



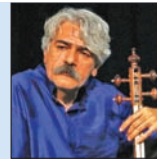
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VP inaugurates development projects in Khorasan Razavi

TEHRAN — Iranian First Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri inaugurated several industrial, infrastructure and development projects in Khorasan Razavi Province in northeastern Iran during a two-day visit to the region.

Some 2500 construction and development projects as well as several production units including a beverage

production line, a dioxide production unit and a dairy production unit, along with the line 2 of Mashhad subway were among the projects inaugurated by the vice President.

Jahangiri arrived in Khorasan Razavi Province on Thursday heading a high-ranking delegation. **→ 4**

Foreign military presence in Persian Gulf fuels insecurity, Hatami warns

TEHRAN — In phone conversations on Thursday, Iranian Defense Minister Amir Hatami discussed the security situation in the Persian Gulf region with Kuwaiti, Qatari and Omani defense ministers, warning about formation of a military coalition in the Persian Gulf under the U.S. leadership to supposedly protect maritime security.

"Military coalition which the United States seeks to form under the pretext of

the shipping security will just cause insecurity in the region," General Hatami said.

He added, "We consider ourselves committed to maintain security in the region, especially in the Persian Gulf region. The Islamic Republic of Iran has spared no effort in maintaining security for navigation in the Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz and Sea of Oman. We believe that regional security must be maintained by the countries in the region." **→ 2**

No law needed for U.S. exit from Iraq: Fatah Alliance

TEHRAN — Hadi al-Amiri, the leader of Iraq's Fatah Alliance, has insisted on the need for the pullout of U.S. forces from Iraq, saying no law is needed for the withdrawal, the Fars news agency reported on Friday.

Earlier, Iraq's two leading Shia parliamentary coalitions of Sairoon (Marching Towards Reform) and Fatah Alliance (Conquest) had renewed their calls for the withdrawal

of American forces from the Arab country.

The U.S., backed by the UK, invaded Iraq in 2003 claiming that the former regime of Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction.

No such weapons, however, were ever found, and the invaders withdrew from Iraq, after nearly nine years of a military campaign that cost hundreds of thousands of Iraqi lives. **→ 13**



PERSPECTIVE

Hanif Ghaffari
Head of the Tehran Times
Politics Desk

Beijing's expanding power over Washington

The President of the United States continues to feel weak and helpless against China. At the beginning of the 2017, Donald Trump tried to contain Beijing by restrictive economic policies. At the time, Trump stated that the \$ 346 billion US trade deficit was due to trade with China. We are now in year 2019 and this trade deficit has reached \$ 419 billion! This shows well that Trump's economic policies toward Beijing have failed. This will undoubtedly have an impact on the presidential election of the year. Many US citizens thought that Trump could reach a deal with Beijing by the end of the 2017 (in the interests of US economic interests), but the White House has practically failed to confront China.

China's stoppage of US agricultural products and Beijing's imposition of reciprocal tariffs on American products indicate that this Asian power does not intend to surrender to the United States. In such circumstances, there will be no opportunity for President Donald Trump and his companions to maneuver.

Many US economic and policy analysts believe that in year 2020, China will be one of the actors that will hurt Trump in the presidential race. However, China has now become a symbol of America's economic and political failure in the world. The popularity of Trump has dropped in recent polls in the United States. Donald Trump's calculations have been incorrect in many cases! This has exacerbated Republican concerns over next year's presidential elections. An overview of the results of recent polls in the United States shows that Trump has a difficult path to re-election.

As The Hill reported, More than 50 percent of respondents in a new survey say they will not vote for President Trump when he seeks reelection in 2020. The ABC News-Washington Post poll released Monday found that 55 percent of respondents said they will not vote for Trump next year, with only 39 percent approving of his work since taking office. Of respondents who were asked if they would vote from Trump in 2020, 14 percent said they would consider it and 28 percent said they definitely would vote for him to have a second term in the White House.

