: "Today, you are aware that we are powerful and capable to do what we have said. You are aware that we shot down your modern drone by missile which was built by Iran."**

## Iran unveils new smart bombs



and its mercenaries, the Defense Ministry will not hesitate for a moment to defend the Islamic Republic and to expand security," Fars quoted him as saying.

The three missiles were unveiled two days after deputy military chief Brigadier

General Mehdi Rabbani was quoted by Fars as saying that the country's missile range was continuing to increase.

"For at least the next 10 years, no regional or trans-regional country is able to counter or fight against the Islamic

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.

**"Success in The Hague was greater than Mosaddegh's"**

Rouhani also said the ruling against sanctions in The Hague was more important than the vote for Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh for nationalization of Iranian oil in his battle against Britons in 1952.

Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh's government nationalized Iran's oil industry in April 1951. In September 1951, Britain froze Iran's sterling assets and banned export of goods to Iran. It challenged the legality of the oil nationalization and took its case against Iran to the International Court of Justice at The Hague.

In July 1952, the ICJ ruled in favor of Iran by a vote of 9 to 5 that it had no jurisdiction in the British-Iranian dispute over oil nationalization.

Rouhani said, "Certain people just see failures. We achieved a success in The Hague court greater than Mosaddegh's success."

The Hague-based UN's top court ordered the U.S. in October 2018 to ease some sanctions against Iran, including those related to the supply of humanitarian goods and the safety of civil aviation.

The ruling was made in response to a plea from Tehran after Washington's withdrawal from the JCPOA and re-imposition of sanctions against Iran.

**"Answering to Obama's phone call accelerated Geneva agreement"**

Rouhani also said that his answer to a phone call by President Barack Obama accelerated the process of reaching the Geneva agreement in 2013.

On 24 November 2013, the Joint Plan of Action also known as the Geneva interim agreement was a pact signed between Iran and the P5+1 countries [China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States; plus Germany] in Geneva.

## U.S. Congress redoubles efforts to limit Trump's Iran war powers

*By staff and agency*

Twenty-eight lawmakers from both the Republican and Democratic parties are pushing legislation to ban the use of funds for military action against Iran without congressional authorization, according to an internal letter obtained by Foreign Policy.

Similar legislation has failed before, but lawmakers are hoping they can fold this into a must-pass defense policy bill expected to be finalized in the fall, Foreign Policy reported on Monday.

"Bipartisan majorities in both chambers have spoken up to defend Congress' constitutional authority over matters of war and peace," the senators and members of congress wrote in the letter, addressed to the chairmen and ranking members of the Senate and House Armed Services Committees, which oversee the defense bill. "With regional tensions high, the risk of the U.S. entering into war with Iran without authorization remains acute."

The letter represents the latest political battle to pare back the president's ability to wage war without congressional authorization amid mounting fears that the Trump administration could stumble into a conflict with Iran. The new push sets up a potential showdown over Iran policy in Congress that will play out during negotiations over the final defense policy bill, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

In Washington's hyperpartisan atmosphere, this campaign by some lawmakers to reassert Congress's role in constitutional decisions over matters of war stands out as an anomaly.

It is championed by both prominent liberal Democratic critics of President Donald Trump, including New Mexico Sen. Tom Udall and California Rep. Ro Khanna, and staunch Republican Trump supporters, such as Rep. Matt Gaetz of Florida.

"This is the most urgent national defense issue we are discussing in Congress, and its this rare issue where you have real bipartisan agreement and also very strange bedfellows from the farther right and farther left," said one congressional aide.

Tensions between the United States and Iran flared up this summer, after two attacks on oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman in May and June. Washington blamed Iran for the attacks, while Tehran denies any involvement.

Tension increased as Iran seized Revolutionary Guard Corps seized British-flagged Stena Impero in the Strait of Hormuz last month.

In June, Trump ordered—then abruptly canceled at the last minute—a military strike against Iran, which many experts fear would turn into a regional firestorm. Despite that restraint, lawmakers from both sides of the aisle have expressed concerns that the Trump administration is inching closer to a military confrontation with Iran, and they have



been working for months through a raft of legislation and amendments to head off the possibility.

It's still unclear whether this amendment has more support than prior legislation, though attaching it to the NDAA would give it additional leverage, as the defense bill is considered must-pass legislation.

In June, the Senate rejected an Iran war powers amendment put forward by Udall and Virginia Democratic Sen. Tim Kaine—it got 50 votes and needed 60 to pass. A similar bill sponsored by Khanna and Gaetz passed the House by a vote of 251 to 170.



# Gen. Soleimani: Sanctioning Zarif attests to his ‘deep impact’

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Major General Qassem Soleimani, commander of the IRGC Quds Force, says the U.S. sanctions on Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif demonstrated the deep impact of the chief diplomat on public opinion in the United States.

“The U.S. act of sanctioning you proved that you, as chief of the country’s foreign policy, have a deep impact on public opinion, especially on the American people with regard to the ignorance of that country’s leaders,” General Soleimani said in a meeting with Zarif on Tuesday, according to Mehr.

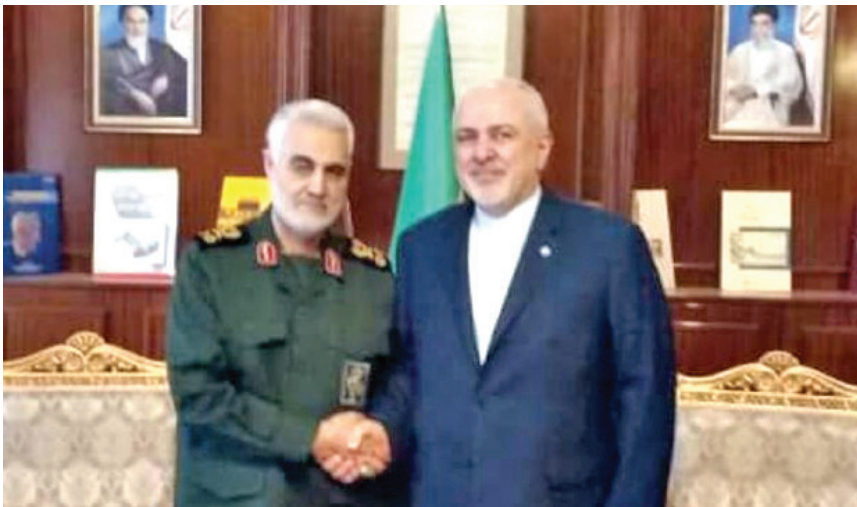
The internationally renowned commander further hailed Zarif’s efforts to protect Iran’s national interests, and congratulated him for being the subject of “U.S. wrath and hostility” for his association with the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

On July 31, the U.S. Treasury Department said it was imposing sanctions on Zarif for acting on behalf of Ayatollah Khamenei, who is also subject to recently imposed U.S. sanctions.

On Thursday, the Iranian Foreign Ministry condemned the U.S. move, describing the measure as a clear sign of the White House’s “frustration”.

**■ Rouhani advisor Tells Trump: No B-Team in Iran**

Hessameddin Ashena, a senior advisor to President Rouhani, tweeted a photo of the Soleimani-Zarif meeting, which was indicative of domestic unity against foreign enemy.



**“If you want a reconciliation you’d face Dr. Zarif, who is supported by General Soleimani, and if you want a feud you’d face General Soleimani, who is supported by Zarif,” Hessameddin Ashena said in a tweet.**

“If you want a reconciliation you’d face Dr. Zarif, who is supported by General Soleimani, and if you want a feud you’d face General Soleimani, who is supported by Zarif,” Ashena said in his tweet.

“The Iranian nation has one leader, one president and one general staff of the armed forces,” he said, adding, “There’s no B-Team in Iran. Rest assured.”

The term “B-Team” was pioneered by Zarif

to refer to White House national security advisor John Bolton, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and UAE Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed, all of whom, he suggested, were unified in their anti-Iran agenda.

However, he recently noted that bin Zayed and bin Salman are taking a separate path from that of the others, and therefore the B-Team is “shrinking”.

**■ ‘Zarif is concerned with substance’**

In another tweet on Tuesday, Ashena said, “FM @JZarif is concerned with substance. So when @realDonaldTrump invited him to the White House for a mere photo op, Zarif refused. Trump’s response was to sanction Zarif. There was a more prudent course that Trump could’ve taken. And he still has the opportunity to do so!”

Hostilities between Tehran and Washington have risen since May 2018 when U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew from a landmark 2015 deal on Iran’s nuclear program. Trump’s withdrawal from the nuclear deal has been attributed to his hatred towards Barack Obama, who was president when the deal was struck.

Since the withdrawal, the U.S. has reimposed punishing sanctions on Iran, including measures aimed at slashing its oil exports to zero, as part of a campaign aimed at pressuring Tehran to negotiate a new nuclear deal.

## Iran has overcome critical conditions, says Aref

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Mohammad Reza Aref, chairman of the pro-reform Hope faction in the parliament, says Iran has made its way through a critical era due to the wisdom of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, efforts of the authorities and patience of the people.

“The country’s conditions in the past couple of months could create crises for the country but with the wisdom of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, efforts of the authorities and patience of the people the country overcame the critical conditions,” Aref said, ISNA reported on Tuesday.

However, he said, the people are still grappling many problems and “all of us should resist this all-out economic war through unity, tactfulness, wisdom and patience.” U.S. President Donald Trump has imposed several rounds of sanctions on Iran, especially targeting its oil exports, after he withdrew the U.S. from the 2015 nuclear deal last year.



The U.S. sanctions have been described by Tehran as an act of “economic terrorism”.

The sanctions were imposed regardless of Iran’s full compliance with its commitments under the nuclear deal, also known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which was struck between Iran and six major powers, including the United States.

## Iranian police take part at Intl. Army Games

**TEHRAN (MNA)** — A team from the Islamic Republic of Iran Border Guard Command is taking part in the ‘Guardians of Order’ competition of the 2019 International Army Games, which kicked off on Tuesday morning in Russia.

In this round of the competition, which is held among the police units of the participating countries, the Iranian team is vying for the title with two teams from Russia and a team from Armenia.

The teams include eight members, two reserves and their supporting staff, and will contest at four different stages, namely, firing range, obstacle crossing, patrols race, and teams’ race.

The International Army Games, introduced by Russia, is underway August 3-17 in ten countries, including Russia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, China, Mongolia and Uzbekistan.

The annual competitions are aimed at defining the strongest military special-



ists from Russia and foreign countries in 32 military contests, with more than 6,000 participants expected, according to the event’s website.

Last year, the Iranian teams gained one gold, one silver and four bronze medals in various contests and stood at the fifth place after Russia, China, Kazakhstan and Belarus.

## Don’t underestimate Iran’s ability to fight a bloody war: historian

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Pouya Alimagham, a historian of the modern Middle East at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has warned President Donald Trump and his security team, including John Bolton and Mike Pompeo, not to underestimate Iran’s military capability to fight back heavily if it comes under attack by the United States.

Writing an article in the American Conservative published on August 6, Alimagham urges the Trump administration to learn a lesson from Iraq’s invasion of Iran in the 1980s and suggests that that Bolton and Pompeo “should consider this history and current reality objectively”.

Following is an excerpt of the article by the MIT historian: On July 29, President Trump tweeted: “Just remember, Iranians never won a war, but never lost a negotiation.” In just 12 words, Trump leveled a multi-layered, ahistorical insult against both his predecessor, Barack Obama, and Iran.

More importantly, the remarks betray a dangerously ignorant understanding of Iran that could result in another careless Middle East war of choice. The tweet invokes a cliché, colonial-era stereotype that Iranians, like other Middle Eastern peoples, are wily swindlers—rapacious, greedy bazaar merchants who aim to take advantage of honest and unsuspecting Westerners. Trump is hardly the first American leader to dabble in such denigrating stereotypes.

The president deployed the stereotype to imply that Iranians tricked a naïve president, Barack Obama, into signing a flawed nuclear deal. According to the world’s foremost nuclear security experts, however, the accord was ensuring Iran’s compliance—that is, until Trump subverted the agreement in 2018.

More importantly, Trump’s words underscore the idea that Iranians are cowardly and militarily ineffectual, but make up for such unflattering character flaws by swindling their foes during negotiations to achieve victory.

Iran’s last war, however, should dispel any notion of cowardice and military weakness—a history President Trump and anti-Iran hawks like National Security Adviser John Bolton must face with clear eyes if the United States is to avoid another needless, catastrophic war in the Middle East.

**■ Iran invades Iran**

In the aftermath of the Iranian Revolution in 1979, Iran faced one of its most vulnerable moments in modern times. During the revolutionary upheaval, many arms depots were raided and weapons were distributed to volunteers ready to deliver the monarchy its coup de grace.

After the watershed moment, the Revolutionary Council feared that, given the Anglo-American coup in 1953 through

the Iranian military, generals could not be trusted. The subsequent purge resulted in the decimation of the country’s military leadership.

Moreover, political infighting between revolutionary factions also led to unrest.

To make matters worse, militant students were fearful that the U.S. was planning to undermine the revolution through a coup—as it did the nationalist government of Mohammad Mossadeq in 1953—so they resolved to ward off any such attempts. Consequently, they seized the U.S. embassy and held its personnel hostage.

Capitalizing on Iran’s internal post-revolutionary chaos, military disarray, and international isolation, Iraqi strongman Saddam Hussein ordered the invasion of his neighboring rival on September 22, 1980. Shortly after, Iran’s internal power struggle between the various revolutionary factions erupted into open warfare.

So devastating was the power struggle that many of the leading personalities of the Iranian Revolution died in assassinations and bomb blasts, including Iran’s president and prime minister. Thus, the Iranian state was forced to fight on two battlefronts—internally against its challengers and externally against Iraqi invaders. The government did not, however, collapse under the weight of its domestic rivals and foreign aggressors. In fact, the war enlivened Charles Tilly’s timeless words: “War makes states.”

**■ Iranian resilience**

The Iranian state harnessed a powerful ideology that intertwined nationalism with Islamic revolutionary spirit in order to prompt Iranians to close rank behind it, marshaling hundreds of thousands of soldiers to liberate Iranian territory occupied by the Iraqi military. By May 24, 1982, and after tens of thousands of deaths, Iran freed the border city of Khorramshahr after a brutal two-year siege.

Soon after Khorramshahr’s liberation, the invading Iraqis were on the defensive, and Saddam’s wartime financiers, namely Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, offered Iran a multi-billion dollar reparations package to end the war. Iran’s leader refused, declaring that the only way the war would end was with Saddam Hussein’s collapse. He then spearheaded the conflict onto Iraqi soil for the first time. Time captured the moment by phrasing the counter-invasion as “Iran on the march.”

**■ Iraq was supported by great powers, Arabs**

Iraq enjoyed the support of the United States, Soviet Union, Great Britain, West Germany, France, and the Arab League—with the exception of Syria and Libya—and even used chemical weapons on Iranian troops. Yet Iran persisted

despite such horrible odds, and hundreds of thousands continued to go to the battlefield knowing it was possible that they, too, could fall victim to Iraq’s horrific chemical weapons.

The violence dragged on for eight bitter years, making it the longest conventional war of the 20th century—with an Iranian death toll estimated between half a million to a million. To put that staggering number into perspective, the conservative estimate exceeds the total American loss of life in World War II.

The war’s conclusion was a failure in Iranian eyes, as it did not end in Saddam Hussein’s overthrow and Iraqis and the region would continue to suffer at his hands. Two years later, he refused to demobilize his million-man army to a jobless future in a war-ravaged economy, and instead dispatched them across Iraq’s border again—this time to Kuwait.

Yet neither did Iran lose the war. In fact, it was the first conflict since the two 19th-century wars with Czarist Russia in which Iran did not lose any territory. Above all, the country survived a genocidal conflict—and survival was its own victory.

**■ Iran today**

Today, Iran’s population is more than double what it was in 1980—estimated at roughly 83 million. After lacking military support from abroad during the Iran-Iraq War, Iran now has extensive domestic weapons manufacturing capabilities. Also unlike 1980, it has more allies in the region. In other words, if Iran fought so stubbornly under such dire circumstances during the ‘80s, it will only fight more effectively today.

It has already proven itself militarily by coordinating the fight alongside the U.S. to defeat ISIS in Iraq while simultaneously working with Russia to help the Syrian government win an unrelenting civil war.

The Iranian military budget may be a fraction of America’s, but the Trump administration—especially anti-Iran hawks John Bolton and Mike Pompeo—should consider this history and current reality objectively.

If they don’t, if they continue to underestimate Iran the same way the Bush administration did with a far weaker Iraq in 2003, they risk another war of choice. Indeed, on the eve of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, Vice President Dick Cheney infamously stated: “I think it will go relatively quickly... weeks rather than months.”

To be sure, history has been unkind to his rosy assessment. Thinking a war with Iran will be over before it begins—or that it will, as Senator Tom Cotton boasted, not require more than “two strikes, the first strike and the last strike”—is the first step towards another needless, ruinous war.

## Iraq a source of pride for Arab world, Islam: Velayati

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Ali Akbar Velayati, a top foreign policy adviser to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, has said neighboring Iraq is a source of pride for the Arab world and Islam.

“We see Iraq as a neighbor and a friendly state. We are proud that there is a party like Harakat Hezbollah al-Nujaba in Iraq,” Velayati said in a meeting with Iraq’s al-Nujaba Movement spokesman Nasr ash-Shimmari on Monday.

“As long as Iran and Iraq stand by each other and there is the resistance movement, no power can withstand them,” he added, according to IRNA.



Velayati also praised the Iraqi prime minister’s efforts, along with those of the al-Nujaba Movement, to prevent U.S. and Israeli interference in Iraq’s internal affairs.

He stressed that Tehran and Baghdad will stand by one another to develop much better relations.

Shimmari, for his part, said that no country can use Iraq to attack Iran. “We will use all in our power to stand against such a conspiracy,” he said.

President Barham Salih has also said Iraq will under no circumstances allow the U.S. military to use its bases in the Arab country for an act of aggression against neighboring Iran.

In an interview back in June, Salih stressed that American troops had been invited to Iraq solely for helping Baghdad fight the Takfiri Daesh terrorist group.

It came after U.S. President Donald Trump’s comments in February, when he said he wanted to maintain a U.S. military presence in Iraq to “watch” Iran.

## Iran blasts Western exploitation of human rights notion

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Mohammad Javad Larijani, secretary of the High Council for Human Rights in Iran, said on Monday that the notion of human rights have become a tool in the hands of Western countries to use against other states.

Larijani said more than 66 items are listed as basic rights of individuals in the United Nations human rights charter but none of them are afforded to the Palestinians or the Yemenis, the Iran Press reported.

“Western countries, which often claim to champion human rights, don’t seem bothered at all,” he said.

He added, “The United Nations looks upon human rights



from a secular perspective, and encourages all countries to adopt them irrespective of their culture or religion.”

Referring to the approval and adoption of an Islamic Human rights charter in Cairo in 1990, Larijani said, “Over two billion Muslims wanted to have an Islamic human rights charter, but Western countries opposed this and a number of Arab countries, which are subservient to the West, abandoned their quest for an Islamic human rights charter.”

“We must end Western colonialism and domination in Islamic countries and revive the idea of Islamic human rights in the world,” he said, adding, “Islam is the standard-bearer of human rights. Western hegemony over some Islamic countries has ensured that these countries remain backward and underdeveloped.”

## ‘U.S. has been a complete loser in confrontations with IRGC’

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — The United States has been a complete loser in confronting the “pious, revolutionary, jihadi and zealous children of the Iranian nation” serving in the IRGC Navy, a senior IRGC commander said on Monday.

Rear Admiral Ali Fadavi, the deputy chief of the IRGC, made the remarks on an inspection visit to the IRGC Public Relations Department, Mehr reported.

Fadavi gave a brief history of confrontations between the IRGC and the U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf over the past forty years, pointing to the recent downing of an intruding U.S. drone by the IRGC as the latest confrontation in which the U.S. suffered a big loss.

The IRGC announced on June 20 that a U.S. spy drone that violated the Iranian territorial airspace in the early hours of the day was shot down by the IRGC Aerospace Force’s air defense unit near the Kooh-e-Mobarak region in the southern province of Hormozgan.

The intruding drone was shot by Iran’s homegrown air defense missile system “Khordad-3rd”.

In comments made a few hours after the incident, IRGC Chief Major General Hossein Salami said the shooting down of the U.S. drone had a straightforward message that any foreign intrusion into Iranian territories would draw a crushing response.



STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	255512.2
IFX	3424.28

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	47,112 rials
GBP	51,078 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: cbi.ir

COMMODITIES

Brent	\$59.82/b
WTI	\$54.85/b
OPEC Basket	\$61.75/b
Gold	\$1,465.85/oz
Silver	\$16.43/oz
Platinum	\$857.85/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

Tehran hosting 2 international exhibitions

**1 →** Presenting the capabilities of Iranian companies and their latest industrial and technological achievements, creating opportunities for domestic and foreign participants to get to know each other and exchange experiences in order to introduce the world's latest technological achievements into the country, as well as presenting domestic and foreign investment opportunities were reported to be some of the main goals of these exhibitions. PCCM 2019 is due to wrap up on August 8 while HOMEX is open till August 9.

Exploration operations begin on 300,000 square meters of lands: IMIDRO head

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN**– Head of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) announced that exploration operations have been started in 300,000 square meters of lands, IRIB reported.

Khodadad Gharibpour said the new exploration operation will be conducted by a consortium of IMIDRO and the country's major mining companies including Khuzestan Steel Company, Mobarakeh Steel Company, Golgohar Mining and Industrial Company, Chadormalu Mining and Industrial Company, and also Iran Minerals Production and Supply Company.

The official also announced that over 11 trillion rials (about



\$262 million) of investment has been made in IMIDRO projects through contribution of the private sector.

Gharibpour further stated that his organization supports the research projects required in the industry, saying that paying attention to the scientific subjects and modern technology through cooperation with the universities is seriously followed up by IMIDRO. Referring to the sanctions, the head of IMIDRO said, "We are combatting the sanctions at the lowest cost and we have witnessed growth in production of all minerals, except for aluminum, during the first four months of the current [Iranian calendar] year (March 21-July 22)".

■ Reviving small mines on agenda

Elsewhere in his remarks, Gharibpour said that reviving small mines is a top agenda of IMIDRO's activities in line with the policies of the "Resistance Economy".

Saying that these mines should be revived by the private sector, the official said that fortunately there is strong will in the government and private sector to materialize this objective.

Establishment of high-capacity industrial units recently in Iran indicates the need for the supply of more minerals as feedstock for these units. This reason besides some other ones such as sanctions on the country's economic sector have encouraged mining sector to revive the small mines which constitute 98 percent of mines in the country. Previously, due to lack of liquidity and infrastructure, exploration projects were not seen economically viable for these mines, but now they have come under the spotlight. And in this regard, mining sector has put a plan for reviving and renovating small mines on the agenda of its activity.

For materializing the objective of reviving small mines, different strategies are being suggested by the related officials.