Healthy economy is antidote to sanctions on Iran: leading scholar

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
By Negar Asadi

TEHRAN — A prominent scholar, believes that fighting corruption and building a healthy foundation for economy are catalysts to resist sanctions and external pressure on Iran.

"What is important is to adopt policies to have a foundation of a healthy economy in order to be able to counter external pressure," Modjtaba Sadria told the Tehran Times in an interview on Thursday.

Sadria, an expert on East Asia, cited China and its resistance against the U.S. sanctions as an example.

China has adopted clear and coherent policies which resulted in a "strong foundation for national

economy" and also a very "strong social base" to counter the U.S. pressure, Sadria explained.

"Between 1848 (opium war) and 1949 (Chinese revolution), a deep desire of independence grew in China. Xi Jinping [the Chinese president] has undertaken huge program of economic transformation of China in order not to depend on Chinese trade with the United States," he explained.

He said that the U.S. pressure is not tolerated in China.

Referring to China's act in suspending purchases of U.S. agricultural products, Sadria said, "This is one of the examples of Chinese tools to retaliate the Trump administration's show of force to China."

China announced on Tuesday that it has suspended purchases of U.S. agricultural prod-

ucts in retaliation for a "serious violation" of agreements between President Xi Jinping and his counterpart Donald Trump.

Sadria said, "On the sidelines of a G20 summit in Osaka, Japan, Trump and Xi met and reached agreement on reducing sanctions by the U.S. However, Trump restored those sanctions. These actions which are unilateralism in the international relations are not tolerated by China. Trump cannot use sanctions as bargaining tools against a country which is the second largest economy in the world."

"Today, China is a society to which you cannot show off power with the game of sanctions," he added.

He also said that the U.S. has not any leverage to impose sanctions on other countries unilaterally and act as the "lone superpower". **→ 2**

Saudi airport targeted twice in fresh Yemeni drone attacks

TEHRAN — Yemeni armed forces have conducted two drone strikes on an airport in Saudi Arabia's southwestern Asir province, as the war-ravaged country continues to push back against a brutal Saudi-led war that has killed thousands of civilians and displaced millions more.

In the first attack, the Yemeni forces, led by the Houthi Ansarullah movement, used Qasif-2K domestically-developed unmanned aircraft to target the control tower of Abha International Airport in Abha, the region's capital.

The second attack saw the drones hit a number of strategic targets within the airport.

General Yahya Saree said the drone strikes were a response to "crimes of aggression and siege against Yemeni people."

Saudi Arabia and a number of its regional allies

-- mainly the United Arab Emirates (UAE)-- launched a devastating campaign against Yemen in March 2015, with the goal of bringing the government of former Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi back to power and crushing the Ansarullah movement.

Saudi Arabia and its allies have also blockaded Yemen's aerial and maritime borders, under the pretext that the Houthis use them to obtain missile parts and weapons.

The U.S.-based Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), a nonprofit conflict-research organization, estimates that the Saudi-led war has claimed the lives of over 60,000 Yemenis since January 2016.

The war has also taken a heavy toll on the country's infrastructure, destroying hospitals, schools, and factories. The UN says over 24 million Yemenis

are in dire need of humanitarian aid, including 10 million suffering from extreme levels of hunger.

Yemeni drones hit Saudi-funded mercenaries; Saudi spy drone downed

Before attacking the airport, Yemeni armed forces and popular committees carried out another drone strike on a group of Saudi-mercenaries, who enjoyed support from warplanes and reconnaissance aircraft near al-Sudais in the Najran province.

According to Press TV, a military source told Almasirah television network that the Yemeni fighters killed and wounded a number of mercenaries and shot down a spy UAV.

The spokesman said the casualties were expected to be much more as Yemeni artillery units also pounded the area where the mercenaries had been stationed.



© IRNA/ Ali Hamed Haghdoust

Traditional dyeing workshops still popular in Iran

Two Iranian men are preparing a traditional dye bath to color piles of wool yarns in a decades-old workshop in Tabriz, north-western Iran, August 7, 2019.

Tabriz was named the world city of carpet by the World Crafts Council in 2015. Its carpets usually show a medallion decorative scheme, ranging from a single medallion to the complexity of a star centerpiece with pendants and cartouches, reflected by quarter-medallions similarly elaborated in the corners of the field.

Persian carpets are sought after internationally for their delicate designs and good quality. **→ 7**



ARTICLE

Yurum Abdullah Weiler
Analyst and journalist

El Paso Mass Shooting: Symptomatic of an American malignancy

"Truly We created you from a male and a female, and We made you peoples and tribes that you may come to know one another."

Holy Quran 49:13

On Saturday, August 3, 2019, a young American male entered a Walmart store in El Paso, Texas and opened fire, killing 22 people, eight of whom were Mexican nationals. The rampage, which was one more mass shooting on an ever-lengthening list of such abominations, elicited a predictable outpouring of heartfelt grief, sympathy and concern for the victims and families, but few dared to suggest that this tragedy was merely symptomatic of a tenacious and longstanding American societal malignancy.

This malignancy has two virulent components: gun violence and white supremacy. White supremacy stems from the white Euro-colonizers who originally established the U.S. on the blood of millions of Native Americans. Author and lecturer Barbara Alice Mann has not exaggerated when she refers to the colonization of North America as "a 500-year organized crime spree." The capitalists who descended from the original white Euro-colonizers amassed their fortunes by the trading in and using slave labor. As Professor Julia Ott of the New School for Social Research writes, "Racialized chattel slaves were the capital that made capitalism."

Native People's scholar Vine Deloria, Jr. explains how the whites viewed the Native and African Americans. "Because the Negro labored, he was considered a draft animal," explained Deloria, "Because the Indian occupied large areas of land he was considered a wild animal." Highlighting the tenacity of white supremacy, Deloria writes, "Whites have always refused to give non-whites the respect which they have been found to legally possess." He goes on to point out that when it comes to the legal rights of non-whites, there is a contemptuous disregard exhibited by the whites. **→ 7**

Iran says has right to counter Israeli presence in U.S.-led coalition in Persian Gulf

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Tehran says it has a right to counter the presence of Israel in a U.S.-led coalition in the Persian Gulf.

In a statement released on the Foreign Ministry website on Friday, the ministry spokesman condemned the Israeli regime's decision to join the coalition, saying it is "a clear threat to Iran's national security".

"Iran reserves the right to counter this threat within the framework of the country's defense policy and responsibility because all the consequences of this dangerous act would lie with the American regime and the illegitimate Zionist regime," Seyyed Abbas Mousavi stressed.

According to local reports, Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz said on Tuesday that Tel Aviv will join the U.S.-led coalition.

"Iran believes the presence of ultra-regional forces in the Persian Gulf under any name and title will not only fail to help reinforce the region's security, but will further prepare the grounds for tension and crisis in the sensitive Persian Gulf region," Mousavi stated.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran has announced its opposition to the formation of such coalitions and considers it a deceptive act which create tensions," he added.

Mousavi also said Tehran will regard the organizers, founders, and members of such a coalition as the culprits behind possible tensions and crises that would emanate from such a move.

The remarks came against the backdrop of increased tensions between Iran and the U.S. after the Islamic Republic shot down an advanced U.S. spy drone over its territorial waters.

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said 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 Kooch-e-Mobarak region in the southern province of Hormozgan.

The invading drone was shot by Iran's homegrown air defense missile system "Khordad-3rd".

Later on the same day, U.S. President Donald Trump said he had called off a retaliatory attack on a number of targets in Iran and said that he was ready to speak with Iranian leaders and come to an understanding that would allow the country to improve its economic prospects. "What I'd like to see with Iran, I'd like to see them call me."

"I look forward to the day where we can actually help Iran. We're not looking to hurt Iran," Trump added.