Saying that many of the small mines can be revived through a processing operation, Vajihollah Ja'fari, the managing director of Iran Minerals Production and Supply Company, suggests that the investor provides a guarantee on purchase to investee (operator of mining project), or vice versa, the investee provides a guarantee on sales to the investor. Special facilities are also offered for reviving the small mines. Farid Dehqan, the managing director of Mining Investment and Activities Insurance Fund, has said that this fund is due to pay loans with the interest rate of lower than 18 percent to the projects for reviving small mines. He said reviving and renovating small mines is a national plan in line with the policies of "Resistance Economy".

Tajikistan eyes accessing open waters through Iran

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** – Tajikistan's **d e s k** ambassador to Iran, Nizamuddin Zahedi, has called for using Iranian ports to access open waters in a meeting with Iranian Transport Minister Mohammad Eslami on Monday, the Iranian ministry's portal announced.

As reported, following the Tajik ambassador remarks, Eslami voiced Iran's readiness to take necessary measures to make this possible, saying that Iran is fully determined to complete the Iran-Afghanistan-Tajikistan railway project.

In the meeting, Zahedi emphasized the need for development of economic cooperation between the two countries and noted that the recent visit of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani to Tajikistan has opened a new chapter in the two neighbors' relations.

He pointed to road and transport sectors as important areas for bilateral cooperation between Iran and Tajikistan, saying that since



Tajikistan's ambassador to Iran, Nizamuddin Zahedi (L), held talks with Iranian Transport Minister Mohammad Eslami on Monday in Tehran.

Tajikistan's independence, development of roads and transportation has been among the government's top priorities.

"Iran has provided much assistance to Tajikistan in this regard, including the Tajikistan Independence Tunnel Project," he

Industry ministry offering special incentives to foreign investors

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** – Iranian **d e s k** Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade has voiced the country's readiness for providing special incentives for participation of foreign investors in the country's various industrial and mining projects.

Speaking in a meeting with a handful of foreign investors active in the field of renewables on Monday, Reza Rahmani underlined the unique opportunities which Iran's industry and mining sectors are offering to foreign investors, saying "We will employ all legal incentives for an effective participation of all foreign investors who are active across the country."

The steel, copper and aluminum industries are rapidly expanding in Iran, Rahmani said, inviting all capable foreign investors to take part in the country's industrial and mining projects.

The minister also noted that in the mining sector alone, there is a capacity of over 50 billion tons of minerals in Iran ready to be extracted, adding that this is a good opportunity for participation of domestic and foreign investors. Rahmani finally mentioned the con-



tribution of foreign companies in Iran's renewable industry especially in solar power plants, saying that the industry would give Iran great opportunities for the export of generated electricity.

He also mentioned Iran's expert workforces, saying "one of the important advantages of our country in cooperation with foreign investors is the presence of capable Iranian workforce."

"In addition to the availability of abundant raw materials, Iran is well-prepared to supply all necessary equipment and conditions for the operation of foreign investors," he added.

Over \$47m paid for agricultural mechanization since March

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** – The head of **d e s k** Iran's Agricultural Mechanization Development Center said since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21) the government has funded two trillion rials (about \$47.6 million) of the allocated budget for agricultural mechanization.

"By the end of this year (March 19, 2020), up to 16 trillion rials (about \$380 million) of funding will go for the agricultural mechanization," ILNA quoted Kambiz Abbasi as saying. According to Abbasi, more than 82 trillion rials (about \$1.95 billion) of investment has been attracted in this area in the past six years.

"Nearly 70 trillion rials (about \$1.6 billion) of the mentioned investment has come from government credit lines allocated for this industry and the rest has been funded by private companies and farmers themselves," he explained.

In late May, Abbasi had announced that the government allocated 18 trillion rials (over \$428.5 million) for mechanization of the country's agricultural sectors including agriculture, horticulture, livestock, poultry, aquatic, and forests. According to the official, last year 15.4 trillion rials (over \$366 million) was allocated in this area.



The official noted that since over 95 percent of the technology and knowledge in this area is domestic, despite the U.S. sanctions most of the goals in the mechanization of various agriculture sectors will be achieved without any problems. In the past forty years, since the Islamic Revolution, Iran has witnessed a remarkable improvement in various sectors and the agriculture industry has been one of the areas in which the country has undergone huge development.

Implementing billions of dollars' worth of development, research and educational projects across the country is an indication of the significant improvements in this sector.

Trump's trade war with China backfires as U.S. stocks suffer worst day of year

By staff and agencies

Financial markets buckled after China escalated the trade war with the U.S., sending American stocks to the biggest drop this year and sparking a rally in global bonds. Gold surged with the yen.

More than \$700 billion was wiped from the value of U.S. equities on Monday, with the S&P 500 Index plunging 3 percent and all but 11 companies in the gauge trading lower. Losses in the Dow Jones Industrial Average surpassed 700 points as Apple and IBM slid at least 4 percent. The Cboe Volatility Index surged about 40 percent.

Investors are starting to grasp the potential for a protracted conflict between the world's two largest economies, with a Treasury-market recession indicator hitting the highest alert since 2007. As demand for haven assets spiked, gold made a run toward \$1,500 an ounce and the Japanese yen extended its rally. Major cryptocurrencies, increasingly seen as a refuge during distressed times, climbed as Bitcoin approached \$12,000. Fear gauges for the corporate bond market rose the most since March as traders rushed to hedge their positions.

"The trade war is now intensifying and it's possible that a currency war will start as well," said Chris Zaccarelli, chief investment officer for Independent Advisor Alliance. "Neither is good for the global economy and both will hurt equity markets."

People's Bank of China Governor Yi Gang said the nation won't use exchange rates as a tool in the escalating trade dispute. Yet for President Trump, the latest decline in the

yuan is "called 'currency manipulation'". The American leader also indicated he'd like the Federal Reserve to act to counter the Chinese action. Swaps show bets the central bank will ease by 100 basis points by December 2020, a quarter point more than what was priced in after last week's cut.

The trade war has been a consistent catalyst for market volatility and hopes of a resolution are now being sent even further out in the horizon, according to Mike Loewengart, vice president of investment strategy at E\*Trade Financial Corp.

On Tuesday, Bloomberg reported that the worst first half in a decade for Wall Street's trading desks is poised to hit year-end pay.

According to a report released Tuesday from compensation consultant Johnson Associates Inc, the report, bonuses for equities traders could fall as much as 15 percent from a year earlier, while their fixed-income counterparts could see a 10 percent drop.

It predicts total incentive compensation for investment and commercial banks will drop in 2019 -- the third time in the last four years -- on geopolitical and rate uncertainty.

"The economy is clearly slowing, so how fast is that going to happen I think is the big variable," Johnson said. "Is it going to slow at a nice, even pace or are we going to have a more dramatic decline?"

Analysts are warning about the dangers of an escalating trade war between U.S. and China as the Asian country moved to strike back at the U.S., hitting U.S. stocks and boosting Treasuries.

As reported by Wall Street Journal, on Monday, U.S. president Donald Trump renewed his attack on China, ar-



guing in a flurry of tweets that Beijing was using currency manipulation and unfair trading practices to undermine jobs and company profits in America.

"China is intent on continuing to receive the hundreds of billions of dollars they have been taking from the US with unfair trade practices and currency manipulation. So one-sided it should have been stopped many years ago!" he said.

The latest Twitter tirade from the White House came after China allowed its currency, the yuan, to devalue against the dollar on Monday against a background of increasing tension in the long-running trade dispute between the world's two largest economies.

The International Monetary Fund has warned that global economic growth is slowing as Washington and Beijing raise the stakes in the standoff. The U.S. Federal Reserve cut interest rates last week to bolster U.S. economic growth as concern rises over the health of the global economy.

Manufacturing woes weigh on EU economy



said the firm's chief business economist, Chris Williamson.

Germany is faring particularly badly with growth now at its lowest rate in more than six years, according to IHS Markit. Its purchasing managers' index slipped to 50.9 as a rapidly deteriorating manufacturing sector almost entirely offset robust growth in the

services sector.

■ The big Eurozone economies

Italy fared little better than Germany, despite growth edging up slightly to a four-month high. Among the big eurozone economies, France fared best, albeit at a subdued tick. Spain saw modest growth.

The overall pace of quarterly economic

growth appears to have slowed to just 0.1%, Williamson said. Figures released last week showed that the eurozone expansion in the second quarter halved to 0.2%, further raising expectations that the European Central Bank will inject another dose of stimulus into the economy at its next meeting on Sept. 12.

Analysts say the ECB could cut its deposit rate on money left overnight at the ECB by commercial from minus 0.4% to minus 0.5%. The unusual negative rate is in effect a penalty aimed at pushing banks to lend excess cash rather than letting it pile up at the ECB. ECB President Mario Draghi has also said the bank has asked staff to study a possible re-start to the bond-buying stimulus program, which pumps newly created money into the financial system. It was only last December that the ECB halted its nearly four-year bond-buying program, which pumped 2.6 trillion euros (\$2.9 trillion) into the eurozone economy in an attempt to revive the economy and get inflation up toward the bank's goal.



# 40 major gas industry projects to be inaugurated by March 2020

**E N E R G Y** TEHRAN – Managing director of National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) said 40 major projects in the country's gas industry are due to be inaugurated by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2020), IRNA reported.

"This year, more than 830 kilometers of pipelines will be set up while five turbo-charger units will also be installed as part of a program for developing the national gas network's pressure boosting stations," Hassan Montazer Torbati said.

The official stated that with these projects going operational, the national network's gas transmission capacity will increase significantly even during the cold season.

According to Torbati, the mentioned 830km of gas pipeline which is due to be laid this year, includes 15 separate projects across the country.

Implementation of telecommunication



networks in three new sections of the national gas network, are also among the major

projects which are going to go operational by the yearend.

The NIGC head further underlined his company's plans for increasing the national networks capacity in the upcoming years in line with the rapid expansion of the network in rural areas.

"The new projects are expected to increase the stability of the natural gas distribution network in the country in line with the plans for increasing gas production capacity in South Pars gas field," Torbati said.

Based on the Oil Ministry priority guidelines for current Iranian calendar year (March 2019-March 2020) which were announced by the Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh in early June, NIGC is asked to put few tasks on agenda as priorities of NIGC, among which connecting all the country's industrial zones and power plants to the network, supplying gas to one million new urban and rural households and finally gas supply to 7600 industrial units which consume liquefied gas can be mentioned.

## Oil prices rise, but U.S.-China trade tensions drag

Oil prices rose 1% on Tuesday as traders betting on falling prices bought back contracts to lock in profits after declines over the last three sessions due to escalating trade tensions between China and the United States.

According to reuters.com, Brent prices plunged more than 8% in the three sessions from their close on July 31, with U.S. President Donald Trump vowing to impose new tariffs on Chinese imports, and China making further moves against U.S. agricultural cargoes.

The United States also responded to a decline in the Chinese yuan on Monday by branding the country a currency manipulator.

Brent fell more than 3% on Monday as traders worried the ongoing trade dispute between the world's two biggest oil buyers would dent demand, helping to prompt Tuesday's short-covering.

International benchmark Brent crude futures LCOc1 had climbed 58 cents, or 1%, to \$60.39 a barrel by 0635 GMT on Tuesday after earlier dipping to their lowest since Jan.

14 at \$59.07.

West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude CLc1 futures rose 59 cents, or 1.1%, to \$55.28 per barrel.

"This is more likely a correction from oversold doom and gloom positions," said Stephen Innes, managing partner at VM Markets.

The United States accused Beijing of manipulating its currency after China let the yuan drop to its lowest in more than a decade.

Concerns that the U.S.-China trade conflict has entered a phase of retaliatory action was weighing on sentiments in the oil market, which for the moment is taking less notice of tensions in the Middle East, analysts said.

The People's Bank of China's firmer-than-expected yuan fixing on Tuesday, however, helped pull the currency away from the recent lows.

"There is large uncertainty surrounding demand ... there will be a lot of attention being paid to the commentary surrounding the trade war and its developments. There's talk



of this potentially causing recession in parts of Asia and Europe," said Harrison Fleming, research analyst at Frame Funds in Sydney.

## Oil industry faces imminent talent crisis

By Irina Slav

The oil and gas industry is facing a potential crisis, and this crisis could hit in just a few years: a workforce shortage.

The problem is not exactly new. Its roots are generational, but the first signs of trouble only manifested relatively recently and were understandably ignored amid the latest oil price crash that led to several hundred thousand job cuts. Now, it is rearing its head.

In January this year, a survey by energy recruitment company Airswift found almost half of respondents were "either quite worried or very worried about an impending talent crisis."

Only 30 percent of oil and gas professionals said that they were feeling "relaxed" about finding talent in the industry, the survey showed. A total of 40 percent see a skills crisis already unfolding in their geographical area, while another 28 percent of respondents see the crisis hitting them within the next five years.

One of the areas already facing a shortage is Europe, and most specifically the UK. A

recent article by Eddie Spence in Bloomberg looked into the reasons behind the shortage that could threaten the future of the industry. In short, these come down to worry about future job security and ethical considerations.

### Oil companies making discoveries

"People are worried that there aren't going to be as many jobs in the future, especially geology-related jobs because of a movement away from fossil fuels," Spence quoted an earth science graduate from the University of Oxford as saying. "With oil companies making fewer discoveries and not wanting to invest as much in exploration, they're worried in the future it's maybe not going to be viable," Robert Paver also said.

This lack of a belief in a long-term job security can be blamed on the oil price crash as well, which is when the UK oil and gas industry's problems with new talent began. Yet there is also the generational factor: millennials and digital natives are less willing to work for an industry they consider unethical.

"University petroleum courses are being asked to take petroleum out of their name,



because people think petroleum is the devil," the chair of the Petroleum Group of the UK's Geological Society, Lucy Williams, told Bloomberg's Spence. "I suspect some people who start on it in their education and then get turned away from it."

### Energy training

This could certainly have grave implications for an industry that would need to add 25,000 new workers over the next six years, according to energy training and standardization non-profit OPITO. The good

news is that 4,500 of these jobs will not be in traditional roles: they would be jobs in data science, automation, and new materials, all areas that don't feature the p-word.

Focusing on the technological aspects of the oil and gas industry is one approach the industry can utilize to attract new talent, the Airswift survey suggested. Another, according to a 2017 report by EY, is finding new ways to advertise jobs to new target audiences, including by borrowing successful practices from other industries such as pharmaceuticals.

A focus on the technological aspects of the industry is what the Baker Institute's Kenneth B Medlock III also believes to be the right path, as detailed in an article for Forbes.

Younger generations are more tech savvy than older ones, he said, and technology is a much larger part of their lives than it used to be for their parents. Oil and gas companies could do worse than focus on the applications of various technologies in their business to attract young employees and secure the next generation of energy industry workforce.

(Source: oilprice.com)

## Shell considers solar panels to power Singapore refinery site

Royal Dutch Shell <RDSA.L> is considering to install solar panels to power its Bukom refining site in Singapore, a company spokeswoman told Reuters on Tuesday. As per reuters.com, "we are exploring the potential of installing solar panels at our Pulau Bukom Manufacturing

Site," she said, without providing further details.

The Bukom manufacturing site includes a 500,000 barrels-per-day refinery, which is Shell's largest wholly owned refinery.

The oil and gas company has been exploring solar installations for its other sites in Singapore

as part of its plans to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon footprint.

Globally, Shell is installing solar photovoltaic panels on the roofs of seven lubricant plants in China, India, Italy, Singapore and Switzerland. It has so far identified three manufacturing

and logistics sites in Singapore's western regions of Tuas, Jurong Island and Pandan to install a solar photovoltaic (PV) power generation system, with a combined peak capacity of about three megawatts. The first and largest of the three Shell solar farms, which will go live next month, will have more than 6,500 panels placed above a lubricant plant in Tuas. The solar farm is expected to produce about 3,300 megawatt hours of renewable energy every year.



### The Tuas lubricant plant

The generated solar energy will be used to help power operations at the Tuas lubricants plant, the company said, adding that this can result in the avoidance of a third of the greenhouse gas emissions from the plant's electricity use which is equivalent to taking about 700 cars off the road for one year.

Installations at Shell's sites in Pandan and Jurong Island are expected to start in late 2019 and early 2020 respectively, the company said.

Shell said as part of its efforts to try low carbon solutions, the company has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Energy Market Authority of Singapore to jointly work on energy storage systems.

"This could include piloting commercially viable business models with innovative solutions that integrate storage systems and solar power to Shell's sites in Singapore," Shell said, declining to provide more details citing commercial confidentiality reasons.

## Russia's September ESPO Blend crude oil exports fall 7.69% on month

Russia's exports of medium sweet ESPO Blend crude oil are expected to total 2.4 million mt in September, down 7.69% from August, according to the latest monthly loading program.

ESPO Blend's September program runs from August 30 to October 1 and will comprise 24 cargoes – each 100,000 mt – and will average 537,455 b/d, according S&P Global Platts calculations using a conversion factor of 7.39.

State-owned Rosneft holds nine cargoes for September, and has sold three for loading over September 5-10, September 10-15 and September 20-25 via tender at premiums of \$5.50-\$5.80/b over Platts front-month Dubai crude assessments on an FOB basis.

Russia's Surgutneftegaz on the other hand holds seven cargoes for September loading, and has sold all of them via tender.

Two 100,000 mt cargoes for loading over May 31-June 6 and June 2-7 were sold to a Japanese trading house at premiums of around \$4.10/b to Platts front-month Dubai crude assessments, traders said.

Surgut sold 300,000 mt cargo of ESPO Blend crude via two separate tenders for loading over August 31-September 5, September 4-9 and September 8-14 at premiums of \$4.80-\$5.50 over Platts Dubai. Another four cargoes, each 100,000 mt in size, loading over September 12-16, September 15-19, September 21-25 and September 25-29 were sold to Chinese and Japanese buyers at premiums of around \$5.80-6/b over Dubai crude assessments, traders said.

Russia's Gazprom Neft holds one 100,000 mt cargo for loading over September 3-13 and sold it via tender at a premium of around \$5.5/b over Platts Dubai, while Switzerland-based Tenery holds seven 100,000 mt cargoes for September loading, according to the program.

Premiums for September-loading ESPO barrels traded in July reached close to nine-month highs supported by improved demand from China – the most favored destination for ESPO Blend because of healthy refining margins, trade sources said.

Chinese independent refiners have started to increase their run rates following the release of a new set of crude import allocations for 2019, market and industry sources said.

Chinese independent and other state-owned qualified refineries – 39 in all – have received a second batch of crude import allocations for 2019 totaling 56.37 million mt, sources told Platts in July.

The new allocations bring total quotas awarded so far this year to around 146.84 million mt for 45 refineries.

Refining margins for middle distillate grades were also high, further supporting premiums for ESPO Blend grade.

"The middle distillate margins look good. So any medium barrels are getting good value to China," a Singapore-based crude trading source said. The M2 Singapore gasoil crack margin against the Dubai swap averaged \$16.71/b in July, from an average of \$15.68/b in June, according to Platts data.

## Brazilian oil giant Petrobras exits renewables business

Brazil's state-controlled oil company Petrobras will scrap plans to invest in renewable energy projects, but says it will continue research and development projects in the field, according to chief executive Roberto Castello Branco.

According to rechargenews.com, "about renewables, we are investing in research and we will just not invest in operational assets because it is something that requires competencies different from the oil & gas business," he said at a press conference about the company's second-quarter results.

"If we decide to enter the game (of the renewable energy sector) we want to enter to win, we will not rush in without thinking just because other oil majors are doing so. We don't want to lose money," he told a press conference publicizing the company's second-quarter results.

Last December, shortly before Castello Branco was appointed by far-right president Jair Bolsonaro, Petrobras unveiled a long-term strategic plan for 2019-23 that included \$417m of renewables investment.

That same month, the company signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with French oil giant Total to jointly develop 500MW of onshore wind and PV in Brazil over five years. Petrobras had also signed an MOU with Norwegian oil company Equinor last September to jointly develop offshore wind projects in Brazilian waters.

When asked if these MOUs would continue, Castello Branco brushed them off as "mostly research and development".

He also cast doubts about renewable-energy investments by other oil majors.

"There is a lot of marketing and only a few real actions," he said. "There are people announcing that they are committed to 'better energies' and what have you, but if you look at the European companies, the ones that are leading announcements in renewables, the projections for the participation of renewables in their revenues in 2030 is of 1%, 1.5% tops."

### Oil and gas operations

Castello Branco, a University of Chicago-trained economist, former central bank director and boss of Rio de Janeiro-based free-market think tank IBMEC, was appointed to run Petrobras in January. His main mission is to divest from activities not related to upstream oil & gas operations – ie, exploration and production. The sale of domestic and international assets such as gas transport and stakes in productive oil fields has so far raised \$34.5b (\$9b) and was one of the main reasons for the company's record net profit of R\$18b in the second quarter.

Castello Branco's decision not to invest in renewables adds to recent declarations and actions by Bolsonaro government against investments that would help control global warming – and follows the firing of the head of the country's space research institute (INPE) after Bolsonaro himself said that INPE's report of a recent surge in Amazon forest deforestation was a lie.

After seven months as CEO, Castello Branco has revised the company's 2019 capex down from R\$16bn to R\$11b. Of the \$4.9bn invested so far this year, 83% has been in upstream activities and only 3% in "other activities", which includes power and renewables. But the company's \$84b long-term strategic plan for the 2019-23 period has yet to be revised.

Petrobras has interests in power generation, with 9.6GW of mostly fossil fuel and natural gas capacity, but it also has 104MW of operating wind power capacity, a 1MW experimental PV plant, and interests in biofuels.

Meanwhile, BP, Equinor and Total continue to invest in solar and onshore wind assets in Brazil.

Petrobras' total divestment plan is estimated at \$15b, of which \$13b is expected to be concluded this year.

First Announcement



1398.2856

### NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO. : 01-31-9580039

National Iranian South Oilfields Company (NISOC) intends to purchase the following goods

Items	Material Description	Quantity
34	PARTS FOR "RUSTON" GAS TURBINE. TYPE TA 1500 . TYPE TA 1750. TYPE TB 4000	456 NOS

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tender are requested to send their "intention To Participate" letter via the following fax number / Email address along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: WWW.nisoc.ir , not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 6,643 EURO or 313,413,017 RIAL, in favor of NISOC

Tender documents including the materials thorough technical specifications and Qualitative Assessment Forms can be accessed via: WWW.nisoc.ir-material procurement management tab

ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS D.D.P. NISOC'S WAREHOUSE, AGHA JARI, IRAN PAYMENT TERM IS C.O.D. SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL NO ADVANCE PAYMENT WILL BE PAID

**FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT**  
**Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex**  
**Kouy-e Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran**  
**Tel. No.: 061 341 24644 Fax No.: 061 3445 7437**  
 Public Relations [www.shana.ir](http://www.shana.ir) [www.nisoc.ir](http://www.nisoc.ir) <http://iets.mporg.ir>  
 تهران تایمز نویت اول ۹۸/۵/۱۶ نویت دوم ۹۸/۵/۱۹



## U.S. withdrawal from INF heightens danger of nNuclear apocalypse: Nobel Nominee

**TEHRAN (Tasnim)** – A prominent American author and five-time Nobel Peace Prize nominee described the Trump administration as “lawless” and said the US move to pull out of the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty “heightens the danger of nuclear apocalypse”.