However, on June 24 Trump announced new sanctions against top Iranian officials, including the office of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei and senior commanders of the IRGC.

On June 30, the U.S. officially asked Germany to participate — alongside Britain and France — in the coalition, a request that was declined by German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas a day later. The UK, however, later accepted to join the coalition.

Iran's defense chief said on Thursday that the U.S.-proposed coalition, which Washington purports would seek to beef up maritime security in the Strait of Hormuz, will foment insecurity in the region.

Such a coalition "will only increase regional insecurity," Brigadier General Amir Hatami told his Kuwaiti, Qatari, and Omani counterparts during separate telephone conversations.

UN says Iran's letter protesting sanctions on Zarif circulated to Security Council

By staff and agency

UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said on Wednesday that a letter by Iran, which asks the United Nations for pushback against the U.S. sanctions on Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad "is being circulated to the Security Council".

He added the UN chief calls on all parties to avoid any actions that would escalate an already very tense situation, according to Xinhua.



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.

President Hassan Rouhani said on Tuesday 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 (among Iranians)," he said.

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

Majid Takht Ravanchi, Iran's permanent representative to the United Nations, wrote a letter to UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres on Tuesday protesting the U.S. sanctions on Zarif, saying that this move signifies a "gross violation" of the UN Charter.

"Ironically, the officials of the current administration of the United States have claimed that the illegal sanctions have been imposed due to the role and position of our Foreign Minister, who is the responsible authority for the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Infatuated with rogue, unreasonable conducts at the international level, this well signifies that the U.S. regime despises diplomacy, which is one of the greatest achievements of humanity to preserve and uphold peace and security among nations. It reveals the deeply-rooted hypocrisy of the United States' authorities in their different but paradoxical claims," he said.

He added, "Although the unlawful move is claimed to target Iran's Minister of Foreign Affairs, considering the official and shameless claims of the U.S. administration, this illegal restriction is part of its overall policy in waging economic terrorism against the Iranian people and bringing pressure to bear on their representatives."

Abu Dhabi can't afford to keep Iran out of Dubai

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — An economic commentator says the

financial contribution of Iranians in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates' business center, has been so large over the past years that Abu Dhabi, the Arab country's political capital, would have to pay a heavy price to continue to keep Iranians out of Dubai under U.S. sanctions.

Writing an article in Lobe Log on Thursday, Esfandiar Batmanghelidj, an Iran-West business diplomacy expert and Columbia University graduate, says new official moves are in the making to revive old business ties between the two Persian Gulf neighbors.

■ **The article reads:**

As the world teeters on the edge of another financial crisis, few places are being gripped by anxiety like Dubai. Every week a new headline portends the coming crisis in the city of skyscrapers. Dubai villa prices are at their lowest level in a decade, down 24 percent in just one year. A slump in tourism has seen Dubai hotels hit their lowest occupancy rate since the 2008 financial crisis, even as the country gears up to host the Expo 2020 next year. As Bloomberg's Zainab Fattah reported in November of last year, Dubai has begun to "lose its shine," its role as a center for global commerce "undermined by a global tariff war—and in particular by the U.S. drive to shut down commerce with nearby Iran."

Dubai, an entrepôt where the workers are migrants and where property is king, is especially vulnerable to global recessions. In the immediate aftermath of the global financial crisis in 2009, Dubai's real estate market collapsed, threatening insolvency for several banks and major development companies, some of them state-linked. Abu Dhabi, which controls the UAE's vast oil wealth, threw Dubai a lifeline with an initial \$10 billion bailout, later expanded to \$20 billion.

But there was a second, hidden "bailout" that helped keep Dubai afloat. When the Bush administration enacted the Iran Sanctions Act in 2006, deepening Iran's economic turmoil



under President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, there was a significant increase in the already significant volume of capital flight from Iran, most of which landed in Dubai. One 2009 estimate places the total value of Iranian investments in Dubai at \$300 billion.