August, 04, 2019 - 12:41 World Comments

US Withdrawal from INF Heightens Danger of Nuclear Apocalypse: Nobel Nominee

“Of course, this (the illegal withdrawal from the INF) heightens the danger of nuclear apocalypse, as does the White House’s illegal effort to transfer nuclear technology to Saudi Arabia without Congressional approval, which is required, and which it will not get because Saudi Arabia not only does not commit to best practices but openly threatens to build nukes,” David Swanson, who is based in Virginia, said in an interview with Tasnim.

“Some US nukes are 1,000 times what was used to vaporize Japanese populations,” he said, adding, “Each submarine can launch 5,000 times what was dropped on Hiroshima. This issue is not secondary, minor, or peripheral. Wake up, people!”

David Swanson is an author, activist, journalist, and radio host. He is executive director of WorldBeyondWar.org and campaign coordinator for RootsAction.org. Swanson’s books include War Is A Lie and When the World Outlawed War. He blogs at DavidSwanson.org and WarIsACrime.org. He hosts Talk Nation Radio. He is a 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 Nobel Peace Prize Nominee. Swanson was awarded the 2018 Peace Prize by the US Peace Memorial Foundation.

■ The US on Friday formally withdrew from the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty with Russia. Washington said last year it would withdraw from the INF, accusing Russia of failing to comply with it. Moscow denies it has violated the treaty and says the Trump administration is pulling out because it wants to pursue a new arms race. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres also expressed concerns over the expiration of the INF, saying, “The world will lose an invaluable brake on nuclear war”. “This will likely heighten, not reduce, the threat posed by ballistic missiles,” he said. What is your assessment of the developments? How do you think about the US claims?

A: My understanding from the analysis by Timmon Wallis is that allegations like those of the US toward Russia are to be dealt with through the terms of the treaty and that to end the treaty requires an extraordinary event of a sort that has not occurred. Moreover, it was the United States who insisted on the treaty being that difficult to legally exit. Now the United States has illegally exited it. Under the US Constitution, a treaty is the supreme law of the land and cannot be violated. Were this a treaty that a party could simply withdraw from (which it isn’t), the party doing the withdrawing would have to include the US Congress. The US House of Representatives’ version of the National Defense Authorization Act includes a provision forbidding the US to violate the treaty (whether or not Trump claims to have withdrawn from it), but that still has to get passed the Senate and the President and then be complied with by a lawless administration that the Congressional leadership has essentially promised not to impeach no matter what. Of course, this heightens the danger of nuclear apocalypse, as does the White House’s illegal effort to transfer nuclear technology to Saudi Arabia without Congressional approval, which is required, and which it will not get because Saudi Arabia not only does not commit to best practices but openly threatens to build nukes.

■ The US president has said he wants a new nuclear pact to be signed by both Russia and China. Do you think that countries like China would join the nuclear treaty that Trump is seeking to reach?

A: Would you? What would be the point of ratifying a treaty with a partner that violates treaties at its whim? The new pact that every nation needs to join is the new treaty banning all nuclear weapons.

■ With the expiration of the treaty, do not you think that the world order would be disrupted? In that case, who would be to blame?

A: Every nuclear government, beginning with the US. Every nuclear profiteer. Every government that has not ratified the nuclear ban. And every person who is not engaged in the struggle to ban nuclear weapons. This week, 74 years ago, the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were each hit with a single nuclear bomb that had the power of a third to a half of what NPR calls a low-yield or “usable” weapon. By NPR, I mean both the Nuclear Posture Review and National Public Radio, both the US government and what many people dangerously think of as a free press. These so-called usable nukes are two to three times the size of what destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the US military’s plans involve using multiple nukes at once. But they really are tiny compared to other nuclear weapons that the United States and other nations have ready just in case some unfortunate scenario makes completely annihilating ours and other species the wisest course of action. Some US nukes are 1,000 times what was used to vaporize Japanese populations. Each submarine can launch 5,000 times what was dropped on Hiroshima. This issue is not secondary, minor, or peripheral. Wake up, people!

# Trump in shock!

## The new American-Chinese economic war

By Saeed Sobhani

**TEHRAN** — U.S.-China relations worsened during Trump’s presidency. Of course, there were disagreements between Beijing and Washington over both security and cyber-crimes during the presidency of Barack Obama, but the emergence of trade and economic disputes in bilateral relations should be analyzed “beyond a simple controversy”. According to evidences in the field of International Trade and Economics, the Chinese have owned about \$ 1 trillion of U.S. foreign debt. China has also been the largest purchaser of U.S. Treasury auctions over the past few years, and it is not unlikely that people like Hillary Clinton- the Democrat candidate in the 2016 presidential election- have warned against trade war with China. Many American economists refer to China as “America’s banker.” In such a situation, the U.S. full-fledged economic opposition with Beijing can be interpreted as a commercial and economic suicide.

Finally, China and the United States are both likely to use methods in this economic conflict, which contradicts their economic red lines in recent years.

In such a situation, we’ll witness lots of ups and downs in the economic and commercial structure of the two countries. Eventually, the controversy between the two players won’t be limited to Washington and Beijing, and their business partners will, willingly or unwillingly, enter their war. Here’s a look at some news and analysis on the US-China trade war:

Trump’s China Shock

Paul Krugman wrote in New York Times that I didn’t know that the Dow was going to drop 750 points, so my latest column is El Paso-related. Probably the right choice anyway, because US-China is moving so fast that anything in the print paper would be out of date. But it does look as if I should try to explain (a) what I think is happening (b) why the markets are going so nuts.

By the way, given Mnuchin’s declaration just a few minutes ago that China is a currency manipulator, tomorrow’s market action should be ... interesting. So here’s the thing: neither Trump’s tariff announcement last week nor, especially, the depreciation of China’s currency today should objectively be that big a deal. Trump slapped 10 percent tariffs on \$200 billion of Chinese exports, which is a tax hike of 0.1 percent of US GDP and 0.15 percent of Chinese GDP. In response, China let its currency drop by about 2 percent. For comparison, the British pound has dropped around 9 percent since May, when it became clear that a no-deal Brexit was likely.

So why are these smallish numbers such a big deal? Mostly because we’ve learned things about the protagonists in this trade conflict, things that make a bigger, longer trade war seem a lot more likely than it did even a few days ago.

First, Trump really is a Tariff Man. Some naïve souls may still have been hoping that he would learn something from the failure of his trade policy so far.

More sensible people hoped that he might do what he did with NAFTA: reach a new deal basically the same as the old deal, proclaim that it was totally different, and claim a great victory.

But no: it’s pretty clear now that he refuses to give up on his belief that trade wars are good, and easy to win; his plan is to continue the beatings until morale improves. What may have looked like temporary tariffs designed to win concessions now look like permanent features of the world economy, with the level of tariffs and the range of countries facing them likely to expand over time. Second, China is clearly signaling that it’s not Canada or Mexico: it’s too big and too proud to submit to what it considers bullying. That slide in the renminbi wasn’t a concrete policy measure as much as a way of saying to Trump, “talk to the hand” (no doubt there’s a good Chinese expression along these lines.)

Incidentally — or maybe it’s not so incidental — while there are many valid reasons to criticize Chinese policy, currency manipulation isn’t one of them. China was a major currency manipulator 7 or 8 years ago, but these days if anything it’s supporting its currency above the level it would be at if it were freely floating. And think for a minute about what would happen to a country with an unmanipulated currency, if one of its major export markets suddenly slapped major tariffs on many of its goods. You’d surely expect to see that country’s currency depreciate, just as Britain’s has with the prospect of lost market access due to Brexit.

In other words, the Trump administration in its wisdom has managed to accuse the Chinese of the one economic crime of which they happen to be innocent. Oh, and what are we going to do to punish them for this crime? Put tariffs on their exports? Um, we’ve already done that.



So how does this all end? I have no idea. More important, neither does anyone else. It looks to me as if both Trump and Xi have now staked their reputations on hanging tough. And the thing is, it’s hard to see what would make either side give in (or even to know what giving in might mean.)

At this rate, we may have to wait for a new president to clean up this mess, if she can.

Trump accuses China of a ‘major violation’ after its currency breaches a key level. Donald Trump lashed out at China over what he called a “major violation” on Monday after the nation allowed its currency to weaken below a key threshold against the dollar, marking the latest point of contention in an escalating trade dispute between the world’s two largest economies.

The Chinese yuan early Monday sank past the psychologically important point of 7 to the dollar for the first time in more than a decade, a development Trump saw as an act of economic retaliation against his administration.

“China dropped the price of their currency to an almost a historic low,” the president wrote on Twitter.

“It’s called ‘currency manipulation.’ Are you listening Federal Reserve? This is a major violation which will greatly weaken China over time!”

A less valuable yuan can counteract American tariffs by making China’s exports cheaper. Frustrated with the state of trade negotiations between the two sides, Trump on Thursday said he would expand tariffs to virtually all imports from China on September 1.

American officials have long warned China that weakening its currency would undercut American producers.

The Treasury Department found in May that no country met the criteria to be labeled a currency manipulator but said it was closely monitoring China and eight other trading partners for such actions.

The weakening yuan is likely to cast another layer of uncertainty on US-China trade talks, which aren’t set to resume in person until after Trump’s proposed escalation is to take effect. In May, the Commerce Department said it planned to expand punitive measures for any country found to unfairly wield its currency in the global market. But Trump has suggested in recent months that the US artificially weaken the dollar, a move that would be similarly precluded by international agreements.

The White House and the Treasury Department did not respond to emails requesting comment.

Trump’s trade war with China is starting to get out of hand

Also CNN reported that The US-China trade war has always been serious. Now it’s starting to get scary. China allowed its currency to drop sharply on Monday to the weakest level in more than a decade. And China announced its companies have halted purchases of American agricultural goods.

The Trump administration escalated tensions even further late Monday by taking the historic step of labeling China a currency manipulator. This comes after US President Donald Trump vowed last week to impose tariffs for the first time on a wide swath of US consumer goods from China.

The trade conflict has reached a new level of seriousness that will be difficult to reverse. The risk is that the trade war is approaching the point at which it causes a severe economic slowdown or even a recession.

By digging into their positions, both

the United States and China increase the risk of breaking an economy that is already starting to crack. Each round of escalation gets them closer to a recession — and to a point of no return.

“We have a trade situation that is going off the rails,” Peter Boockvar, chief investment officer at Bleakley Advisory Group, wrote in a note to clients on Monday. “The policy of using tariffs as a tool to address our legitimate beefs with the Chinese has failed miserably.”

David Kotok, co-founder and chief investment officer of investment firm Cumberland Advisors, told CNN Business that “this stupid tariff war we’re having” is raising the risk of a recession.

“Things are escalating and the escalation is not over,” Kotok said.

The sense that the trade war has entered a new and more dangerous phase was confirmed when the US Treasury Department officially designated China as a currency manipulator.

The news prompted further selling in global financial markets and raised speculation that China could take even more aggressive steps to devalue its currency.

“It makes things worse,” said Ian Winer, advisory board member at Drexel Hamilton. “If people thought they kept the yuan from weakening to avoid being labeled a currency manipulator, that just went out the window.”

Investors around the world are spooked. The Dow plunged 767 points, or 2.9%, on Monday. The Nasdaq tumbled 3.5%, suffering its longest daily losing streak since just before Trump’s 2016 election. The VIX (VIX) volatility index spiked 40% to a seven-month high.

Investors piled into government bonds, driving the 10-year Treasury yield to 1.75%, the lowest level in nearly three years.

“The escalating US-China trade war will certainly be bad for the US economy. How bad is almost impossible to calculate,” said Art Hogan, chief market strategist at National Securities Corporation. Hogan said that the worse the trade war gets, the faster a recession could arrive in the United States. “Historically, recessions occur in reaction to a monetary policy mistake. This is the first time we may have to deal with a trade policy miscalculation,” he said.

Many investors and business executives broadly agree with the Trump administration’s desire to get China to play fair on trade. Beijing’s non-tariff trade barriers, including forced technology transfers, have long hurt American businesses.

However, there is growing concern about Trump’s use of tariffs as a way of getting concessions.

Trump blindsided Wall Street last week by announcing plans to impose a 10% tariff on \$300 billion of US imports from China.

The new tariffs, which are scheduled to go into effect on September 1, would target everything from apparel and footwear to electronics such as smartphones. More than previous rounds of tariffs that shielded finished goods, these levies would hit US households, the strength of the American economy.

“If you inject uncertainty during back-to-school and holiday shopping, that will have a drag on the economy,” Hogan said.

Retail and tech stocks have been hit especially hard by the latest tariff threat. Best Buy (BBY) alone has plunged nearly 15% since Wednesday’s close.

The Chamber of Commerce warned last week that these new tariffs “will only inflict greater pain on American businesses,

farmers, workers and consumers, and undermine an otherwise strong US economy.”

America’s farmers won’t get relief any time soon.

China’s Commerce Ministry confirmed that Chinese companies have halted purchases of US agricultural products.

The trade war has forced Washington to come to the rescue of farmers with billions of dollars in aid.

Delinquencies on agriculture loans have tripled since mid-2015 to eight-year highs, according to the St. Louis Federal Reserve Bank.

FDIC Chairman Jelena McWilliams told CNN Business last week that the agency is “monitoring very closely” how banks in farm states are being impacted by the trade war.

“We may experience more delinquencies, which then become very difficult for those communities and our ag sector,” McWilliams said.

China retaliated on Monday by allowing the yuan to move above the psychologically important ratio of 7 to 1 against the US dollar. The People’s Bank of China blamed the weakness on “trade protectionism and new tariffs on China.”

“China retaliates: on a scale of 1-10, it’s an 11,” Chris Krueger, senior policy analyst at the Cowen Washington Research Group, wrote in a note to clients.

Hours later, Trump responded on Twitter, calling the move “currency manipulation” and a “major violation which will greatly weaken China over time.”

The fact that China decided not to defend its currency further suggests Beijing is digging in for a longer trade war. Officials are no longer trying to avoid Trump’s currency wrath.

“China is taking a darker and more cynical view of Trump’s objectives with China,” said Michael Hirson, Eurasia Group’s practice head of China and Northeast Asia. “They’re becoming increasingly pessimistic about their ability to steer Trump away from further escalation.”

China’s currency move raised the specter of a currency war, where major countries race to devalue their respective currencies. “It’s the currency risk that is the most volatile, hardest to see and the fastest reacting,” said Kotok. “That’s the left hook that can knock out the boxer.”

Nervous investors flocked to gold, driving the precious metal above \$1,460 an ounce for the first time since May 2013.

However, Hirson said China is “not weaponizing its currency.” Rather, he argued officials in Beijing are trying to take ownership for a decision they would have needed to make eventually.

And there are powerful incentives preventing China from allowing its currency to sharply devalue.

Such a move would panic investors, destabilize financial markets and trigger a wave of foreign capital that Beijing has been desperately trying to attract.

The problem is that this trade war escalation is occurring against a backdrop of cracks in the global economy.

China’s growth has already slowed.

Manufacturing surveys around the world have tumbled. US factory activity in July decelerated to the weakest level in nearly three years. A closely watched gauge of US service sector activity declined on Monday to a level unseen since August 2016.

And global central banks don’t have much room to offset economic turmoil.

Borrowing costs are already extremely cheap. Lowering them further won’t directly offset trade uncertainty.

Europe and Japan’s central banks still have negative interest rates. The Federal Reserve has already done a sudden reversal from hawkish to dovish. Last week, the Fed cut interest rates for the first time in nearly 11 years.

“Central banks are running out of bullets,” said Kotok. That’s why Morgan Stanley on Monday said it has “high conviction” US stocks will experience a 10% correction before the end of September. The S&P 500 is already about halfway there.

The trade war and Fed developments have opened markets up to a “meaningful downside based on the deteriorating fundamentals that can no longer be ignored,” Michael Wilson, Morgan Stanley’s chief US equity strategist, wrote in a note to clients.

Of course, the market pain could force Washington and Beijing to reverse course.

Trump closely follows financial markets and does not want to get blamed for ending the longest bull market in American history.

But Hirson suggested China and the United States remain stuck in an escalatory feedback loop.

“The more Trump increases pressure on China,” he said, “the more difficult it becomes for the leadership there to back down because that makes it look like they are negotiating at gunpoint.”

In other words, the trade war looks likely to get worse before it gets better.



# INSTEX : Truth or promise?

**1 →** The head of the central bank of Iran then described for Europe to at least begin work on exporting essential commodities to Iran, but the Europeans even postponed the request, stating in their plan that this would be forthcoming and the request will also be considered.

## 2- SPV Structure

Federica Maria Mogherini, the former EU's foreign policy chief, announced the launch of a SPV (Special Purpose Vehicle for Trade with Iran) in November last year, as the English name implies, to create a channel for specific purposes meant to provide essential goods from the European Union to Iran, the European system was set for a few weeks to be established as a special mechanism for maintaining trade relations with Iran.

Federica Mogherini also said that a special mechanism for economic cooperation with Iran would be prepared before November 2018. She meant the SPV, which aims to continue EU trade cooperation with Iran even with US sanctions. If the SPV were realized, it would be beneficial to Iran because the US sanctions would be ineffective to some extent depending on what the SPV considered, and this would be an economic and political gain for Iranian foreign policy. According to news coming from Europe, SPV was supposed to operate as a company to liquidate trade with Iran out of the ordinary financial circles. For example, in this structure Iran could sell oil to Italy and provide the necessary credit and liquidity to pay a French company that has given Iran goods or services and exchange money between two European companies.

Naturally, the US opposed the creation of the system, lobbied Europe, and none of these promises came true.

The month of November was over, and then, by the end of the year, the second date was announced for launching the channel, but again the Europeans were not loyal to their words.

## 3- ISTE Design

Finally, the Europeans, announced the launch of another financial mechanism that was much more restrictive than the SPV system for trading with Iran, with a company called INSTEX hosted by France, German management and British oversight. Iran was required to register such a company to cooperate with INSTEX in Iran. The economic consortium would be headed by Per Fischer, a former director of the COMMERZ Bank of Germany. INSTEX is said to cover trade in food, medicine and medical equipment, according to Europeans words.

Within a month of the news, Iran had set up a company like INSTEX called SATEMA. SATMA stands for Trade and Financing Mechanism. In fact, the name indicates that Iran expected an SPV-like process. Some still consider INSTEX is a continuation of the SPV or even its running arm, but it's not true. The following are reasons for this claim.

INSTEX, the trade protection instrument, is a payment mechanism that allows European companies to trade with Iran without being exposed to U.S. sanctions. British former Foreign Minister Jeremy Hunt has said that INSTEX is a clear and practical step that shows Europe is firmly aligned with the Iran-Iran Nuclear Agreement until it fully adheres to the agreement!

While the SPV is designed to protect European companies from the consequences of sanctions against Iran, the Europeans said in a statement that third parties could



also be connected to the system.

In the long run, we intend to open INSTEX to third countries that want to trade with Iran, and the three European countries will continue to work together to achieve this goal, the statement said. Another difference is that the Europeans have insisted that Iran must adopt the FATF mechanism to implement INSTEX. It is seen as an obligation beyond the bound the JCPA.

The United States, however, did not accept a system that pay money to Iran's account or have a wide range of goods exported to Iran, and even threatened European companies involved in these acts for the sanctions of United States. The Europeans further argued that without money pay in the INSTEX, Oil for essential goods is considered and in the first phase of INSTEX export to Iran of the mentioned goods will be done:

A variety of agricultural products such as soybeans and corn, 2- Food products, 3- Fruits and vegetables, 4- Agricultural pesticides, Fertilizers and seeds, 5- Animal feed including meal and forage, 6- Pulp and raw materials, 7- Materials Primary medicines, 8- Types of general medicines and drugs for specific diseases, 9- Types of medical and hospital equipment, 10- Advanced surgical instruments and operating rooms, 12- Advanced medical equipment such as radiotherapy and radiation therapy, - Various types of human and animal vaccines, etc.

## 4- Russia's Reaction to INSTEX

The Russian Foreign Ministry had earlier announced that Moscow had urged all countries not to buy Iranian energy carriers, thus backing Iran's positions. Russian's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that Russia wants to speed up implementation of the INSTEX mechanism, and also hope that all countries trading with Iran will use it. The above statement demonstrates Russia's determination to enter the INSTEX if implemented, which would itself be an encouragement for governments that partially agree with Russia, China for instance.

## 5- Suspension of the INSTEX

In fact, however, there is no news of INSTEX being implemented, and Europeans said that they should wait and these actions are timely.

For example, chief Federica Mogherini, indicated that INSTEX's long-term goal, is opening of economic channels for third countries interested in doing business with Iran, and three European countries still working to achieve that goal.

The United States views INSTEX as an illegal campaign for money laundering and sanctions relief, and strongly opposes it.

Even if INSTEX only supplies essential supplies to Iran, it has still faced opposition from the United States, this view of America, have indicated that Trump's decision is extreme pressure to Iran, but the United States' behavior is preventing Iran from reaching essential needs that are in opposition to natural rights and fundamental human rights.

But what really hampers the European promise of such mechanisms is that we know that America's pressure plays an important role on the one hand, and on the other hand European companies do not want to be subject to US sanctions and other commitments, including compliance with FATF regulations. Iran opposed to delay, and Iran repeatedly stated that the US withdrawal and delay for INSTEX cause, Iran reduce its commitment to the JCPA, which was opposed by Europeans.

## 6- Analyzing Recent Developments

"We are consulting to facilitate oil exchange through INSEX," the EU ambassador in Russia said in an interview.

"When we talk about INSEX (the instrument of European trade exchange with Iran), we have to start with the current political developments about JCPA," said Markus Ederer, EU ambassador in Russia in an interview with TASS news agency. International Atomic Energy International reported July 8, for the first time since its implementation of JCPA, that Iran is enriching uranium to more than 3.67%, and the EU is very concerned about this development and has called Iran not to take further steps. It is important for European countries.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, after exiting the United States, for a year, put "strategic patience" on its agenda and gave the parties this time, in particular the European countries, promised to compensate US exit for Iran and fulfilling their obligations under the nuclear agreement. He continued, as the three founding countries of INSTEX have stated, and I believe that legal exchanges of oil for drugs, medical goods and nutrition products under the INSTEX mechanism will be implemented soon.

Following the EU foreign ministers' last meeting on July 7, Federica Mogherini, said shareholders were consulting on facilitating trade of other goods, in INSTEX.

The EU ambassador in Russia at that time stated "there has been no new development in the participation of third countries in INSTEX, but it was clear from the beginning that third countries would have access to it."

In analyzing recent events, first of all, it

must be said that Marcus Eder's prediction of third countries' entry into INSTEX was correct. In the green continent itself, a country like Sweden has expressed interest in joining the INSTEX mechanism. Sweden's ambassador to Russia, Peter Ericson, has said his country is ready to join the INSTEX system, according to AL-MAYADEEN news.

Russia and China have also expressed interest in working with the INSTEX system. Clearly, getting into INSTEX will be very beneficial not only to the three founding countries of INSTEX, but also to third parties. However, the analysis of the above discussion should be noted that Marcus Eder's statement that there was no change in third party access to INSTEX can be criticized, because at that time Russia had indicated its willingness to cooperate with INSTEX.

Secondly, it should be noted that the INSTEX would not move toward petroleum for essential goods, such as food and medicine, because This implies that Iran has violated international obligations and, like Iraq at the time, is bearing the brunt of its commitments and that access to medicine and medicine is only for human rights respect for Iran. Iran fulfilled its international obligations, including the IAEA Statute obligations, and Iran's move to increase its enrichment has been a response to US exit of JCPOA and failure of INSTEX.

## 7- Result

As we know, any international treaty can continue its life on the world stage as long as its parties remain in the treaty and fulfill their obligations. If one party withdraws from the treaty or fails to fulfill its obligations, there is a right for the other party to withdraw from the treaty, suspend its obligations or refuse to fulfill its obligations, or, in accordance with the mechanisms provided for, in the treaty or international law, the obligation of the other government to be demanded. Iran was also said to have exercised its reciprocal right after the United States leave JCPOA and after a year of failure to fulfill Europeans promises, in a statement issued by the Supreme National Security Council of Iran to the parties, in May 9 statement. It warned that Iran will reduce its obligations under the agreement if they fail to fulfill their obligations in the oil and banking sector within 60 days.

Iran has reduced its two obligations under the nuclear pact, and has stated it will not abide by the restrictions contained in the Brokerage Agreements on 300-kg ceiling of uranium reserves and the 3.67 percent of enrichment level. As stated above, with the implementation of INSTEX Iran will abide by its obligations under the Nuclear Agreements, and will be commercially beneficial to INSTEX's third parties.

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## China won't play victim role amid U.S. tariff hikes

**GLOBALTIMES** — China announced it was considering levying additional temporary tariffs on US agricultural imports on all agreements made after August 3. Meanwhile, Chinese companies have suspended purchasing US agricultural products. The decision was made following the US move to slap an additional 10 percent in tariffs on \$300 billion worth of Chinese goods last week.

The announcement from Beijing send a clear message to Washington that their latest action was unacceptable, and that China will not hesitate to take necessary countermeasures should the US follow through on the tariff hikes.

The US government claimed the added tariffs would be implemented on September 1, as thorough negotiations were scheduled with both delegations in August. It is precisely this unilateral reversal strategy by the US that has had a severe impact on trade negotiations.

US stocks plummeted last Thursday after the US government announced it would continue its trade war with China. On Monday, US stocks fell again at the opening bell over trade tension concerns between the two economic powers. The weak stock market performance served as an indication that the trade war has spared no mercy for the US economy. The only outcome is a lose-lose scenario and falls by the basic fundamentals of economics, and the US government will not be an exception to this principle.

China would like to reach a trade agreement, but this does not mean it is timid. Such a goal is centered on the goodwill and the inherent responsibility that it holds to protect the well-being of others through continuous cooperation with the US. Yet at the same time, when Washington increases tariffs, China will take necessary countermeasures, which should come as no surprise. China has always utilized a rational approach when responding by purposefully limiting its power. Under the latest circumstances, China suspended US agricultural purchases. The move is a typical tit-for-tat action.

If the US incurred an enormous deficit from trade with China, then large-scale Sino-US economic and trade cooperation could not exist. Previous White House administrations were not foolish, neither were US importers and exporters. However, tightening the screws on bilateral trade is the worst possible solution. American farmers have adequate production facilities and plenty of land, but more importantly, they have China with its expanding market demand. Unfortunately, the Trump administration's China watchdog group is not on the right track. The US should take greater responsibility for the development of Sino-US trade.

The US government needs to stop fantasizing about a China surrender brought on by extreme pressure. To establish a trade relationship conducive for a win-win result, both sides must consider each other's concerns when conducting negotiations in a frank and honest manner.

Unilateralism has been a total strategy failure. How could something like that become a "rule" between China and the US? It would only create further losses for both sides and prevent them from reaching any mutual agreements.

It is misleading and naive for the US to downplay its losses from the trade war while praising China's sufferings. It is also a shame how the US government deceives its people. Calculating the exact amount of damages incurred by both sides would be impossible. It will ultimately test economic endurance and the strength of both political systems. China's stamina and endurance will allow the country to prevail throughout the trade war.

After a few rounds of trade negotiations, both sides must have gotten to know each other well. They shouldn't rely on a miracle or an ace in the hole to emerge as a winner, and they need to understand that pursuing a complete victory is unreasonable. Otherwise, it would be a waste of time and public sentiment. Furthermore, US uncertainty is harmful to potential investors.

It seems that many acres of US farmland will not be put to use. Challenging times lie ahead for at least a few Chinese and US businesses. It will depend on the US whether they want to resolve deadlocked trade negotiations before Sino-US relations incur further damage. Although Washington imposed new tariffs, the aim was not to sabotage trade relations. However, Trump's capricious administration could push things too far, which would lead to severe consequences the US never anticipated.

When the Chinese government announced it would suspend purchases of US agricultural products, the word "suspend" was used to indicate how there is room for both parties to reach a solution. It also means the suspension will last until the US adopts a better attitude. This is one of the many soft tools that China has. Although not aggressive, China will stand firm as a nail on their position. The US, now more than ever, should reassess its China strategy.

## White nationalism feeds off failed globalization adaptation

By Yu Jincui

**GLOBALTIMES** —Atrocity by white supremacist extremists is emerging as arguably the premier domestic-terrorist threat in an increasing number of Western countries. It's no exaggeration to say white nationalist violence has become a global terror threat.

The Guardian reported Sunday, in the wake of a deadly shooting at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas, that more than 175 people around the world have been killed in the past eight years in at least 16 high-profile attacks motivated by white supremacists. The targets of these attacks include Muslim worshippers, people of color, and left-wing politicians and activists in the US, the UK and other Western countries. Many of the white perpetrators or suspects have a strong hatred for immigrants and refugees.

Why is white nationalism surging? What has driven the rising hostility and violence toward those deemed "outsiders" - whether because of their religion, skin color or national origin? Indeed, white nationalism has a long history in Western countries. However, recent years have seen more blame placed on immigrants, people of color and refugees for conundrums of modern life, including growing economic instability, rising inequality and industrial decay. This has added more hostility and intolerance to increasingly multicultural societies like the US.

In the era of globalization, the international economic landscape has been profoundly changed with new emerging economies beginning to dominate the global economy. The living standards of low-class whites have been declining in recent years, which is the fault of improper domestic policies in dealing with new

economic situations. However, some Westerners simply blame globalization and waves of immigrants. The fundamental reason for the resurgence in white nationalism is that they have failed to adapt to the changing global situation and face up to the domestic problems caused by those changes.

The internet and social media have played an important role in allowing white nationalists to spread hate and xenophobic views. Social media is criticized for serving as a conduit for hate speech and as a recruitment tool for white supremacist groups, but there is no effective way to curb it.

The swelling scourge of white nationalism and terrorism to further it have become obvious. Worryingly, there is still no sign that it will slow down. It's difficult for different races, religions and cultures to achieve harmonious coexistence. The specter of white nationalism has made it even more difficult for Western countries to achieve racial unity and peaceful coexistence among religions and cultures. Western countries often point their fingers at non-Western countries over racial and religious issues. But they haven't paid enough attention to their own problems.

Can Western countries work out a solution to prevent the specter of white nationalism further dividing their societies? That's whether the West can stop its decline. Social division will accelerate Western decline. So far, it seems that Western countries can't find a way to solve its problems. They are not able to make themselves great again in an expansionist and aggressive way as they have done before, nor can they stop the flow of immigrants caused by globalization. Western societies will unfortunately become more divided in the future.

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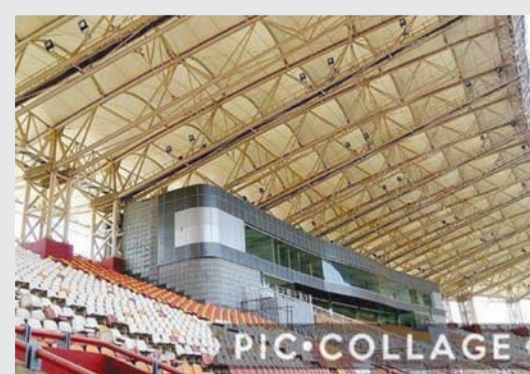
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# Astronomers have found a record-breaking star that’s nearly as old as the Universe

Another ancient star has been found lurking in the Milky Way. Around 35,000 light-years away, a red giant star named SMSS J160540.18–144323.1 was found to have the lowest iron levels of any star yet analyzed in the galaxy.

This means that it’s one of the oldest stars in the Universe, probably belonging to the second generation of stars after the Universe burst into existence 13.8 billion years ago.

«This incredibly anaemic star, which likely formed just a few hundred million years after the Big Bang, has iron levels 1.5 million times lower than that of the Sun,» explained astronomer Thomas Nordlander of the ARC Centre of Excellence for All Sky Astrophysics in 3 Dimensions and the Australian National University.

«That’s like one drop of water in an Olympic swimming pool.»

And that’s how we can tell how old the star is, because the very early Universe had no metals at all. The first stars were made up primarily of hydrogen and helium, and were thought to be very massive, very hot, and very short-lived. These stars are called Population III, and we’ve never seen them.

Stars are ‘powered’ by nuclear fusion, where the atomic nuclei of lighter elements are combined to create heavier ones. In smaller stars, that’s mainly the fusion of hydrogen into helium. But in larger stars - such as the Population III stars are thought to have been



- elements up to and including silicon and iron can be forged.

When such stars end their lives in spectacular supernova explosions, they spew those elements out into the Universe. As new stars form, the elements get caught up in them - and thus, how much metal a star contains is a reliable indicator of when it formed.

For example, we know that the Sun is around 100,000 generations from the Big

Bang, based on our star’s metallicity.

But we’ve found other stars in the Milky Way that have a low metallicity, indicating an early Universe origin. One such object is 2MASS J18082002–5104378 B, the previous record-holder for the lowest iron content of  $[Fe/H] = -7.47 \pm 0.07$  - around 11,750 times less metallic than the Sun.

But SMSS J160540.18–144323.1 is at  $[Fe/H] = -7.62 \pm 0.2$ . As Nordlander said, that’s around 1.5 million times less metallic.

It’s unlikely any Population III stars survived long enough for us to study them. But through the stars that came after, their stories can be unraveled.

The researchers believe that the star that gave SMSS J160540.18–144323.1 its iron was relatively low mass for the early Universe, only around 10 times the mass of the Sun. This is massive enough to produce a neutron star; and, after a comparatively weak supernova, the team believes this is what it did.

A supernova explosion can trigger a rapid neutron-capture process, or r-process. This is a series of nuclear reactions in which atomic nuclei collide with neutrons to synthesize elements heavier than iron.

There was no significant evidence of these elements in the star, which could mean that these elements were captured back by the newly dead neutron star. But enough iron escaped that it was incorporated into the formation of SMSS J160540.18–144323.1.

It was likely one of the very first members of that second generation of stars.

And it’s dying. It’s a red giant, which means the star is at the very end of its lifespan, using up the last of its hydrogen before it switches to helium fusion.

The team believes that studying it more closely could yield even more information about Population III stars. But imagine the stories it could tell if it could talk.

(Source: [sciencealert.com](#))

## Graphene discovery could make room-temperature superconductors possible

Scientists have discovered a new kind of graphene material, which researchers estimate could be used to build superconductors that work at room temperature.

The breakthrough -- detailed this week in the journal Nature -- occurred when scientists formed moiré patterns with graphene sheets.

Graphene is a strong, durable and highly conductive material composed of 2D sheets of carbon atoms. In each graphene sheet, the carbon atoms form a hexagonal lattice, or honeycomb-like, pattern. Moiré patterns are the interference patterns produced when two layers with mesh-like patterns -- a combination of opaque and transparent elements -- are

overlaid, with one layer slightly turned or twisted.

When researchers made a moiré pattern with graphene sheets, the electrons organized themselves into rows. Scientists suggest the graphene discovery could pave the way for superconductors and other quantum materials.

Superconductors allow electrons to flow without any resistance. But most materials exhibit superconductive qualities at only extremely cold temperatures. If scientists can find a way to build superconductors that work at room temperature, they could dramatically boost the speed and efficiency of modern electronics.

“Our findings provide an essential clue to the mystery

connecting a form of graphene, called twisted bilayer graphene, to superconductors that could work at room temperature,” researcher Eva Y. Andrei, a professor of physics at Rutgers University, said in a news release.

Moiré patterns can be changed simply by changing the angle of the twisted pattern. In the lab, scientists experimented with the twist of layered graphene, producing different patterns and measuring their effects on the material electronic properties.

Researchers discovered that at a twist angle of 1.1 degrees, the electrons that typically speed past one another come to a complete halt.

(Source: [UPI](#))

## SpaceX’s new business strategy: Rideshares for small satellites



Enormous communications and military satellites are the bread and butter of SpaceX’s launch business. But big satellites are dying out -- and smaller, nimbler satellites are all the rage.

SpaceX announced a new business strategy on Monday that indicates the company wants to adapt: It’s establishing a “rideshare program” for small satellites. Under the new initiative, SpaceX will dedicate “regularly scheduled” launches of its mighty Falcon 9 rocket to carrying large batches of smallsats, rather than focusing on one large, primary payload.

“SpaceX is committed to serving the commercial market as it grows and changes, and we believe we can address the needs of small satellite operators,” the company said in an emailed statement.

Smallsats have seen a meteoric rise in popularity over the past few years. They range in size from as small as a smartphone to as large as a kitchen refrigerator. And as they’ve grown more advanced, hoards of businesses have entered the market promising to deliver services using new smallsat technologies.

SpaceX itself plans to create a broadband network using thousands of smallsats in low-Earth orbit. The company hopes the project, called Starlink, will bring cheap high-speed internet to communities all over the globe.

Typically, smallsats reach orbit by tagging along with larger, more expensive satellites, and the waiting list can be long and unpredictable.

But there’s been a major push in the launch industry to cater directly to the booming smallsat market. Dozens of new rocket companies are promising to build scaled-down rockets that can provide quick and easy launches for smallsats. One such company, Rocket Lab, is the first to start commercial operations and has launched seven missions so far.

Cramming a bunch of smallsats onto large rockets isn’t a new idea. Rideshares have been done for years, and a company called Spaceflight has organized such trips,

including a dedicated rideshare aboard a SpaceX rocket that took off in December.

SpaceX also used its Falcon 9 to put up the first batch of 60 Starlink internet satellites earlier this year.

Leena Pivovarova, an analyst at Northern Sky Research, said the price points and capabilities SpaceX is advertising for its new rideshare program will be very attractive to smallsat companies.

“I think that SpaceX is very well positioned to compete here, and I think this is going to have a really big impact on the dedicated smallsat launch providers,” Pivovarova told CNN Business. However, she also noted there are still some unanswered questions about SpaceX’s new program, like how it will fit the dedicated smallsat missions into the long list of launches it already has lined up.

According to a new web page that went live Monday, SpaceX says it plans to launch about one dedicated smallsat rideshare per year beginning in late 2020 or 2021. Each mission will travel to a sun-synchronous orbit about 500 to 600 kilometer (310 to 372 miles) above Earth. That’s a common destination for Earth observation and communications smallsats, according to Pivovarova.

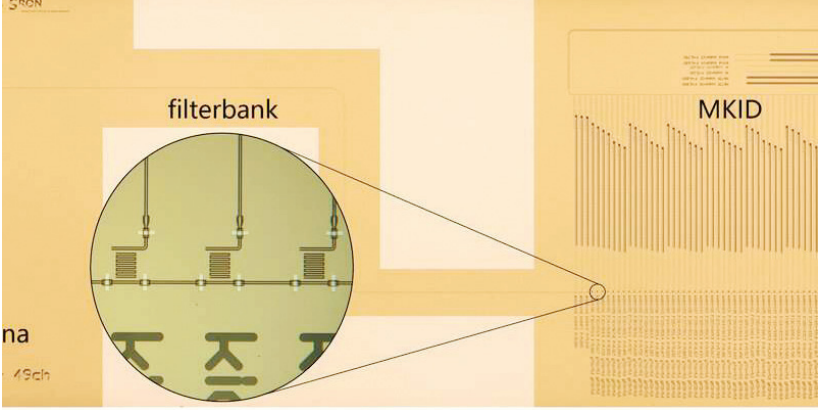
SpaceX is expected to continue launching large communications satellites as it clears a backlog of scheduled missions. Military payloads are also expected to remain a core part of its business.

But SpaceX’s president and chief operating officer, Gwynne Shotwell, acknowledged that the company’s core launch business hasn’t grown like it once hoped. SpaceX had forecasted in 2017 it would be launching 30 to 40 rockets per year by 2018, according to SpaceNews, but it only launched 21 times last year and is expected to match that number in 2019.

“We thought the commercial market might expand to that, I think we probably wished it had, but [now] we’ve got plenty of capacity to launch our Starlink system,” Shotwell said, according to SpaceNews.

(Source: [CNN](#))

## Measuring distances to remote celestial objects and analyzing cosmic clouds



Researchers in Japan and the Netherlands jointly developed an origination radio receiver DESHIMA (Deep Spectroscopic High-redshift Mapper) and successfully obtained the first spectra and images with it. Combining the ability to detect a wide frequency range of cosmic radio waves and to disperse them into different frequencies, DESHIMA demonstrated its unique power to efficiently measure the distances to the remotest objects as well as to map the distributions of various molecules in nearby cosmic clouds.

“Deshima” (or, Dejima) was a Dutch trading post in Japan built in the mid-17th century. For 200 years, Deshima was Japan’s precious window to the world. Now, the two friendly nations open up another window to a new world, the vast Universe, with innovative nanotechnology.

“DESHIMA is a completely new type of astronomical instrument with which a 3D map of the early Universe can be constructed,” said Akira Endo, a researcher at the Delft University of Technology and the leader of the DESHIMA project.

The uniqueness of DESHIMA is that it can disperse the wide frequency range of radio waves into different frequencies. DESHIMA’s instantaneous frequency width (332 -- 377 GHz) is more than five times wider than that of the receivers used in the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array (ALMA).

Dispersing the cosmic radio waves in different frequencies, or spectroscopy, is an important technique to extract various information about the Universe. Since different molecules emit radio waves in different frequencies, spectroscopic observations tell us the composition of the celestial objects. Also, the cosmic expansion decreases the measured frequencies, and measuring the frequency shift from the native frequency provides us the distances to remote objects.

“There are many existing radio receivers with spectroscopic capability, however, the covered frequency range in one observation is quite limited,” says Yoichi Tamura, an associate professor at Nagoya University.

“On the other hand, DESHIMA achieves an ideal balance between the width of frequency range and spectroscopic performance.”

Behind this unique capability is the innovative nanotechnology. The research team developed a special superconducting electric circuit, a filterbank, in which radio waves are dispersed into different frequencies, like a sorting conveyor in a fulfillment center. At the end of the “signal conveyors,” sensitive Microwave Kinetic Inductance Detectors (MKID) are located and detect the dispersed signals. DESHIMA is the world’s first instrument to combine these two technologies on a chip to detect radio waves from the Universe.

As its first test observation, DESHIMA was installed on a 10-m submillimeter telescope, the Atacama Submillimeter Telescope Experiment (ASTE) operated by the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan (NAOJ) in Northern Chile. The first target was the active galaxy VV 114. The distance to the galaxy has been already measured to be 290 million light-years. DESHIMA successfully detected the signal from the carbon monoxide (CO) molecules in the galaxy at the right frequency expected from the expansion of the Universe.

When astronomers try to detect radio emission from a remote object with unknown distance, usually they sweep a certain range of frequency. Using conventional radio receivers with narrow bandwidth, they need to repeat observations while slightly shifting the frequency. By contrast, the wide-band DESHIMA greatly improves the efficiency of the emission search and helps researchers to produce maps of distant galaxies.

DESHIMA’s high performance has also been proven for observations of nearby molecular clouds. DESHIMA simultaneously captured and imaged the distribution of the emission signals from three molecules, CO, formyl ion (HCO+), and hydrogen cyanide (HCN) in the Orion nebula.

(Source: [Science Daily](#))

## Turning water into ice in the quantum realm

When you pop a tray of water into the freezer, you get ice cubes. Now, researchers from the University of Colorado Boulder and the University of Toronto have achieved a similar transition using clouds of ultracold atoms.

In a study that appeared August 2 in the journal Science Advances, the team discovered that it could nudge these quantum materials to undergo transitions between “dynamical phases” -- essentially, jumping between two states in which the atoms behave in completely different ways.

“This happens abruptly, and it resembles the phase transitions we see in systems like water becoming ice,” said study co-author Ana Maria Rey. “But unlike that tray of ice cubes in the freezer, these phases don’t exist in equilibrium. Instead, atoms are constantly shifting and evolving over time.”

The findings, she added, provide a new window into materials that are hard to investigate in the laboratory.

“If you want to, for example, design a quantum communications system to send signals from one place to another, everything will be out of equilibrium,” said Rey, a fellow at JILA, a joint institute between CU Boulder and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). “Such dynamics will be the key problem to understand if we want to apply what we know to quantum technologies.”

Scientists have observed similar transitions before in ultracold atoms, but only among a few dozen charged atoms, or ions.

Rey and her colleagues, in contrast, turned to clouds made up of tens of thousands of uncharged, or neutral, fermionic atoms. Fermionic atoms, she said, are the introverts of the periodic table of elements. They don’t want to share their space with their fellow atoms, which can make them harder to control in cold atom laboratories.

“We were really wandering in a new territory not knowing what we would find,” said study coauthor Joseph Thywissen, a professor of physics at the University of Toronto.

To navigate that new territory, the researchers took advantage of the weak interactions that do occur between neutral atoms -- but only when those atoms bump into each other in a confined space.

First, Thywissen and his team in Canada cooled a gas made up of neutral potassium atoms to just a fraction of a degree below absolute zero. Next, they tuned the atoms so that their “spins” all pointed in the same direction.

Such spins are a natural property of all atoms. Thywissen explained, a bit like Earth’s magnetic field, which currently points to the north.

Once the atoms were all standing in formation, the group then tweaked them to change how strongly they interacted with each other. And that’s where the fun began.

“We ran the experiment using one kind of magnetic field, and the atoms danced in one way,” Thywissen said. “Later, we ran the experiment again with a different magnetic field, and the atoms danced in a completely different way.”

In the first dance -- or when the atoms barely interacted at all -- these particles fell into chaos. The atomic spins began to rotate at their own rates and quickly all pointed in different directions. Think of it like standing in a room filled with thousands of clocks with second hands all ticking at different tempos.

But that was only part of the story. When the group increased the strength of the interactions between atoms, they stopped acting like disordered individuals and more like a collective. Their spins still ticked, in other words, but they ticked in sync.

In this synchronous phase, “the atoms are no longer independent,” said Peiru He, a graduate student in physics at CU Boulder and one of the lead authors of the new paper. “They feel each other, and the interactions will drive them to align with each other.”