While global investors pulled their capital out of Dubai in the aftermath of the global financial crisis, the Iranian business community mostly stayed put, maintaining their deposits in Dubai's teetering banks. Iranians continued to invest in Dubai's ailing property market and used Dubai's ports to conduct re-exports as sanctions restricted Iran's direct access to global markets. For Iran's captains of industry and finance, Dubai was not some far flung emerging market, but a vital channel to the global economy in the face of tightening sanctions. As Iranian economist Saeed Laylaz smartly observed in 2009, "Dubai is the most important city on earth to the Islamic Republic of Iran, with the exception of Tehran."

The financial crisis and U.S. sanctions had served to deepen the mutual dependence between Dubai and Iran—an outcome that ran counter to the goals of policymakers in both Abu Dhabi and Washington.

The Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and the

de-facto ruler of the UAE, Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed (MBZ), has long seen Iran as a rival. MBZ is hostile to Iranian influence over Dubai, where many of the leading trading families can trace their roots to Iran, a legacy of centuries of trade in the Persian Gulf. MBZ's dream of an assertive UAE would have been undercut had Dubai continued to develop into the Hong Kong to Iran's China.

The Obama administration's effort to build a multilateral sanctions campaign offered MBZ the opportunity to curtail Iran's presence in Dubai's economy. As they sought to isolate Iran economically, U.S. officials traveled to Dubai to meet with banks and companies to discourage them from engaging in commercial activities with Iran. Rather than resisting U.S. interference in the UAE's economic sovereignty, Abu Dhabi amplified the American message—the bailout had put Abu Dhabi in a position to dictate policy to Dubai. The new policy called for Dubai to close its doors to Iranian money.

In subsequent years, the presence of Iranians in Dubai's economy has diminished significantly. Trade persists, but banks refuse Iran-origin funds, close the accounts of Iranian companies, and deny services to individuals who maintain Iranian citizenship.

Foreign military presence in Persian Gulf fuels insecurity, Hatami warns

Iran's defense minister discusses Persian Gulf security with Kuwaiti, Qatari and Omani counterparts

➡ He noted that the regional countries should enter constructive talks in this respect.

The defense chief blamed the U.S. as the main culprit behind insecurity in the region.

Pointing to Israel's decision to join a U.S.-led coalition in the Persian Gulf region, Hatami said, "Such probable action will be very provocative and can cause catastrophic consequences for the region."

Sheikh Nasser Bin Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the Kuwaiti defense minister, said that Iran has very important and effective status in the region which is respected by Kuwait.

Qatari Defense Minister Khalid bin

Mohammad Al Attiyah also said, "We have no doubt that regional security should be maintained by the [Persian] Gulf littoral states, and the Islamic Republic of Iran is a very important country to protect security in the Gulf."

Also, Omani Defense Minister Bader bin Saood Al Busaidi attached great importance to the regional countries' involvement in protecting security of the region.

Tensions in the Persian Gulf have been on the rise over the past several months. The Pentagon has deployed aircraft carriers, fighter jets and military forces to the region

to counter what it claims Iran's threats to U.S. interests.

The tensions started escalating after British Royal Marines were involved in the seizure of Iranian oil tanker Grace 1 off Gibraltar, claiming that the ship was carrying oil to Syria in breach of EU sanctions. Iran called it an act of "piracy" and denied that it was carrying oil to Syria.

Days later, Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps seized British-flagged Stena Impero in the Strait of Hormuz for violation of maritime rules and regulations.

Recently, Iranian Foreign Minister Mo-



hammad Javad Zarif said Iran will no longer ignore violation of law in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz.

Healthy economy is antidote to sanctions on Iran: leading scholar

“Today, China is a society to which you cannot show off power with the game of sanctions,” Sadria says

➡ "When China takes retaliatory action against the U.S. unilateralism and pressure, it affects not only the U.S. economy, but the whole global economy," he pointed out.

He noted that China has adopted policies in line with the growth of its national economy that the U.S. cannot harm it by imposing sanctions or exerting pressure.