With the right tweaks, the group also discovered that it could do something else: turn back time, causing both the synchronized and disordered phases to revert back to their initial state.

In the end, the researchers were only able to maintain those two different dynamical phases of matter for about 0.2 seconds. If they can increase that time, He said, they may be able to make even more interesting observations.

“In order to see richer physics, we probable have to wait longer,” He said.

Other coauthors on the paper include Scott Smale, Ben Olsen, Kenneth Jackson, Haille Sharum and Stefan Trotzky from the University of Toronto and Jamir Marino from JILA.

(Source: [Science Daily](#))

## Fertility experts aim to help save northern white rhinos from extinction

Only two female northern white rhinoceroses are left, prompting Merck -- a science and technology company working with the BioRescue Project -- to offer assisted reproductive technologies to save the species from extinction.

The rhinos -- mother and daughter are named Najin, 40, and Fatu, 19 -- are being kept in the Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya. The last male species, Sudan, who was the father and grandfather, died in 2018.

“With the northern white rhino species dangerously on the verge of extinction, we consider it our responsibility, as industry leaders in the assisted reproductive technologies for the last 60 years, to offer our help through innovative medical technologies before it’s too late,” said Marie-Andrée Gamache, managing director at Merck.

The BioRescue Project received funding of \$4.4 million from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, which is led by Professor Thomas Hildebrandt from the Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research.

It consists of a global team of scientists and conservationists from Germany, Italy, the Czech Republic, Japan and the United States.

Najin and Fatu are too old and physically unable to carry a pregnancy to term, therefore, their egg cells will be harvested for later use in an IVF procedure with the permission of the Kenyan government. Sudan’s semen was harvested before he died and is stored at minus 196 degrees Celsius in equipment supplied by Merck at the Leibniz Institute.

The embryo obtained will then be transferred into the uterus of a southern white rhinoceros via embryo transfer and carried to term by the surrogate mother.

“The desired outcome will be a self-sustaining, genetically healthy population of northern white rhinoceroses that can survive in the wild. Due to the small number of eggs and sperm available, the stem cell approach is important in order to increase the genetic variability of the population,” said Richard Vigne, managing director of the Ol Pejeta Conservancy.

(Source: [UPI](#))



## Egypt’s restoration of ancient King Tut’s large coffin goes well

At an up-to-date conservation laboratory in the Egyptian Grand Museum (GEM), the large gilded coffin of famous ancient king Tutankhamun was placed inside a plastic incubator for sterilization in order to be later fully restored for the first time since it was discovered almost a century ago.



“This coffin was kept inside the tomb of the king since it was discovered in Luxor in 1922...it is at the GEM now for restoration because its status is very fragile,” Egyptian Antiquities Minister Khaled al-Anany told reporters before he accompanied them at the lab to inspect the restoration work.

The minister said the sterilization work of King Tut’s coffin started on July 22 at the wood restoration plant of the GEM in preparation for an all-out restoration process.

He said the initial examination showed that the coffin was suffering from general weakness and it also had developed cracks in its gilded plaster, especially in the lid and base.

Tutankhamun, who ascended the throne at the age of nine and died at 19, is the world’s best-known pharaoh of ancient Egypt. The young king ruled from 1332 BC to 1323 BC, during a period known as the New Kingdom in ancient Egypt.

He won his fame for his tomb, which was discovered by British Egyptologist Howard Carter in Luxor in 1922 and has remained one of the best preserved.

The tomb contained three anthropoid coffins nested within each other.

The innermost coffin is mummy shaped and made of solid gold that weighs 110.4 kg. It was found wrapped in linen inside the middle coffin which is made of gilded wood inlaid with multicolored glass.

The middle coffin was found inside the outer gilded coffin which is also made of gilded wood portraying the king in the Osirian shape, with arms crossed upon his chest and holding the insignia, the flail and the crook ornamented with blue and red glass.

Soon after the discovery of the tomb, the inner and middle coffins were moved to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, while the outer gilded coffin was left inside the tomb.

Meanwhile, Hussien Kamal, director of conversation technical affairs at the GEM, said the coffin was isolated in a separate room for seven days before commencing the sterilization process.

“Analysis and scientific investigation of the coffin have been carried out to determine the damage and the restoration methods as well,” he told Xinhua, adding that the sterilization process will continue for more three weeks.

After the sterilization, Kamal said, the restoration process will take some eight months, noting that it will be displayed for the first time at the GEM in 2020.

Egypt, one of the most ancient civilizations, has been working effortlessly to preserve its rich archaeological treasures and historical heritage, which will also help boost the once-flourishing tourism industry that has largely been affected by the political turmoil over the past five years.

(Source: china.org)



## ROUND THE GLOBE

### City of Valletta

The capital of Malta is inextricably linked to the history of the military and charitable Order of St John of Jerusalem. It was ruled successively by the Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs and the Order of the Knights of St John.



Valletta’s 320 monuments, all within an area of 55 ha, make it one of the most concentrated historic areas in the world.

Malta’s capital Valletta is a fortified city located on a hilly peninsula between two of the finest natural harbors in the Mediterranean. The Siege of Malta in 1565 captured the European imagination and mobilized the resources needed to create the new city of Valletta, founded soon after, in 1566.

The Knights of St John, aided by the most respected European military engineers of the 16th century, conceived and planned the city as a single, holistic creation of the late Renaissance, with a uniform grid plan within fortified and bastioned city walls. Since its creation, the city has witnessed a number of rebuilding projects, yet those have not compromised the harmony between the dramatic topography and the Hippodamian grid.

The fabric of the city includes a compact ensemble of 320 monuments that encapsulate every aspect of the civil, religious, artistic and military functions of its illustrious founders.

#### ■ Integrity

The city is built on a narrow peninsula surrounded by water. As a result, the perimeter of the city has remained largely unchanged since the departure of the Knights of St John, unencumbered by more recent development. It is of sufficient size and includes all elements necessary to express its Outstanding Universal Value.

(Source: UNESCO)

# UNESCO-tagged Lut Desert draws 5,000 foreign visitors a year

**TOURISM TEHRAN** — Over 5,000 foreign sightseers visited the UNESCO-registered Lut Desert in the barren heartland of Iran during the past Iranian calendar year (ended March 20, 2019).

“During the past year, over 5,000 foreign travelers visited parts of the Lut Desert that is situated in Kerman province and that is a sign of sustainable security in the region,” IRNA quoted provincial tourism chief Fereidoun Fa’ali as saying on Tuesday.

The Lut Desert, widely referred to as Dasht-e Lut (“Emptiness Plain”), is a large salt desert encircled by the provinces of Kerman and Sistan-Baluchestan, and South Khorasan. It is the world’s 27th-largest desert, and was inscribed on UNESCO’s World Heritage List on July 17, 2016.

“New tourist routes can be defined in compliance with the criteria for safeguarding a World Heritage in order to facilitate visits to various parts of the World Heritage site,” he said.

The Lut Desert is teemed with giant dunes, shifting sands, salt plains and wind-hewn kaluts, offering visitors epic journeys



of breathtaking beauty and wilderness. It is a destination for people who are in search of new adventures; outstanding scenery and unparalleled serenity

The scorching desert is also being considered as one of the top areas in the world for finding meteorites, thanks to its unique parameters. In recent years, significant finds have been made, with the efforts of national and international teams of researchers.

Seven years of satellite temperature data analyzed by NASA show that the Lut Desert is the hottest spot on Earth. Based on the research, it was hottest during 5 of the 7 years, and had the highest temperature overall: 70.7°C in 2005.

The big and sprawling Kerman province has long been a destination for globetrotters. Kerman has been a cultural melting pot since antiquity, blending Persians with subcontinental tribe dwellers. It is home to myriad historical sites and scenic landscapes such as Bazaar-e Sartasari, Jabalieh Dome, Ganjali Khan Bathhouse, Malek Jameh Mosque and Shahdad Desert to name a few.

## Iran one step closer to create ministry of tourism

**1 →** Last year, the lawmakers gave approval to the bill for establishing the tourism ministry with 137 votes in favor, 41 against and 1 abstention.

Under provision I of the bill, properties, facilities and human resources already in possession of the organization will be handed over to the new ministry.

Provision II outlines the responsibilities and tasks of the ministry in accordance with the responsibilities of the cultural heritage organization. The government is required to present any changes in duties of the new ministry to the Majlis within a year.

Provision III stresses that any increase in the number of human resources, facilities and financial dealings at the

new ministry will be forbidden during the implementation of the sixth development plan.

Lawmakers in favor of the bill believed that the formation of the ministry would revitalize the organization and hold it accountable before the parliament. Lawmakers against the bill said the formation of a new ministry was not a priority and was against the objectives of the fifth and sixth development plans that call for a reduction in the number of ministries.

The CHHTO was founded in 1985, administered and funded by the government. Ali-Asghar Monesan, the incumbent director of the organization, was appointed by President Hassan Rouhani on August 13, 2017.

## Archaeologists shed light on early settlement eras of Iran’s Manujan

**HERITAGE TEHRAN** — A team of Iranian archaeologists has found ancient relics and evidence that could shed new light on early settlement eras of Manujan county in southeastern Kerman province.

The team commenced new rounds of survey and excavations back in January at a ruined fort (locally known as Manujan fort) and its environs. At that time, a restoration project was also started on the mudbrick citadel.

Excavations at the fort has yielded a special kind of pottery as well as pieces of jewelry and glassware works that throw



light on different periods of the area, ILNA reported on Tuesday.

“The [newly-excavated] pottery is simple and handmade and it can be classified as rough potteries,” archaeologist Alidad Soleymani said.

Paint of the earthenware is resembling pottery-painting manners, which were practiced in prehistorical eras, the archaeologist explained.

“We are trying to revive the way they build this [kind of] local pottery,” he said.

“We have evidence that testifies glassware and even jewelry were made [in workshops] in the region.”

Most of the pottery [pieces] found [in Manujan] are broken and only about two flawless pottery have been discovered in the area, he added.

In January, Soleymani said during previous rounds of excavation, the fort had yielded relics and remains dating to various Islamic eras.

Manujan fort is nestled on top of a smooth natural rock and in the heart of a city of the same name in Kerman province, which is bounded by the provinces of Fars on the west, Yazd on the north, South Khorasan on the northeast, Sistan-Baluchestan on the east, and Hormozgan on the south.

## Uruguay warns its citizens not to travel to U.S. after recent mass shootings

Uruguay’s government has issued a travel advisory, warning its citizens not to travel to the United States in wake of two deadly mass shootings, citing the danger of violence, hate crimes and racism and the ‘inability’ of U.S. authorities to stop them.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Montevideo issued an advisory on Monday, urging Uruguayans to “take precautions against the growing indiscriminate violence, mostly hate crimes, racism and discrimination” if they are traveling to the U.S., noting that they have claimed over 250 lives in the first seven months of 2019.

Those brave souls that do venture north are advised to avoid crowded places and public events “such as theme parks, shopping centers, art festivals, religious activities, gastronomic fairs and any type of cultural or sporting events,” especially if they are bringing children along.

Uruguayans were also urged to avoid some cities entirely, such as Detroit, Michigan; Baltimore, Maryland; and Albuquerque, New Mexico – which are listed among



the twenty “most dangerous in the world” in a recent survey by the business magazine Ceoworld.

Montevideo’s travel advisory comes after the two mass shootings over the weekend, which claimed 31 lives. In

El Paso, Texas, 22 people were killed and dozens more injured by a lone gunman who opened fire at a Walmart on Saturday, before surrendering to police. Several hours later, on Sunday, another shooter targeted a popular nightlife spot in Dayton, Ohio, killing nine and injuring 27 more people before he was killed in a shootout with police officers.

Though authorities do not believe that the two incidents were linked, there has been a frenzy of speculation about possible political motives of one or both attackers – along with calls for tighter gun control laws.

The Uruguayan advisory says it is “impossible” for U.S. authorities to deal with mass shootings, due to the “indiscriminate possession of firearms by the population.” The Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution – ratified in 1791 – ‘guarantees’ personal firearm ownership, resulting in Americans owning an estimated 40 percent of all firearms on the planet.

(Source: eTurboNews)

## China’s ancient rituals brought to life by video project

Wearing traditional clothing, more than 100 actors have re-enacted four ancient Chinese rituals – the rite of passage, the nuptial rite, the social meeting rite and the archery contest rite – for a multimillion yuan video project.

The scenes shot look like they are straight out of Chinese director Zhang Yimou’s historical films, but they are first and foremost works of high academic value.

Since 2014, history professor Peng Lin has been resurrecting rituals portrayed in the I-Li, or Book of Etiquette and Ceremonial, a Chinese classic text about the Zhou dynasty’s (1046-256 BC) ceremonial rites and social behavior.

The book is one of three – along with the Rites of Zhou and the Book of Rites – that together are referred to as the “Three Rites”, and which guided Confucian teachings of propriety and behavior.

“We read a lot of books and did lots of research. Some students of mine were in charge of preparing the clothes. Some prepared the buildings and others various artefacts,” says the history professor and director of the Institute for Chinese Classics Studies at Beijing’s Tsinghua University.

“We spent over 20 days filming the archery

contest rite in Beijing. The scaffolding stage was over 30 meters in height, with over 1,000 lights. We had much regret disassembling it [after filming].”

Thanks to funding of more than 10 million yuan (U.S.\$1.4 million) from Johnson Chang – the founder of the Hanart TZ art gallery and co-founder of Asia Art Archive – Tsinghua University and the Chinese state, Peng has so far restored four of the 17 rites mentioned in The Book of Etiquette and Ceremonial, and videoed them.

His research was so meticulous that, when re-enacting the nuptial rite, everything, right down to the size of the wheel of a horse-drawn cart, was replicated accurately. In the case of the cartwheel, the size was based on archaeological findings.

“In the past, horse-drawn carts were buried in tombs. The wooden carts left an imprint underground so we knew the measurements. After a cart was made, we rented two horses [to pull it]. However, we found out modern horses are too big for ancient carts,” Peng says.

This is because after the Zhou dynasty, horses from the Han dynasty bred with others including those of the Mongolians and the Huns. Peng solved the problem by raising

the horse harness on the cart.

“We eventually made four carts. One of them will be on show this autumn at Beijing Auto Museum,” he says.

Nothing irritates Peng more than seeing ancient Chinese rites being viewed as trivial relics of days long gone.

In 2016, there was uproar in China when pictures spread online of a protégé of Chinese poet, Zheng Shiqing, bending his knee before his revered mentor. Internet users complained the ancient ritual embodied slavish behavior, which had no place in contemporary society, where equality and free thinking were paramount.

But Peng says the act was purely a sign of respect. “If you kowtow to the Japanese during the Japanese invasion [of China], that’s despicable. But what’s the problem with kowtowing to one’s parents [or mentors]?” Peng explains.

“Recently, a fire broke out in Notre-Dame de Paris in France. Pictures [in the press] showed people kneeling on the ground. Was that feudalistic? Nowadays, some people are still thinking like they are stuck in the May Fourth Movement and the Cultural Revolution when Confucianism was attacked for being feudalistic. That’s unacceptable.”



Peng, who is an expert in the classic rites from China’s Zhou dynasty, is an advocate of ancient Chinese values and rituals – and is not a fan of modern ones.

He objects, for example, to Chinese people celebrating Mother’s and Father’s Day as if they are practicing filial piety, which has long been the core value of Chinese culture. He believes it should be done every day, not just once a year.

In modern times, it was Kong Decheng, the 77th-generation descendant of Confucius, who championed Chinese ancient rites. In 1949, the Nationalist Party leader of China, Chiang Kai-shek brought Kong from China to Taiwan to teach the Book of Etiquette and Ceremonial at the National Taiwan University. (Source: South China Morning Post)



# Iran, Lebanon to prepare five-year plan for health cooperation

**HEALTH DESK** **TEHRAN** — Iran and Lebanon have agreed to form a joint committee to prepare a five-year plan for cooperation in the health sector, announced Iranian Health Minister Saeed Namaki in a meeting with his Lebanese counterpart in Tehran.

According to Namaki, the joint committee will be comprised of representatives from health ministries of the two sides, ISNA reported on Monday.

"We are completely ready to help Lebanon in the field of health, medical care, medicine and medical equipment," said Namaki.

"Currently, many Lebanese students are studying in Iranian universities and their number is going to increase in future. Moreover, we will facilitate the treatment of Lebanese patients in Iran, so that they choose Iran as a friendly and peaceful destination to receive medical treatment."

"We place great focus on transferring our technical knowledge to Lebanon. However, at first, we need to export some medicine to Lebanon to meet the immediate medical needs of people. Then, the private sector of both countries can cooperate on exchanging their technical knowledge," he added.

"We believe that if can provide the infrastructure in Lebanon for producing some specific medicines, we can capture not only Lebanon's market, but also markets of other countries in the region," he explained.



*Iranian and Lebanese health ministers speaking at a press conference.*

## ■ No limitations for cooperation with Iran

Over the meeting, Lebanese Health Minister Jamil Jabak announced that they see no limitations in cooperation with Iran, especially in the field of food and medicine, as they reject and condemn the cruel sanctions

against Iran.

"I think many other countries in the region have the same opinion about sanctions against Iran," said Jabak.

"In our visits from Iranian pharmaceuticals, we were amazed at the high quality of medicine produced in Iran and we want to

use Iran's technical knowledge and expertise in Lebanon," he added.

"In Lebanon, the Health Ministry purchases medicine through private sector companies, so we will facilitate the import process for Lebanese private pharmaceuticals who want to supply their medicine from Iran."

According to Jabak, Lebanon imports around \$1.8 billion of medicine. Also, each year, \$200 million is assigned for importing medicine from European and North American countries for chronic life threatening diseases.

The Lebanese health minister also asked for Iran's technical and scientific help to build a central laboratory.

"After visiting Iran's Central Laboratory for Food and Medicine Control, I realized that every country needs such a laboratory to control the quality of food, medicine and water," he said.

"We also visited some Iranian hospitals, and we think Lebanese medical students can benefit from specialized courses in Iran."

According to a report released by Iran's Food and Drug Administration, the country exported some \$120 million worth of pharmaceuticals and raw materials in the last Iranian calendar year (ended March 20) which indicate a 70 percent year-on-year increase.

Russia, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Ukraine, and Azerbaijan are the main export destinations of the home-grown pharmaceuticals.

## 3.4m children undergo vision screening for Amblyopia

**HEALTH DESK** **TEHRAN** — The Welfare Organization carried out vision screening tests for diagnosing Amblyopia (known as lazy eye) for 3.4 million children aged 3 to 6 years during the past Iranian calendar year 1397 (March 2018-March 2019), the organization's director Vahid Qobadi Dana announced.

Lazy eye is a vision development disorder in which an eye fails to achieve normal visual acuity, even with prescription eyeglasses or contact lenses.

The screening tests were done in over 41,000 health centers during the Iranian calendar months of Azar (November 21-June 20, 2018) and Dey (June 21, 2018 – January 20,

2019), Qobadi Dana explained.

The vision screening tests for preventing Amblyopia began in 1997 nationwide and 42.5 million children have so far been screened during the program, he said.

Out of this figure, 1,585 million children were diagnosed with vision impairments, he noted.

Screening tests in the year 1397 showed 15,000 children were suffering from Amblyopia and 75,000 children were diagnosed with other vision impairments, he added.

Over the past 24 years, about 70 billion rials (about \$1.7 million) has been allocated for Amblyopia screening tests in different parts of the country, he concluded.



## Is there a link between dark chocolate and depression?



A survey-based study looking at chocolate consumption and depression finds that people who eat dark chocolate are less likely to report depressive symptoms. What do these findings mean, and can we trust them?

### ■ Stack of dark chocolate

Over the years, chocolate has been the focus of a great deal of research.

Thanks to its flavor and texture, chocolate is a popular food. As a result, a large number of people tend to read and share any studies that investigate its potential health benefits.

Overall, its high sugar and fat content make chocolate a snack for people to enjoy in moderation, but consumers and experts are keen to find hidden depths to this silky wonder.

The most recent addition to chocolate's body of research comes from University College London (UCL) in the United Kingdom. The UCL team worked in conjunction with scientists from the University of Calgary and Alberta Health Services Canada.

The title of the UCL press release is, "People who eat dark chocolate less likely to be depressed," which is a bold header, indeed.

Before we continue, it is worth explaining that, as far as we can tell, this study did not receive funding from any chocolate manufacturers. The scientists published their results in the journal Depression & Anxiety.

### ■ Why study chocolate and depression?

Globally, depression is a sizable issue. Currently, talking therapies and medication are the most common treatments. As the authors explain, talking therapies are often oversubscribed, so doctors prescribe most people antidepressants.

However, these medications do not work for everyone. Also, according to the authors of the current study, about half of the people who receive a prescription for these drugs stop taking them within 6 weeks of beginning treatment.

Finding lifestyle interventions that can improve depressive symptoms is a priority. Physical activity appears to benefit some people with depression, but it does not help everyone, and not everyone is physically able to exercise.

Over the years, other scientists have also turned to dietary interventions to reduce depressive symptoms, with some success. Along these lines, the authors of the latest study explain that "[o]ne commonly consumed foodstuff postulated to have mood-enhancing properties is chocolate."

However, over the years, there have only been a few studies looking at whether chocolate truly can elevate mood in a clinically relevant way, and these experiments have produced mixed results.

### ■ A more thorough approach

According to the authors, earlier studies did not account for a wide enough range of variables, and none looked at how the type of chocolate might influence the findings.

So, in their new study, the scientists controlled for a large number of potentially confounding variables, including weight, height, marital status, education, ethnicity, income, levels of education, smoking, and other health conditions.

They also analyzed dark chocolate and nondark chocolate separately.

The scientists took data from the United States National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. After excluding individuals who were underweight or had diabetes, they had 13,626 participants aged 20 years or older.

(Source: medicalnewstoday.com)

## Could a 'tickle' a day keep the doctor away?



A small electric "tickle" to the ear may affect the body's nervous system, and British researchers claim this can promote overall well-being and may potentially slow down some effects of aging.

The tickle treatment is called transcutaneous vagus nerve stimulation (tVNS). The procedure involves placing custom-made clips containing electrodes on the part of your ear called the tragus; that's the small, pointed tip above your ear lobe.

A small electrical current is delivered through the clips to affect the vagus nerve. The vagus nerve is part of the autonomic nervous system, which is responsible for body functions you don't think about, like blood pressure, temperature and heart rhythm.

The study authors suggest that the device may help balance the autonomic system.

"We saw that just two weeks of daily tVNS helped to re-balance the levels of activity in the two branches of the autonomic nervous system," said Susan Deuchars, one of the study's authors. She's director of research in the School of Biomedical Sciences at the University of Leeds in England.

"These branches normally work in balance to allow healthy levels of activity. As we age -- and also in certain clinical conditions -- this balance changes so that the sympathetic branch predominates and this can be detrimental for health. tVNS daily seems to redress the balance of this activity towards that associated with healthy function," she said.

The researchers suggest that the treatment can improve mental well-being and sleeping patterns. The study authors noted that it could have a role in the treatment or diagnosis of heart

disease, high blood pressure, Alzheimer's disease and type 2 diabetes.

However, not everyone is convinced that a simple, non-invasive procedure might have such wide-ranging health effects.

Dr. David Knopman, a fellow of the American Academy of Neurology and professor of neurology at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., said this study didn't provide evidence to support any claims of health benefits.

"The sample sizes are small. The studies were poorly controlled. I would question the claims about efficacy," he said.

The researchers explained that it's difficult to have a control group, because people can feel that they're not receiving the treatment.

Three small studies were conducted. The first two looked at a single session of tVNS. The third was a two-week study of daily treatments for 15 minutes a day.

All of the study participants were aged 55 or older. None had any evidence of heart disease.

The first study had 14 volunteers. The second study included those volunteers along with 37 more, for a total of 51. The two-week trial had 29 volunteers. All three groups had average ages in their mid- to late-60s.

Deuchars said researchers didn't see any risks from the treatment and that it's easy to use. Study volunteers were trained to use the device at home.

She noted that the cost would likely be reasonable, and the device could possibly be available over the counter.

For now, Deuchars said, further study is planned. The researchers hope to include more people, and study use of the device for longer periods of time.

(Source: HealthDay News)

## New device helps running with less pain

**HEALTH DESK** **TEHRAN**— Researchers at Tehran University of Medical Science have designed a new device that can help people run or walk long distances with consuming less energy and feeling less pain or tiredness.

According to Rezvan Nasiri, the lead researcher of the project, the device is an exoskeleton that entails a special spring.

The spring restores some parts of the energy consumed in running and later transfer it to the legs, so no engine or battery is used in this device, ISNA quoted Nasiri as saying on Tuesday.



"The imbedded spring sheet restore the energy of one leg and transfer it to the other, so it reduces the energy consumption by eight percent," she added.

"We designed this device to help people who have physical disabilities have more serious physical exercises. Moreover, the athletes who suffer from Sciatica Nerve pain or chronic muscular pain can use the device to feel less pain when running."

The device is designed based on careful study of human skeleton and reduce the tiredness of muscles especially in fast running, she noted.

"This device can be adjusted to different paces of running while similar foreign products are only designed for a specific pace of walking or running."

Building this device is also less costly than similar foreign products, she concluded.

## Natural colon cleansing & detox: is it necessary?

The practice of natural colon cleansing dates back to ancient Greece. In the U.S., cleansing the colon -- the large intestine -- became popular in the early 1900s. But when the theories behind it lost support, it fell out of favor. Recently, though, colon cleansing -- using, for example, teas, enzymes, or colon irrigation -- has experienced resurgence.

Is colon cleansing good for you? Scientific research on colon cleansing is extremely limited. There is no good evidence for most of the claims that its practitioners make. And the side effects can range from mild to severe.

### ■ What is natural colon cleansing?

There are two main colon-cleansing methods. One involves buying products; the other involves seeing a practitioner to have a colon irrigation.

Colon cleansing with powdered or liquid supplements. You take some supplements used for colon cleansing by mouth. Others you take through the rectum. Either way, the idea is to help the colon to expel its contents. You can find these products on the Internet or in health food stores, supermarkets, or pharmacies. They include enemas, laxatives-both stimulant and non-stimulant types, herbal teas, enzymes and magnesium.

Colon cleansing with colon irrigation (high colonics). The first modern colonic machine was invented about 100 years ago. Today, colonic hygienists or colon hydrotherapists perform colon irrigations. Colon irrigations work somewhat like an enema but they involve much more water. While you lie on a table, a low-pressure pump or a gravity-based reservoir flushes several gallons of water through a small tube inserted into your rectum.

After the water is in the colon, the therapist may massage your abdomen. Then you release the water like a regular bowel movement; the process flushes out the fluids and waste. The therapist may repeat the process, and a session may last up to an hour.

The practitioner may use a variety of water pressures and temperatures and may or may not combine water with enzymes, herbs, coffee, or probiotics. Probiotics are supplements containing beneficial bacteria.

### ■ What is the theory behind natural colon cleansing?

One of the main theories behind colon cleansing is an ancient belief called the theory of autointoxication. This is the belief that undigested meat and other foods cause mucus buildup in the colon. This buildup produces toxins, the theory goes, which enter the blood's circulation, poisoning the body.

Some people claim these toxins cause a wide range of symptoms, such as fatigue, headache, weight gain and low energy.

On the surface, the idea of toxins being reabsorbed by the body makes some sense. After all, rectal suppositories are used to rapidly administer drugs but the whole theory of autointoxication has been disproven.

### ■ What is the goal of natural colon cleansing?

The health claims made by producers of colon cleansing products and colon irrigation practitioners are broad and wide-reaching. Their main goal is to clear the colon of large quantities of stagnant, supposedly toxic waste encrusted on colon walls. Doing so, they claim, will enhance the vitality of the body.

Other stated goals include improving mental outlook, improving the immune system, losing weight, reducing the risk of colon cancer.

Quality scientific research is lacking when it comes to determining whether or not a colon cleansing is helpful.

### ■ Is natural colon cleansing needed?

Are bowel movements enough to clear the colon? Or is it true that colon cleansing can be beneficial? We do know that the body alone can do the following: Natural bacteria in the colon can detoxify food wastes. The liver also neutralizes toxins. Mucus membranes in the colon may keep unwanted substances from reentering the blood and tissues. The lining of the intestines regenerates itself faster than any other tissue in the body, preventing a buildup of harmful material.

The normal number of bowel movements varies from person to person.

Increasing the number of bowel movements doesn't improve weight loss. That's because the body absorbs most calories before they reach the large intestine.

(Source: healthline.com)



## FAO, DOE launch joint program to access Green Climate Fund

05 July 2019, Tehran - The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in collaboration with the Department of Environment (DOE) held the Inception Workshop of the “Green Climate Fund (GCF) Readiness Programme” that aims to strengthen the country’s capacity to access climate finance to implement its commitments to reducing emission and strengthening resilience.

Organized in four sessions on 04 and 05 August 2019 in DOE premises, the Inception Workshop was attended by experts and scholars from FAO, DOE, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Agriculture Jihad, the Ministry of Energy, the Ministry of Petroleum, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour, and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, the Meteorological Organization and other relevant key partners from public and private sectors.

Participants discussed a coordination platform to engage all relevant stakeholders. The experts also defined necessary strategic investment criteria for prioritizing climate investments and a strategy to ensure that adaptation and mitigation actions will benefit all key stakeholders especially women, youth and children.

Speaking at the event, FAO Representative to Iran, Mr Gerold Bödeker thanked DOE, GCF and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the support extended to this Programme and congratulated all participating agencies and stakeholders on developing collective views on strategic priorities for Iran’s access to climate finance and actions to strengthen coordinated actions. He emphasized the importance of climate smart agriculture that encompasses sustainable forest and other natural resources management, saying that FAO is looking forward to further collaboration with national and international partners to mitigate climate change threats.

Coordinated by FAO and funded by GCF, this Readiness Programme supports the establishment of National Designated Authority Office within the Department of Environment to improve Iran’s climate change investment planning, decision-making mechanisms and act as the coordination body for developing, appraising and financing programmes and projects that aim to adapt and mitigate climate change.

(Source: FAO)

## Four people killed every week defending environment, report says

Four people are being killed every week for defending the environment and the rate of deaths has doubled in 15 years, a new report warns.

Only 10 per cent of these murders will result in a conviction, according to the paper published in Nature Sustainability. Globally, 43 per cent of all murders result in conviction.

Lead researcher Dr Nathalie Butt, from the University of Queensland, said: “The number of reported deaths of environmental defenders has increased, as well as the number of countries where they occur.

“In many instances, weak rule of law means that cases in many countries are not properly investigated, and sometimes it’s the police or the authorities themselves that are responsible for the violence.”

Scientists say 1,558 deaths were recorded in 50 countries between 2002 and 2017, which is more than double the number of British and Australian armed service personnel killed during active duty in the same period.

Countries with higher levels of corruption have more environment-related deaths. Victims are from a variety of groups, including community activists, lawyers, journalists, members of social movements and NGO staff.

Environmental defenders from indigenous groups had the largest number of deaths, with most violence occurring in Central and South America. One in three deaths between 2014 and 2017 were linked to the mining and agribusiness sectors.

(Source: The Independent)

## WORDS IN THE NEWS

### Copying music from the Internet

(June 6, 2001)

The record company EMI is planning a new service which will allow people to copy music from the Internet without breaking the law. BBC Business correspondent Mark Gregory reports: EMI’s artists include the Spice Girls, the Beatles and pop stars Robbie Williams and Janet Jackson. Like the rest of **the industry**, it’s struggling to cope with technological change that makes it much easier for people to copy music without paying for it. Music can be stored in a personal computer, it can be passed anywhere in the world via the internet, millions of people own the equipment needed to record or **burn** their own **unauthorized compact discs**. Unofficial online music services like that provided by the American group Napster have proved **wildly** popular.

**To tackle the issue**, EMI has **teamed up** with a computer software company to develop the first ever service that allows music lovers to legitimately make their own CDs on their own CD recording equipment of songs on which EMI **holds the copyright**. The music will be **downloaded** from the internet in **encrypted form**. The difficult bit comes in designing software that gives the copyright holder power over what use is made of the music once it’s in the customer’s computer. It may, for example, be possible to require additional payments every time a new CD is burned. EMI says it’ll talk about pricing when the service is ready to launch. In theory it could **do away with** the need for dedicated music shops, but industry analysts say many people like to go to places where they can listen to music they haven’t heard before. But, of course, that too can be done over the internet.

■ **Words**  
**the industry:** the music industry, including record companies and recording artists  
**to burn:** the common term for recording content on to a compact disc  
**unauthorized compact discs:** CDs which are made without the permission of the record company and recording artist  
**wildly:** very  
**to tackle the issue:** to try to find an answer to a problem  
**teamed up with:** worked together with  
**holds the copyright:** owns the rights to a piece of music so that people have to ask for your permission to copy or use it  
**downloaded:** copied files onto your computer  
**encrypted form:** coded so that it can’t be used without permission  
**do away with:** remove

(Source: BBC)

# Top scorers of university entrance exam announced

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — Iran’s university entrance exam (Konkur) announced the top scorers on Tuesday in three main groups of mathematical sciences, experimental sciences, and human sciences along with two other groups of art and foreign languages, Tasnim reported.

Out of 36 top scorers, 14 are female. There is no female among the top 10 students admitted for the mathematical sciences.

All three top students in foreign languages, mathematics and experimental sciences groups are male, while the four top students in art group are female.

There is one female top scorer among 10 top students for the mathematical sciences group, similar to last year’s results.

Two females are ranked first at the top 10 list of human sciences.

Moreover, only two female students are among the top 10 students in experimental sciences group, while females held a share of 6 in human sciences.

All 5 top scorers of art group are from



Tehran, while two students in human sciences group are from the city of Lar.

Furthermore, 18 top students are from

the city of Tehran. The city of Tabriz, with 4 students, is the other city with highest number of top scoring students.

## The pilgrimage experience

By Dr. Seyed Hossein HosseiniSeddiq

As the Hajj is approaching again, I would like to share my pilgrimage experiences with the readers of the Tehran Times.

I had a long-held desire to do a Hajj in Saudi Arabia. I wanted to take some of my students as well, but it was not financially easy. It is said when there is a will, there is a way. I participated in a lottery for Iranian students studying abroad, to go to Mecca. I won with the Grace of Allah. I departed from Mehrabad International Airport on /29 March 2012 to Jeddah in Saudi Arabia. There were about 480 people in two groups, however not all of them were students. Students were allowed to bring their spouse and children if they were married, but not their parents.

When we began to descend towards Jeddah, the pilot said everyone can say a great “Yes” or “Labbayk”. Everyone joined together in the cheer. From Jeddah city we went to Medina by bus. It was about a six hour drive during which we rested for dinner. We stayed in one of the best hotels in Medina. It was so close to Masjid-e-Nabvi, Prophet Mohammad’s (peace be upon him and his descendants) mosque.

I visited a huge mosque that had a simple architecture. It had a green Dome. The prophet’s grave is located under that dome. The tomb was located in the Prophet’s house. His daughter, Fatima’s, house was close to his tomb. Two of his companions Omar and Abu-Bakr are also buried there. I also visited Jannat al Baqi (a graveyard). Several of the prophet’s companions and family members are buried there. Unfortunately, the graves could not be identified as the Saudi government removed names or never stated the names. There were only a few little stones that gave vague idea of buried people.

We visited some mosques in and around Medina and Ohod battle fields. After 6 days, we departed Medina.

At a mosque close to Medina, the men of the group wore special clothes made of only 2 towels. It was unsewed cloth like dead people. Nothing belongs to this world. The women wore simple sewed clothes. God invited us to a great ceremony and we replied with a great YES, YES, YES (Labbaiyk). After getting dressed, we were not permitted to view ourselves in mirrors, windows, or anything that showed our reflection. We remained this way for the 6 hour bus ride to Mecca. They brought our luggage to the hotel. We had nothing from the world except nail clippers, small scissors for cutting some hair and nails during our special ceremony and a Rosary. I think, we were allowed to have cell phones for taking photos and sending texts.

We arrived at our huge hotel in Mecca. It housed approximately 4,000 Iranian pilgrims. It was around 2:30 a.m., then the group clergyman (who was a faculty member at the University of Mofid in Qom) who told us we could not go to the holy Cube because it was facing the Morning Prayer. We were not able to continue the special ceremony. So we went to bed. It was very difficult because everywhere we went, there were mirrors and reflective surfaces. There were reflective surfaces in the elevators, corridors, rooms and the WC. Married couples had to live as brother and sisters. The clergyman instructed us to not intentionally put our legs or head under the blanket. It was not a problem if it was done without premeditation. After praying and eating breakfast that was prepared in the room’s refrigerator, we left the hotel toward the holy Cube.

At 7 when we saw the holy Cube, first we prostrate towards God. We turned 7 times around the holy Cube starting at the green light. Then we prayed behind Prophet Abraham’s place where his footprint can be seen. After that we went to a saloon which was between Safa and Marveh Mountains. It

was the location where Hagar, Abraham’s second wife, tried to provide water for her infant. We jogged 7 times between the two mountains at a distance of 400 meters. The total was 400 meters X 7 or 2,800 meters.

After the jogging we cut some nails and some pieces of hair. We returned to the Cube for circling 7 more times which is required for both men and women. If they are unable to complete this special circling then married couples cannot continue the common life and singles cannot marry. After finishing this part of ceremony, all the participants went back to pray again behind Abraham’s footprint. The entire ceremony took 4 hours.

During my travels, I visited 2 museums, one in Medina and the other in Mecca. We also went to visit a cave where Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him and his descendants) received his Prophetic message. It is located at the peak of the mountain. The ascent had many stairs to climb. We began to hike to the top at 2 am by only moonlight. It took about 50 minutes to ascend the stairs.

We had heard there might be monkeys; however we did not see any. That is a good thing because they are known for stealing cameras and other valuable items.

When we arrived at the entrance, it was very small. It was only large enough for 2 people that could pray there. We were able to see the holy Cube between rocks. After staying until about 4 am, suddenly many Iranian, Turkish, and Egyptian pilgrims came up towards the cave. We returned around 6 am to our hotel for breakfast. Then I slept until noon.

It was a wonderful spiritual journey. It was a very enjoyable travel, one I dreamed of since I was a young child. It was a real blessing to go on a pilgrimage to God’s House. I wish every Muslim to have such a chance.

Dr. Seyed Hossein HosseiniSeddiq is a faculty member at Islamic Azad University, Gorgan Branch

## We must change food production to save the world, says leaked report

Attempts to solve the climate crisis by cutting carbon emissions from only cars, factories and power plants are doomed to failure, scientists will warn this week.

A leaked draft of a report on climate change and land use, which is now being debated in Geneva by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), states that it will be impossible to keep global temperatures at safe levels unless there is also a transformation in the way the world produces food and manages land.

Humans now exploit 72% of the planet’s ice-free surface to feed, clothe and support Earth’s growing population, the report warns. At the same time, agriculture, forestry and other land use produces almost a quarter of greenhouse gas emissions.

### Stop damaging land or face climate catastrophe, major report warns

Humans need to stop abusing the land we live on if we want to avoid catastrophic levels of climate warming, scientists on the UN’s major Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) will warn at a meeting in Geneva this week.

Soils are believed to sequester 1 per cent of the planet’s total carbon, but they once contained as much as 7 per cent. If land is farmed in a more sustainable way, carbon could be absorbed back into the soils, making them a carbon sink.

However, currently one-third of total emissions come from the land.

Researchers believe any genuine plan to combat climate change must tackle the state of the land and production of food. This means putting a stop to chopping down rainforest, degrading soils, killing wildlife and draining peatlands.

Kelly Levin, from the think tank World Resources Institute, told BBC News: “If we consider the climate problem hard now, just think about how much harder it will be without the land serving as a large sink for carbon dioxide emissions.”

Scientists will warn of increasing pressure on land to provide food, timber and plant materials for a growing population which will make meeting emissions targets even harder.

(Source: The Independent)

In addition, about half of all emissions of methane, one of the most potent greenhouse gases, come from cattle and rice fields, while deforestation and the removal of peat lands cause further significant levels of carbon emissions. The impact of intensive agriculture – which has helped the world’s population soar from 1.9 billion a century ago to 7.7 billion – has also increased soil erosion and reduced amounts of organic material in the ground.

In future these problems are likely to get worse. “Climate change exacerbates land degradation through increases in rainfall intensity, flooding, drought frequency and severity, heat stress, wind, sea-level rise and wave action,” the report states.

It is a bleak analysis of the dangers ahead and

comes when rising greenhouse gas emissions have made news after triggering a range of severe meteorological events. These include news that:

- Arctic sea-ice coverage reached near record lows for July;
- The heatwaves that hit Europe last month were between 1.5C and 3C higher because of climate change;
- Global temperatures for July were 1.2C above pre-industrial levels for the month.

This last figure is particularly alarming, as the IPCC has warned that rises greater than 1.5C risk triggering climatic destabilisation while those higher than 2C make such events even more likely. “We are now getting very close to some dangerous tipping points in the behavior of the climate – but



as this latest leaked report of the IPCC’s work reveals, it is going to be very difficult to achieve the cuts we need to make to prevent that happening,” said Bob Ward, policy director at the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment.

(Source: The Guardian)

First Announcement



N.I.S.O.C

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO. : 01-31-9280011

National Iranian South Oilfields Company(NISOC) intends to purchase the following goods

Items	Material Description	Quantity
19	PARTS FOR “RUSTON” GAS TURBINE. TYPE TA 1500	2341 NOS

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tender are requested to send their “intention To Participate” letter via the following fax number / Email address along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: WWW.nisoc.ir , not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 6,623 EURO or 312,504, 000 RIAL, in favor of NISOC

Tender documents including the materials thorough technical specifications and Qualitative Assessment Forms can be accessed via: WWW.nisoc.ir-material procurement management tab

ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS D.D.P. NISOC’S WAREHOUSE, AGHA JARI, IRAN PAYMENT TERM IS C.O.D. SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC’ S MATERIAL APPROVAL NO ADVANCE PAYMENT WILL BE PAID

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex

Kouy-e Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran

Tel. No.: 061 341 24644 Fax No.: 061 3445 7437

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# Saudi Arabia's 'strategic plan' to take Turkey down

➤ According to the report, Mohammed bin Salman, the kingdom's de facto ruler, took the decision to confront Turkey following the assassination of Khashoggi by a team of Saudi agents in their country's Istanbul consulate.

The murder of the Saudi journalist, a Middle East Eye and Washington Post columnist, created international outrage, in large part due to Turkey's insistence on Riyadh providing accountability and transparency over the affair.

"President Erdogan ... went too far in his campaign smearing the kingdom, especially the person of the crown prince, using in the most reprehensible manner the case of Khashoggi," the reports says

In the document, the Emirates Policy Centre claims Turkey did not provide "specific and honest" information to assist the Saudi investigation into the killing, but instead leaked "disinformation" to the media "all aimed at distorting the image of the kingdom and attempting to destroy the reputation of the crown prince".

Riyadh had concluded that Erdogan failed in his attempt to politicise and internationalise the case and now was the time to mount the fightback, the report says.

Both the CIA and leading members of the US Congress have accepted the Turkish intelligence assessment of Khashoggi's murder.

The CIA also concluded that Mohammed bin Salman almost certainly signed off on the operation, an assessment based on its own intelligence as well.

"The accepted position is that there is no way this happened without him being aware or involved," said a US official familiar with the CIA's conclusions, the Washington Post reported.

Since then, a report by United Nations human rights investigator Agnes Callamard detailed the difficulties the Turkish authorities



had in investigating the murder and gaining access to the consulate building and the home of the consul-general.

Callamard concluded independently that the crown prince ordered Khashoggi's murder.

## ■ The pressure begins

Last week came the first public sign of the campaign detailed in the Emirati document coming to life.

Saudi authorities blocked 80 Turkish trucks transporting textile products and chemicals from entering the kingdom through its Dubai port.

Three hundred containers carrying fruit and vegetables from Turkey had also been held in Jeddah's port, according to a Turkish official who spoke to MEE on condition of anonymity.

The number of Saudi tourists visiting Turkey decreased 15 percent (from 276,000 to 234,000) in the first six months of 2019, according to official data released by the Turkish tourism ministry.

Saudi Arabia has approximately \$2bn

worth of direct investment in Turkey, according to the Turkish foreign ministry data from 2018.

That year, Turkish exports to Saudi Arabia were valued at around \$2.64bn, while imports from the kingdom stood at \$2.32bn.

Behind the scenes, other signals have been sent to Ankara.

The Emirati report says "in a sign that the Saudi leadership has severed its relationship with ... Erdogan and started treating him as an enemy", King Salman approved "without hesitation" a recommendation from an advisory committee not to send an official invitation to attend a high-profile Organisation of Islamic Cooperation summit in Mecca.

The Turkish president's name was added to the list of those excluded from the summit, alongside Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and the Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani.

Eventually, King Salman decided to allow the Qatari emir to attend the event in

Mecca, though Erdogan's invitation was not forthcoming.

The Turkish government is aware of the Saudi crown prince's attempts to sever relations and is trying to combat them through keeping direct communications with his father, King Salman.

A senior Turkish official, speaking anonymously, said the existence of a Saudi strategy to punish Turkey over its stance on the Khashoggi case wasn't surprising.

"We are aware of what they are doing. It is almost public, to the extent that you could see their activities on Saudi-backed social media and Saudi state media," the official told MEE, noting that they had openly called for a boycott. "Tourist arrivals are decreasing, while we are having problems related to Turkish exports. We are closely following the situation."

The Turkish official said, however, that Ankara does not believe that Saudi citizens are altering their stance on Turkey, despite the government in Riyadh's efforts.

"Istanbul, for example, is still full of Saudi tourists. Saudi officials should check the BBC's poll on Erdogan's popularity in the Middle East. Then they will realise that they are failing," the official said.

Erdogan phoned the king on Thursday, raising the problem of Turkish exports being held at Saudi ports.

Another Turkish official, also speaking anonymously, said Erdogan's phone call with the Saudi king was cordial and focused on regional developments, such as Syria and the Palestine question.

The official, who was informed about the call, said the king was lucid and supportive of Turkish concerns with regard to Syria.

In the same call, Erdogan invited King Salman and his family, including the crown prince, to Turkey.

This article is available in French on Middle East Eye French edition.

## China says U.S. currency manipulator labeling could cause chaos in financial markets

TEHRAN — China's central bank said on Tuesday that Washington's decision to label Beijing as a currency manipulator would "severely damage international financial order and cause chaos in financial markets".

Washington's decision to ratchet up currency tensions on Monday would also "prevent a global economic and trade recovery," the People's Bank of China (PBOC) said in the country's first official response to the latest U.S. salvo in the two sides' rapidly escalating trade war.

China "has not used and will not use the exchange rate as a tool to deal with trade disputes," the PBOC said in a statement on its website.

"China advised the United States to rein in its horse before the precipice, and

be aware of its errors, and turn back from the wrong path," it said.

The U.S. currency accusation, which followed a sharp slide in the yuan on Monday, has driven an even bigger wedge between the world's largest economies and crushed any lingering hopes for a quick resolution to their year-long trade war.

The dispute has already spread beyond tariffs to other areas such as technology, and analysts caution tit-for-tat measures could widen in scope and severity, weighing further on business confidence and global economic growth. The U.S. Treasury Department said on Monday it had determined for the first time since 1994 that China was manipulating its currency, taking their trade dispute beyond tariffs, Reuters reported.

## Biden leads Democrats as minorities favor most electable candidate versus Trump

TEHRAN — Joe Biden maintained his lead for the Democratic presidential nomination as minorities gravitated toward the former vice president and his top rival, U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, in search of the safest bets for beating President Donald Trump in 2020, according to a Reuters/Ipsos poll.

The Aug. 1-5 public opinion poll, released on Wednesday, showed that 22% of Democrats and independents would vote for Biden, a level that is unchanged from a similar poll that ran last month. Another 18% said they supported Sanders, up 2 percentage points from the July poll.

None of 23 other candidates received more than 9% in the poll.

Biden and Sanders offer Democrats sharply contrasting views on how to govern. Sanders leads the effort to expand government-run healthcare for all Americans while Biden offers a more moderate approach that would allow people to keep their existing healthcare plans.

Yet the choice for Democrats may have less to do with ideology and more to do with who is best suited to beat Trump in the November 2020 general election.

According to the poll, 36% of Democrats say they are simply looking for someone who can win. Only 11% say the most important quality is someone with a strong healthcare plan, and 5% say it is most important to pick a strong voice on the environment < Reuters reported.

## Hamas slams UN for not including Israel in 'List of Shame'

TEHRAN — The Palestinian resistance movement of Hamas has criticized the United Nations (UN) for not including Israel in its annual list of countries that kill and maim children, the so-called List of Shame.

The list, the Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict, was prepared by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for the year 2018. He presented the report to the UN Security Council, Press TV reported.

Hamas spokesman Hazem Qasem said the exclusion of Israel from the list came despite the fact that the same report found that the number of Palestinian children killed or wounded by the Israeli regime hit its highest level in 2018 since 2014.

The UN report said that 59 children were killed last year, 56 of them by the Israeli army, and that 2,756 children were wounded, most of them sustaining injuries during the Great March of Return rallies in the besieged Gaza Strip, which began in March 2018.

Qasem warned that the UN's submission to pressure exerted by the U.S. and Israel would give Israeli forces "the green light" to commit more crimes against Palestinian people, particularly children.

Qasem urged the UN to translate its recommendations and resolutions on Israel's violations against the Palestinians into "practical measures" and to take Tel Aviv to international courts in order to curb the regime's grave violations of international law.

On Sunday, Palestine's Ambassador to the UN Riyad Mansour had censured Guterres for not including Israel in the list.

"The UN secretary-general should include Israel in the list of shame," Mansour had said ahead of the special session held in the Security Council to discuss the annual report.

The report also said that 203 children were being held in Israeli jails, most of them under administrative detention, which means imprisonment without trial or charge for up



to six months, extendable an infinite number of times.

According to the report, children who received jail terms were subjected to ill treatment in Israeli prisons.

## Iraqi Hashd al-Sha'abi forces cleanse areas in southern Nineveh of Daesh

TEHRAN — Members of the pro-government Iraqi Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), known in Arabic as Hashd al-Sha'abi, have managed to cleanse more than a dozen villages in the southern part of the country's province of Nineveh during the third phase of a major offensive to hunt down remnants of the Daesh terrorist group.

The media bureau of Hashd al-Sha'abi forces announced in a statement on Monday that the 40th Brigade of the volunteer forces had purged 13 villages, including Ayn al-Jahesh, Msheirfeh, ?Arish, Khirbet al-Yazidi, Albu Jarad, Ayn al-Bayda, of Daesh extremists.

Separately, the 4th and 24th brigades of Hashd al-Sha'abi, supported by government troops, destroyed a number of militant hide-outs and defused six improvised explosive devices northeast of the town of Miqdadiyah, which lies in Iraq's eastern province of Diyala and located about 80 kilometers northeast



of the capital Baghdad.

A statement by the media office of the Joint Operations Command said on Monday that the Iraqi army, police and Hashd al-Sha'abi units, backed by the Iraqi Air Force

fighter jets, had launched the third phase of the Will of Victory Operation in the eastern Diyala province and Nineveh province in the north.

The statement said the troops had begun

search operations in rural areas near the towns of Miqdadiyah, Jalawla and Khanaqin in Diyala province.

Also in Nineveh province, the troops commenced an operation to clear the rugged areas of al-Atshanah and the mountain ranges of Badush and Sheikh Ibrahim in west and northwest of the provincial capital city of Mosul.

According to Press TV, the second-in-command of the Joint Operations Command (JOC), Lieutenant General Abdul Amir Rashed Yarallah, said in a statement on July 20 that Iraqi military forces had launched the second phase of the Will of Victory Operation to hunt down Daesh remnants north of Baghdad and areas nearby.

The statement noted that the offensive aims to "beef up security and stability in areas north of Baghdad and surrounding areas in the provinces of Diyala, Salahuddin and Anbar."

## No peace, security and stability without the end of the Israeli occupation: Jordan FM

➤ Safadi stressed that Jordan and Turkey "are working to develop their partnership and enhance their cooperation in various economic, investment, tourism and security fields, and to increase coordination in efforts to solve the regional challenges."

He stressed the need for concerted efforts to stop the suffering in Syria and end the crisis through a political solution in accordance with UN Resolution 2254, which preserves Syria's unity and cohesion, achieves national reconciliation, restores Syria's security and stability and provides conditions for the voluntary return of refugees.

according to Islam Times, Safadi stressed that "terrorism is a common enemy that has nothing to do with the values of peace, love and respect for others held by the true Islamic religion. He stressed that the defeat of terrorism is to defeat the darkness and end the crises and the roots of the conflict that generate despair and oppression, which lived on terrorism.

Safadi stressed "the importance of the victory achieved by Iraq against terrorism and the need to stand by Iraq in the stabilization and reconstruction efforts to prevail victory over the dark thought."

## Turkey calls on U.S. to end support for Kurdish militants in northern Syria

TEHRAN — Turkey has strongly called on the United States to stop supporting a Kurdish militant group in northern Syria as Ankara and Washington held their latest round of talks on the issue aimed at preventing a fresh Turkish cross-border invasion into the Arab country.

The Turkish government has long been infuriated by Washington's persisting support of the People's Protection Units (YPG), a Kurdish militant group in northern Syria, that the U.S. regards it as the main purported fighting force against terrorists of the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group.

The YPG plays as the backbone of the so-called Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), an anti-Damascus alliance of predominantly Kurdish militants.

Ankara has declared the YPG as a terrorist group and views it as the Syrian branch of Turkey's homegrown Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), a terrorist group that has been fighting for an autonomous region inside the Anatolian country since 1984.

"The U.S. should positively answer our request to end its partnership with the YPG in Syria," said Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu at a press conference in the capital Ankara on Monday.

## UN urges India, Pakistan to stay calm as Kashmir heats up

TEHRAN — The United Nations (UN) has urged India and Pakistan to maintain peace as tensions between the nuclear-armed neighbors escalate again in the wake of New Delhi's move to strip the disputed Kashmir region of its special autonomy.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged all parties to exercise restraint, said his spokesperson Stephane Dujarric on Monday.

"We are following with concern the tense situation in the region," Dujarric said.

Asked if Guterres intended to play a role in resolving the Kashmir issue, Dujarric said the UN chief had constantly said that his good offices were always available if "both sides" asked for it.

The government of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi revoked the special status of Indian-administered Kashmir on Monday, a move described by Pakistan as "illegal."

In response, Pakistan's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that "no unilateral step by the government of India can change [Kashmir's] disputed status... Pakistan will exercise all possible options to counter the illegal steps," Press TV reported.

## NATO says it's not preparing for an unlikely U.S. withdrawal

TEHRAN — NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg says he's absolutely convinced the U.S. will remain in the military alliance and it has made no preparations for an unlikely U.S. withdrawal because doing so would send a signal that it could happen.

Stoltenberg made the comments in an interview while visiting New Zealand on Tuesday. He says there is strong bipartisan support for NATO in the U.S. and words are being matched by deeds as the U.S. increases its military presence in Europe.

The New York Times reported earlier this year that President Donald Trump had privately said several times in 2018 that he wanted to withdraw from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Stoltenberg says, however, that Trump's message about allied nations needing to spend more on defense is having an impact, AP reported.

## Yemen airport closure 'death sentence' for thousands: Groups

TEHRAN — Aid groups have slammed the Arab coalition for its closure of the airport in Yemen's capital, saying it's prevented thousands of sick civilians from traveling abroad for urgent medical treatment.

The Norwegian Refugee Council and CARE say the Sanaa airport's three-year closure has amounted to a "death sentence" for many sick Yemenis.

They appealed late Monday on Yemen's warring parties to come to an agreement to reopen the airport for commercial flights to "alleviate humanitarian suffering caused by the closure."

The Arab coalition, has been at war with, Houthis, since 2015, and has imposed a blockade on ports that supply Houthi-controlled areas.

Mohammed Abdi, the NRC's director in Yemen, says there's "no justification" for standing in the way of life-saving treatment, AP reported.



## Maguire must live with the price tag pressure, says Van Dijk

Harry Maguire will come under the microscope like never before after his 80 million pounds move to Manchester United made him the world's most expensive defender and Liverpool's Virgil van Dijk says he must focus on his game and tune out the noise if he is to handle the pressure.

Van Dijk preceded Maguire as the most expensive defender in world football when he joined Liverpool for 75 million pounds in 2018 before United eclipsed that mark for the former Leicester City centre back on Monday.

Dutch international Van Dijk told British media the price tag was not something Maguire had any influence over but there would be no escaping the attention it would bring.

"The price comes with pressure but it doesn't change too much because you always have pressure at big clubs like Man United," he said.

"It's not easy to completely shut off all the pressure."

Van Dijk has been a transformative presence for Liverpool since joining the Merseyside club from Southampton, helping them win the Champions League last season and take the Premier League title race down to the wire.

He said being able to keep things in perspective had helped him cope with the price tag and the odd wind-up from opponents. "Quite a lot of things are more important than playing football," the 28-year-old added. "You need to enjoy it but the pressure will always be there.

"Just focus on doing what you love to do and play your best game. Get your qualities out on the pitch, enjoy your game and don't think about the other things.

"If opponents have a go during the game because you cost that much, what can you do? I'm not listening to them. It does not change anything in my head."

(Source: Mirror)

## Rooney in talks over Derby player-coach role - reports

Former England captain Wayne Rooney is in advanced talks with Derby County about joining the Championship (second-tier) club as player-coach, Sky Sports News reported on Monday.

Derby's new Dutch manager Phillip Cocu declined to comment on the reports but Sky said England's record goalscorer was due to fly to the Midlands to discuss the details of the deal.

The 33-year-old ex-Manchester United and Everton striker, who has two years left on his contract with MLS club DC United, has previously spoken of his desire to go into management.

The BBC reported that Derby owner Mel Morris believes Rooney could help to get the club back into the Premier League.

"At the moment I can't say anything," Cocu told Sky Sports after Derby beat Huddersfield Town 2-1 in their opening fixture of the new Championship campaign.

"Like I said before the game we are working on completing the team. It isn't complete yet. I cannot say anything about names before things are done.

"We have a lot of players we think could be an asset for the team. You always try to get the best you can with the resources at the club. A few more days then hopefully I can say something more."

Derby appointed Rooney's former England team mate Frank Lampard as manager last season and he took them to the playoff final but has since joined his former club Chelsea.

Sky Sports said Rooney sees Derby as an ideal opportunity to learn the ropes while also prolonging his playing career.

Rooney was a big fan of Dutch manager Louis van Gaal's coaching methods when he was at Manchester United and has been convinced that Derby boss Cocu has a similar approach.

(Source: Goal)

## US athletics legend Lewis lashes Trump

Olympic athletics legend Carl Lewis, attending the Pan American Games at the invitation of Lima organizers, took the opportunity to slam US President Donald Trump on Monday.

"We have a president who is racist and a misogynist, who doesn't value anybody but himself," said Lewis, who was asked to weigh in on the issue of gender equality in sport.

"My mother was a pioneer. My parents were teachers and they taught us that everyone deserves the same opportunities," said Lewis, who counts nine Olympic gold medals among his 10 total.

"Of course I'm for (equal pay) in athletics. We shouldn't even be talking about it.

"We have to fight for people's rights and love each other."

Lewis, 58, won Olympic long jump gold at four straight Games: 1984, 1988, 1992 and 1996. He completed a sprint treble with 100m, 200m and 4x100m relay gold at the 1984 Olympics, and also won the 100m in 1988 and 4x100m relay gold in 1992.

He will be in Lima until Sunday, when the Pan American Games athletics competition ends, and will present the 100m and long jump medals.

(Source: AFP)

## German club sacks captain for displaying neo-Nazi sympathy

German football team FC Chemnitzer said it has sacked captain Daniel Frahn for displaying sympathy toward neo-Nazis during a league match.

Frahn, who joined the third-tier side in 2016, was unable to play Saturday's game against Hallescher due to injury but chose instead to watch the match from the stands.

He was seated with a group of far-right fans and, according to the club, was clearly seen to display sympathy for the supporters -- a move that "caused great damage to the club."

Striker and captain Frahn, who previously played for top-tier side RB Leipzig, had earlier this year been fined for paying tribute to far-right activist and renowned club hooligan, the late Tommy Haller. After scoring a goal, he celebrated by holding up a black T-shirt that read "support your local hools [hooligans]".

Romy Polster, deputy chairman of the club's shareholders' meeting, said that "it was the wrong decision to continue to trust" its player after the incident in March, and that the regret he showed for his actions back then was "a farce."

(Source: CNN)

# Belgian cyclist Bjorg Lambrecht dead after Poland crash

Belgian cyclist Bjorg Lambrecht died in hospital on Monday at the age of 22 after crashing at the Tour of Poland, his team announced.

"The biggest tragedy possible that could happen to the family, friends and teammates of Bjorg has happened... Rest in peace Bjorg," Lotto-Soudal tweeted.

Polish news website Onet reported Lambrecht collided with a concrete structure around 30 kilometers (19 miles) into the race after it suddenly began to rain.

He was resuscitated on the spot, then taken in a critical condition to a hospital in the southern city of Rybnik, where he died on the operating table, according to Onet.

"It wasn't a high-speed descent. It was a straight and wide road. He had a moment of hesitation, he left the asphalt and the tragedy occurred," said race director Czeslaw Lang.

"The injuries were so serious that we called for a helicopter and an ambulance. He was transported to hospital. His heart started beating again but he sadly died" during the operation, Lang said, quoted by PAP agency.

German Pascal Ackermann, who was handed the stage three victory after the win was taken from Fabio Jakobsen for an irregular sprint heading into the finish line, paid tribute to Lambrecht.

"Today, the result of the race doesn't matter," Ackermann said.

"I was devastated to hear today's tragic news and I would like to personally send



my deepest condolences to the family and friends of Bjorg Lambrecht and everyone at Lotto-Soudal," he added.

Alejandro Valverde, the world road race champion in 2018, echoed Ackermann's comments on Twitter.

"Deeply sorry for the loss of Bjorg Lambrecht, a cyclist who had demonstrated a lot in a few years," the Spaniard said.

"My deepest condolences to family, friends and team," he added.

Ackermann's advantage is 12 seconds

## Swiss indict former German soccer officials over World Cup payment



Swiss federal prosecutors have filed fraud charges against three former senior German soccer officials over a suspect payment linked to the 2006 World Cup hosted by Germany, the Swiss Attorney General's office said on Tuesday.

The indictment alleges former German Football Association (DFB) presidents Theo Zwanziger and Wolfgang Niersbach, senior DFB official Horst Schmidt and former Swiss FIFA official Urs Linsi misled members of a DFB body about the true purpose of a payment of about 6.7 million euros (\$7.5 million), a statement said.

The four men have denied any wrongdoing.

Proceedings against German soccer great Franz Beckenbauer, who is also under investigation in the case, are continuing separately because his health problems made it impossible to question him, the Attorney General's Office (OAG) said.

Beckenbauer, a World Cup-winning player and coach for Germany, headed the 2006 World Cup organising committee.

Schmidt, Zwanziger and Linsi are accused of fraud and Niersbach of being complicit in fraud in the charges. The OAG said it dropped last month its investigation of money-laundering allegations in the case.

"The investigations have revealed that in summer 2002 Franz Beckenbauer accepted a loan of 10 million Swiss francs in his own name and for his own account from Robert

Louis-Dreyfus. This sum was used to fund various payments made via a Swiss law firm to a Qatari company belonging to Mohammed Bin Hammam," the OAG said.

At the time, Bin Hammam was a member of the FIFA Executive Committee and the FIFA Finance Committee.

"The exact purpose of the total payments of 10 million Swiss francs to Mohammed Bin Hammam could not be determined -- also because a corresponding request for mutual legal assistance made by the OAG to the Qatari authorities in September 2016 remained unanswered until today," it added.

The payment in question triggered several investigations and led to Niersbach's resignation over allegations it was used as a slush fund to buy votes in favour of Germany's bid to host the 2006 tournament.

Zwanziger headed the DFB from 2006 to 2012 and was succeeded by Niersbach until his resignation in the fallout from the scandal in 2015.

The DFB did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

A DFB-commissioned investigation in 2016 said the sum was the return of a loan via FIFA from former Adidas chief Louis-Dreyfus.

A German court in October ruled there was no evidence to bring soccer officials to trial for suspected tax evasion over the payment.

(Source: Reuters)

## German cancer researcher first woman to win 4,000km cycling race



Fiona Kolbinger -- a 24-year-old German cancer researcher and newcomer to the world of ultra-endurance racing -- has become the first female rider to win the Transcontinental Race.

The 4,000km adventure race took riders from Burgas, Bulgaria to Brest, France and, despite finishing in a time of just 10 days, two hours and 48 minutes, Kolbinger says she could have 'gone harder' and 'slept less' after producing one of most outstanding sporting achievements of the year.

"I am so, so surprised to win. Even now," said Kolbinger, one of 40 women in a field of 265 riders. "When I was coming into the race I thought that maybe I could go for the women's podium, but I never thought I could win the whole race... I think I could have gone harder. I could have slept less."

Finishing six hours ahead of her nearest rival, Ben Davies, Kolbinger had maintained a 120 to 130km lead for the past few days, but extended that to a huge 200km last night, eventually arriving in Brest this morning. Remarkably, the Transcontinental is also Kolbinger's first ever race.

Founded by the late Mike Hall in 2013, the Transcontinental Race is considered to be one of the hardest solo races on earth. Riders must be fully self-sufficient

will be cancelled," said a statement on the Tour website.

The 22-year-old died after colliding with a concrete structure around 30 kilometers into the third stage on Monday following rain.

Lambrecht won the Under 23 Liege-Bastogne-Liege and finished second in the Tour de l'Avenir in 2017 behind this year's Tour de France winner Egan Bernal before turning professional last year with Lotto Soudal.

This year he placed 12th at the Criterium du Dauphine, winning the best young rider category, fourth in La Fleche Wallonne and sixth at the Amstel Gold.

Lambrecht's death brought a flurry of tributes across social media from all corners of the cycling world.

"Such an incredibly sad day here in Poland and across the cycling world," tweeted Mark Cavendish who finished sixth in Monday's stage.

"To the family, friends and teammates off Lambrecht, all our thoughts and sympathies are with you. Rest In Peace Bjorg. May your star continue to shine as brightly as it did in cycling."

Alejandro Valverde, the world road race champion in 2018, echoed Cavendish's comments.

"Deeply sorry for the loss of Bjorg Lambrecht, a cyclist who had demonstrated a lot in a few years," the Spaniard tweeted.

(Source: AFP)

## Barcelona must resolve Neymar saga and finalize departures

Ernesto Valverde's Barcelona have arrived in the United States for the final part of their pre-season tour, but the club's leaders back in Catalonia are not going to stop working as they look resolve a few deals.

Understandably, Valverde wants his squad to be finalised as soon as possible, yet the reality is that Barcelona still need to work out what they are doing with Neymar, while also looking to resolve the futures of Philippe Coutinho, Ivan Rakitic and Rafinha Alcantara.

Once Junior Firpo's signing was confirmed at left-back, the position that Valverde worried about most, the club swiftly moved onto the Neymar saga. They do, however, realise that the bulk of the work is going to have to be done by the Brazilian if the deal has any chance of becoming a reality.

It is Neymar who is insisting on returning to Barcelona, and it is he who must lead a change of attitude at Paris Saint-Germain, with the French side refusing to sell to Barcelona to this point. Relations between PSG and Barcelona are not good, and the Parisians would prefer to sell Neymar to any other club than Barcelona. As such, the 27-year-old has been offered to various sides across Europe.



At the Camp Nou, they are waiting for Neymar to take the next step in terms of forcing PSG's hand. They are not very optimistic that his return can become a reality, but they are refusing to rule it out. Jordi Cardoner, Barcelona's vice-president, spoke before the Joan Gamper Trophy and his statements echoed that sentiment. "Neymar? He is not happy at his team but that is a situation that has to be resolved in Paris," Cardoner told TV3. "Today, at this

time, we rule out that he can join [Barcelona]. If one day there is a Neymar case, we will talk."

■ **Against the clock**

The departures of Coutinho, Rakitic and Rafinha all need to be finalised before the close of the window, with all three currently on Barcelona's US tour. The easiest and most feasible is that of the former Celta Vigo player, Rafinha. The other two, however, are more difficult due to the large sums involved.

For Coutinho, Barcelona are determined to receive at least 100 million euros. It is worth remembering that the transfer window closes in England on August 8, so time is running out as the best bet of receiving a large fee will be from a Premier League side. PSG have been mooted as a possible suitor for Coutinho, though their interest is minimal.

Rakitic's future is also up in the air. Valverde said after the Joan Gamper Trophy that he has a lot of midfielders, indicating that he needs a few to leave, while Rakitic himself has a lot of clubs interested in him. He has offers from England and Italy, but nothing has been decided just yet.

(Source: Marca)



# Iranian paddler Kazemi aims for Olympic berth at Canoe Sprint World C'ships

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Hediye Kazemi is preparing for the 2019 ICF Canoe Sprint World Championships, where she can secure a quota place for the 2020 Olympic Games.

The 2019 ICF Canoe Sprint World Championships will be held in Szeged, Hungary from Aug. 21 to 25.

Kazemi, who won a silver medal at the Women's Kayak-1 500 m at the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta, Indonesia, is training hard to book a place in the Olympics for the first time ever.

"The world championships are fast approaching and I know that the best paddlers of the world will take part in the prestigious event. It will be a difficult competition, however we're focused on getting the best results in Hungary," Kazemi said in an interview with IRNA.

"All participants will do their best to secure Olympic berth in the competition. We have two more chances to earn quota place for the Tokyo. Olympic berth will be distributed at Asian championship and a tournament scheduled for the next year," she added.

"I believe that the Iranian paddler are among the Asia's best and require more careful consideration. The Asian countries are investing in canoeing since so many medals will be distributed in the events in Olympics. Our athletes can also win medals in the Asian Games and Olympics," Kazemi concluded.



## Zob Ahan lose to Al Ittihad in ACL Round of 16



**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Zob Ahan of Iran lost to Saudi Arabia's Al Ittihad 2-1 in the first leg of the 2019 AFC Champions League Round of 16.

Alireza Mansourian's team got off to a dream start at the neutral venue of United Arab Emirates' Zabeel Stadium. Zob Ahan captain Ghasem Haddadifar opened the goal with a curling left-footed strike from outside the area. Just two minutes later, Luis Jimenez

equalized the match after a cross from the right was deflected onto the bar and the ball fell to the ex-Chile international and he made no mistake in poking home on the rebound for a debut goal.

In the 72nd minute, Al Ittihad defender Ziyad Al-Sahafi sent a powerful header into the back of the Zob Ahan's net to win the tie.

On Aug. 12, Zob Ahan will host Al Ittihad in Doha's Grand Hamad Stadium.

## Esteghlal eye for Iraqi midfielder Hussein Ali



**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Esteghlal are going to sign Al Zawraa iconic midfielder Hussein Ali Al-Saedi but they have a difficult task ahead since the Qatari club can tempt him to join them with a huge offer.

Al Zawraa are also trying to convince the player to stay in the Iraqi team.

Esteghlal were interested in signing Safaa Hadi, who also plays for Al

Zawraa, but the 20-year-old player will most likely stay in his current team.

Esteghlal iconic attacking midfielder Ayanda Patosi joined Emirati football club Baniyas and the Blues are looking for a good replacement.

Hussein Ali, 22, has experienced playing in a Qatari football club since he was a member of Qatar SC last season.

He was on target in Iraq's 2-1 win over Palestine in the 2019 WAFF Championship underway in Karbala.

## We will only get better, says Al Ittihad's Sierra

Al Ittihad coach Jose Luis Sierra expressed his satisfaction with his team's performance in the 2-1 victory over Zob Ahan FC in the first leg of the 2019 AFC Champions League Round of 16 on Monday.

After going behind to a Ghasem Haddadifar strike inside the opening 10 minutes, the two-time AFC Champions League winners came from behind to snatch a 'home' victory in the game held at Dubai's Zabeel Stadium.

Goals from new signing Luis Antonio Jimenez and defender Ziyad Al-Sahafi helped Sierra's men end Zob Ahan's six-game unbeaten run in the AFC Champions League.

"The weather is still hot and humid, so the weather had a detrimental impact on our players," explained the Chilean tactician who re-joined Al Ittihad in February, having earlier helped them win two domestic trophies in a two-year stint between 2016 and 2018.

"It is our first competitive match of the season as well. So, overall, I'm satisfied with our performance and I can only expect the team to get better with every



passing game."

The winning margin could have been larger for Al Ittihad, but a combination of solid defending from Zob Ahan and a lack of clinical finishing from Romarinho on

the night meant they would have to go into the second leg in Doha holding to a one-goal advantage.

The Brazilian is his side's top scorer in the competition, having registered three strikes in the group stage, but on Monday, his finishing was below par. Early on, he headed wide from close range, before shooting straight at the keeper in the 29th minute, and again just on the wrong side of the upright an hour into the match.

"I thought Romarinho did very well. Tactically, he was important for us. His movements created spaces in the opposition's backline, but he was unfortunate not to score. It just wasn't his day in front of goal.

"We had a decent crowd of travelling fans behind us today and their support made the difference. We are thankful for them and that's always what I have come to expect from Al Ittihad fans."

The winners of the last 16 tie - the return leg will be played on August 12 - will face either Al Ahli Saudi FC or Al Hilal SFC in the quarter-finals.

(Source: the-afc)

## Excitement builds ahead of 2019 edition kickoff

Asia's top 16 clubs begin their quest for glory in the AFC Futsal Club Championship Thailand 2019 on Wednesday at the iconic Bangkok Arena in the Thai capital.

The 2016 runners-up Naft Al Wasat from Iraq will open the tournament in a thrilling Group B contest against three-time semi-finalists Al Rayyan Sport Club, from Qatar, at 12 noon local time.

All eyes will be on the day's final match when host side, Port Futsal Club, mark their nine-year return to this competition when they battle debutants Star FS Seoul from Korea Republic in Group A at 7:30pm.

Kyrgyz Republic's FC Erem and Shenzhen Nanling Tielang FC from China PR are also in action in Group A at 2:30pm before last year's finalists Thai Son Nam from Vietnam take on Uzbekistan's AGMK FC in Group B just hours later.



The action continues on Thursday as Islamic Republic of Iran's Mes Sungun, who will be aiming to become the first side in the tournament's history to defend their title, take on debutants Kazma SC

of Kuwait in the day's final match.

Meanwhile, Japan's Nagoya Oceans, the tournament's most successful club with three titles, open their Group D campaign against 2017 quarter-finalists

Al-Dhafra Sport & Cultural Club, from the United Arab Emirates, at 2:30pm.

Lebanon's Bank of Beirut, who finished third in the last edition — their best-ever performance — will be hoping to continue their rich vein of form when they face Group C opponents Victoria University College FC from Myanmar, who return to the tournament after making their debut in Yogyakarta, Indonesia last year.

The host club of the 2018 edition, Vamos FC, of Indonesia, will face the last of three debutants this year, 2018 Tajikistan Futsal League champions, Soro Company, in Group C.

The top two sides from each of the four groups will advance into the final eight, which is scheduled to take place from Wednesday, August 14. Log onto the-AFC.com to stay up to date with all the excitement at the Bangkok Arena.

## New version of Club Licensing Regulations confirmed

**FFIRI** — New version of the Club Licensing Regulations are confirmed by Asian Football Confederation (AFC).

Board of directors' meeting was held in Iran football federation headquarters on Sunday.

Iran Football Federation president Mehdi Taj and members of the board, namely Mahmoud Eslamian, Heydar Baharvand, Mahmoud Shiei, Abdolkazem Taleghani, Fereydoon Esfahanian, Hedayat Mombeini, Leyla Soofizadeh and Ebrahim Shakouri attended the meeting.

At the start of the meeting, Soheil Mehdi, Club Licensing Manager at Iran Football Federation, reported about approval process of new version of regulation by AFC.

"We have been in correspondence with AFC and made change the regulations in order to improve it according to FIFA standards. It has been confirmed by Asian Football Confederation," Mehdi said.

"The previous regulations over the past four years, needed to be reformed according to new standards. The new one is available for the Iranian clubs via Club Licensing Administrative System (CLAS) system. All AFC affiliates are mandated to follow, from the professional to amateur leagues. The clubs will be granted a license after fulfilling five requirements: Infrastructure, personnel administration, business, legal and sporting," he added.

At the end of the meeting, the members talked about the stadiums which are prepared for hosting the league's games.

## Brazilian Matheus Alves linked with Persepolis

**TASNIM** — Matheus Alves Leandro has been linked with a move to Iranian football club Persepolis.

After Malian forward Modibo Maiga failed to pass medical exam, the Iranian team are going to hire Matheus Alves.

Alves was a member of Brazilian football club Fluminense from 2013 to 2017 and has also played at South Korean clubs Gangwon and Suwon.

The 26-year-old forward most recently played for Thai club PT Prachuap.

Persepolis are going to win Iran Professional League for the fourth successive time.

Also, Gol Gohar Sirjan completed the signing of Kevin Johnny Jansen of the Netherlands.

The former Netherlands U21 midfielder has joined the Iranian top-flight football club on a two-year contract.

The details of Jansen's contract have not been revealed.

Jansen began his career in Feyenoord in 2011 and has also played in Dutch football teams NEC, ADO Den Haag, and SC Cambuur.

Gol Gohar Sirjan, headed by Vinko Begovic, won promotion to Iran Professional League in April.

## Shayan Mosleh joins Sepahan

**PLDC** — Sepahan football team completed the signing of former Persepolis left back Shayan Mosleh on Monday.

Mosleh was deemed surplus to requirements by new Persepolis coach Gabriel Calderon in July.

The 26-year-old player has joined Sepahan on a two-year contract for an undisclosed fee.

Mosleh started his football with Damash Gilan in 2014 and joined Sepidrood one year later.

He penned a two-year contract with Persepolis in 2017 and claimed two Iran Professional League titles, two Super Cups and one Hazfi Cup with the Reds.

## Ould Ali's Palestine building towards Asian Qualifiers

Their bid for a first WAFF Championship title is far from over, but Palestine head coach Nouredine Ould Ali has one eye on his side's Asian Qualifiers campaign for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and AFC Asian Cup China 2023, which begins in September.

A 1-0 opening match win against Yemen in Group A was followed up by a late 2-1 defeat to hosts Iraq on Friday in a mixed start to the regional championship, giving the Palestinians little room for error if they are to advance to the final on August 14.

But even if Palestine's WAFF Championship tilt ends at the group stage, Ould Ali sees the competition as important preparation for the crucial Asian Qualifiers to come.

"When we participate in WAFF Championship, we have two goals," said the Algerian. "The first is to compete in this tournament, and the second is to work on preparing the team for the Asian Qualifiers for the World Cup 2022 and Asian Cup 2023.

"The work we did in the first two matches gives us positive indications before playing the first match of the Asian Qualifiers one month from now."

That match, against Uzbekistan on September 5, is the start of an eight-game campaign which will also pit them against Singapore and Saudi Arabia, as well as Yemen, who they defeated last Tuesday.

Palestine appeared on track for another win, this time against the hosts, when an Islam Batran penalty put them 1-0 up inside three minutes on Friday, but goals from Mohanad Abdulraheem and Hussein Ali sealed an impressive Iraqi recovery.

Despite the defeat, which significantly dents their chances of reaching the final as group winners, Ould Ali is buoyed by the experience thus far in Karbala.

"Although we lost, we will continue to work strongly in the coming matches as we still want to compete and also want to continue developing our performance," he said.

"The positive thing in this match was we scored early, as we usually don't score in the first minutes. On the other side, we still have some work to do in the offensive and defensive sides and also the players reaction after we conceded was not as we hoped.

"Playing in such weather in front of such a big crowd was good for us, because we will face Asian teams in different conditions." (Source: the-afc)



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GUIDE TO  
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

He who persists in enmity, causes damage to himself, and he who neglects it, is oppressed, and a vengeful person can never be virtuous and fearful of God.

*Imam Ali (AS)*

## Online galleries inevitable in global art market

**1 →** Visual artist Setareh Hosseini also believes that online galleries enjoy a significant position in today's world where online systems, audio applications and online services are proliferating rapidly.

“Online galleries can provide a better chance to watch, buy and sell artworks with fewer intermediaries,” she said.

“Art lovers can look at a variety of artworks by different artists while sitting at home and relaxing. They can even choose and purchase one,” she remarked.

She added, “The galleries can also provide the visitors with films that document various processes of the creation of artworks, helping visitors get much closer to the world of the artists from a remote and distant place.”

However, she noted, “Looking at an artwork closely and drowning in the details and moments of its creation still has its own beauty and glory.”

Artibition is an Iranian online marketplace. It gives the chance to visitors to check and carefully view and even compare several works by different artists at the same time. It also provides information on any auctions and art sales in advance.

However, it may not be pleasing to all art lovers to seek works on their computers or cell phones.

They cannot get the feel of seeing a real painting with all its details except by standing right in front of them.

A sculpture with all its beautiful rhythm can attract any visitor while standing right in the corner of a gallery, giving moments of joy to an art lover. This may not be the case with an online image.

Being engaged in conversation with other visitors and even the artists themselves and exchanging views can also be an advantage for a real gallery.

However, one must admit that online galleries will probably gradually replace real galleries in the near future as online services grow faster and faster.

It seems that galleries these days need to continue their activities despite the growing technology of modern life, while looking for various ways to bring back life to the art galleries. In this way visitors can be brought back to the galleries despite the crowded and hectic life of today.

## Cinema Cinema Academy announces nominees for Leading Figure of the Year title

**A R T TEHRAN** — Nine cineastes and an official are competing for the award for the Leading Figure of the Year as the Cinema Cinema Academy, Iran's first private film academy, announced the nominees for the title on Tuesday.

Filmmakers Narges Abyar, Mohsen Amiryusefi, Bahram Tavakkoli, Saeid Rustai, Hooman Seyyedi and Reza Mirkarimi, actors Navid Mohammadzadeh, Javad Ezzati and Ali Nasirini and Cinema Organization of Iran director Hossein Entezami are the nominees.

The nominees were selected in a poll of 200 film critics, journalists and media personalities.

The Leading Figure of the Year will receive the Mehrgiah award during the Cinema Cinema Academy Awards, which will be held at Tehran's Enqelab Hotel on August 10.

The organizers have named the award “Mehrgiah” (mandrake), which is considered to be a mythical plant and the symbol of fertility, love and unity in Iranian culture. The award made of bronze represents a mandrake with five leaves placed on a rock-shaped stand.

Comedy actor Reza Attaran was named as the Leading Figure of the Year last year.

The Cinema Cinema Academy Awards can be considered to be the Iranian equivalent of the Oscars.

**Cartoonist Shahram Rezai dies in car crash**

**A R T TEHRAN** — Iranian cartoonist Shahram Rezai died in a car crash on Ardebil-Meshkin Shahr road on Monday, his fellow cartoonist Hadi Heidari told the Persian service of ISNA on Tuesday. He was 41.

Rezai, who was also a teacher and university professor, had received over 100 awards at the Iranian and international events.

In 2017, he won second prize at the 34th Aydin Dogan International Cartoon Competition in Turkey.

# “The Last Fiction” world premiere set for Sept. 1

**A R T TEHRAN** — Iranian director Ashkan Rahgozar's acclaimed animated movie “The Last Fiction” will have its world premiere on September 1 in the Nordic countries of Sweden, Finland and Norway.

The U.S. theaters will begin screening the movie on September 27, Hoorakhsh Studio, where the movie has been produced, announced on Tuesday.

On October 1, the film will be screened in Russia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Spain, Greece, Albania, Serbia, Romania, Slovenia and several other countries.

“The Last Fiction” recounts a story from Persian poet Ferdowsi's epic masterpiece Shahnameh. It is about Zahak's treacherous rise to the throne in Jamshid in Persia. The young and naive hero Afaridoun will have to save the kingdom and its people from darkness. But he must first conquer his own demons in this portrayal of Persian mythology that reveals human nature.

An all-star cast including Parviz Parastui, Leila Hatami, Hamed Behdad, Baran Kowsari, Askhan Khatibi, Akbar Zanjapur and Farrokh Nematii have lent their voices to the characters in the production.

The world-renowned Iranian vocalist Shahram Nazeri has sung the closing credits song in the movie, which has been acclaimed at several prestigious Iranian and international events.

It was named best animated film at the 37th Fajr Film Festival in Tehran in February. The 3rd Southern Cone International Film Festival-FICCSUR, which was held in Valparaiso, Chile in May, picked the film as best animation.



A scene from “The Last Fiction” by Ashkan Rahgozar.

## “Beloved” producer Elaheh Nobakht honored at Slovenian festival



*“Beloved” producer Elaheh Nobakht (R) receives the Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Development of Cinematography by a Woman from jury member Zeynep Ozbatur Atakan at the 4th Kranjska Gora International Film Festival in Kranjska Gora, Slovenia on August 3, 2019.*

**A R T TEHRAN** — Iranian producer Elaheh Nobakht was honored with a special award for her collaboration in director Yasser Talebi's acclaimed documentary “Beloved” at the 4th Kranjska Gora International Film Festival in Slovenia.

She received the Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Development of Cinematography by a Woman from jury member Zeynep Ozbatur Atakan during the closing ceremony of the festival on August 3, the organizers announced.

The film is about an 82-year-old woman who prefers a hard, solitary herder's existence with her cows to a more comfortable life among people.

The documentary has received many awards at several international festivals.

The most recent honors were bestowed on July 13 during the Sole Luna Doc Film Festival in Palermo, Italy.

The film received the best photography award and the High School Students Award in the Journey Section.

It was also honored at the 67th Trento Film Festival in May in Italy. The film received the jury special mention and a UNESCO honorable mention.

In addition, “Beloved” has taken first place among the top five mid-length films selected by audience votes at the Hot Docs festival in Canada, Toronto in May.

Earlier last week, Iran's Experimental and Documentary Film Center announced that “Beloved” will compete at the 13th Asia Pacific Screen Awards (APSA), which will be held in Brisbane, Australia in November.

The film was screened during the opening ceremony of the Kranjska Gora festival, which took place in the Slovenian city from July 27 to August 3.

## Isfahan festival focus turns to cinema of Iran's neighboring countries



*Director of the 32nd International Film Festival for Children and Youth in Isfahan, Alireza Tabesh, attends a press conference at the Farabi Cinema Foundation in Tehran on August 6, 2019. (IFFCY)*

**A R T TEHRAN** — The director of the 32nd International Film Festival for Children and Youth in Isfahan, Alireza Tabesh, said on Tuesday that the festival's special focus is on films from Iran's neighboring countries.

“Films from Georgia and Tatarstan will be screened in special programs during the festival,” he stated a press conference held at the Farabi Cinema Foundation in Tehran.

Several workshops have also been arranged on the sidelines of the festival, which will be attended by a significant number of guests from across the world, he added.

“The development of the children's film market is of high significance for the organizers and we are expecting more film companies to attend the market,” Tabesh noted.

The organizers plan to honor three Iranian cineastes for their lifetime achievements in children's cinema this year.

Screen and stage actress Maryam Saadat, filmmaker Mahin Javaherian and former

director of the Fajr Film Festival Alireza Rezadad are the three honorees.

The festival will be running in the central Iranian city of Isfahan from August 19 to 26.

A selection of 12 feature films and 10 animated movies will be screened in the international competition of the festival.

Among the films are “The Mystery of Green Hill” by Cejen Cernic from Croatia, “Hacker” by Poul Berg from Denmark and “Creek of Silence” by Vladimir Potapov from Russia.

In addition, eleven animated movies and nine short films have been selected from different countries to be screened at the festival.

The organizers also announced earlier that a selection of movies honored at different editions of the Annecy International Animated Film Festival in France will go on screen during the festival.

In addition, eight features and animations by Danish filmmakers will be reviewed during a special program.

## 3 new films to go on screen at Iranian theaters

**A R T TEHRAN** — “The Main Idea”, “A Man without Shadow” and “Janan” will go on screen at Iranian theaters across the country on Wednesday.

“The Main Idea” by Azita Mugui is about the serious attempt made by people and companies to win a tender for a joint project between Iran and Spain on Hendurabi Island in Iran.

With an all-star cast, the film tells the story of a divorced couple, each of whom tries to win the tender,

while they have a very strong rivalry.

“A Man without Shadow” starring Leila Hatami and Ali Mosaffa is about a filmmaker, who is making a documentary on domestic violence and honor killing, which little by little impacts his personal life. Alireza Reisian is the director of the film.

Directed by Kamran Qadakhchian, “Janan” is about a romantic girl who finds a letter, which uncovers an old love story in her family.

## “Supernatural”, “Arrow” makers: CW dramas ending on a high

**BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)** — The makers of “Supernatural” and “Arrow” say they're bringing the CW shows to a close at the right time.

“You don't want to be the last person at a party, even if it's the best party on the planet,” said Jared Padalecki, who's paired with co-star Jensen Ackles as the evil-busting Winchester brothers on “Supernatural.” Its 15th season, debuting Oct. 10, will be its last.

“Arrow” producer Marc Guggenheim also compared the superhero show to a gala that's still going strong. Its eighth and final season with star Stephen Amell begins Oct. 15.

“We all would much prefer to go out on a high note, and go out while people are still talking about the show rather than being, like, ‘That show's still on the air?’” he said.

While the “Supernatural” stars felt it was time to end their long run, Ackles told a TV critics meeting Sunday that taping

the final episodes will be difficult.

“I'm just hoping to stave off the emotion until at least episode 19, 18, somewhere in there,” he said. “And then who knows what's going to happen? It's going to be a big shift in a lot of our lives.”

CW President Mark Pedowitz saluted the 15-season run as a “remarkable achievement.”

“As we always said ... when they were ready to stop, we will stop. And for them and for Stephen Amell on ‘Arrow,’ these shows will go out the way they were supposed to go,” he said. “But if you can convince them to come back, I'm open.”

Ackles speculated this may just be a break in the “Supernatural” journey, although CW's attempts at spinoffs haven't succeeded.

“Am I saying there's something in the works? No. Am I saying I would be open to having a conversation about this in the future? What is the harm in that?” said Ackles, who plans to take his character's



Jared Padalecki, left, and Jensen Ackles participate in The CW “Supernatural: Final Season” panel during the Summer 2019 Television Critics Association Press Tour at the Beverly Hilton Hotel on Sunday, Aug. 4, 2019, in Beverly Hills, Calif. (Photo by Richard Shotwell/Invision/AP)

well-worn boots with him as a souvenir.

“Arrow” star Amell was asked how to square his recent claim of a happy ending for the show, despite rumors that

his character Oliver Queen, aka Green Arrow, doesn't survive.

“That's not a spoiler,” Amell replied, prompting Guggenheim to jump in.

While a character did tell Oliver that he's going to die, the producer said, there's more than one way to consider possible outcomes. He then proceeded to muddy the waters.

“When I read about this online and people are asking us questions, they're thinking about things in a very binary way, that the ending will either be X or Y. And all I would say is, I think we have Z planned,” Guggenheim said.

In its final season, “Arrow” will be part of what CW is billing as the biggest crossover yet for its shows drawn from the world of DC Comics. Titled “Crisis on Infinite Earths,” the story will unfold from Dec. 8 to Jan. 14 on episodes of “Supergirl,” “Batwoman,” “The Flash,” “Arrow” and “DC's Legends of Tomorrow.”