Trump and Xi held a summit during the G20 in Osaka, Japan in June.

Xinhua reported that the two leaders had agreed to resume economic and trade negotiations, and that the U.S. said it would not impose any new tariffs on Chinese products.

However, Trump announced last week that the U.S. would put a new 10 percent tariff on \$300 billion worth of imports from China.

China "has not ruled out import tariffs on U.S. agricultural products purchased after August 3, and related Chinese companies have suspended purchasing U.S. agricultural products," Xinhua said.

American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall said in a statement issued after news of China's retaliatory measures, "China's announcement that it will not buy any agricultural products from the United States is a body blow to thousands of farmers and ranchers who are already struggling to get by."



■ **'U.S. move to form coalition in Persian Gulf is show of bargaining strategy'**

Sadria also said that the U.S. move to form a maritime coalition in the Persian Gulf is a "show of bargaining strategy rather than execution of threats" and is not based on realities in the world.

"Washington is trying to apply its bargaining policies against Iran and form a coalition like it created against Iraq in 2003," he said.

“The U.S. efforts to form alliance in the Persian Gulf is more a show of a bargaining strategy which cannot pose a threat against Iran.”

U.S. goes all out in spying on Iran's oil sales: NY Times

Ptess TV — The CIA spy ring dismantled by Iran's Intelligence Ministry last month was trying to gather intelligence on Iran's oil sales, a new report by The New York Times reveals.

On July 22, Iran's Intelligence Ministry announced it had identified and destroyed an integrated network of operatives serving the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) inside the country.

The Ministry's director-general for counterin-

telligence said that Iran captured 17 professional spies working on behalf of the CIA throughout last year and some of those arrested had been handed death sentences.

"The identified spies were employed in sensitive and vital private sector centers in the economic, nuclear, infrastructural, military and cyber areas... where they collected classified information," the unnamed official said in a statement.

Now, it appears that the espionage involved

clandestine efforts to gather intelligence on oil sales, The New York Times said.

According to the report, citing two traders, many of the 17 people accused of spying had worked in the oil and energy sector as traders and brokers.

"They had come under scrutiny because of contacts with foreigners on their trips abroad."

The suspects arrested in Iran were operating in key organizations and institutions mainly

in the private sector, an Iranian official said at the time.

He noted that the CIA had recruited the individuals by mainly contacting them over the internet.

Other tactics included issuing or renewing U.S. visas, hiring Iranian specialists, providing necessary equipment and access to certain participants in scientific events abroad, sending emails and messaging through social media.

Iran has pushed enemies toward isolation: general

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** – The deputy chief of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has said Iran's enemies are in a position of "passiveness" due to the country's power and influence, adding that Iran has successfully pushed its enemies toward isolation.

"It has become clear to the world, especially our enemies, that the power of our revolution is exemplary and that they cannot stand against it," Brigadier General Ali Fadavi said on Thursday, Tasnim reported.

General Fadavi added that although the enemies cannot express such weakness because of their arrogant nature, their actions and behavior clearly show that they are unable to resist the Islamic Revolution's power.

Brigadier General Ahmadreza Pourdastan, head of the Iranian Army's Strategic Studies, has predicted that the United States will collapse in the near future while the Islamic Republic



will continue to flourish.

General Pourdastan also pointed to a U.S. decision to form a coalition in the Persian Gulf, saying, "Except for one or two countries, other countries are not part of this coalition."

"The coalition has failed before being formed," Pourdastan added, Mehr reported on Friday. The Pentagon has said recently that the U.S. was working on a new security initiative in the Persian Gulf by "shining a flashlight" in the region to deter attacks on commercial ships.

"The goal is to increase maritime domain awareness and surveillance capabilities in the region to dissuade malign action," said Kathryn Wheelbarger, one of the most senior policy officials at the Pentagon. Under a plan detailed on July 9, the U.S. would provide coordinating ships and lead surveillance efforts while participants in the coalition patrolled nearby waters and escorted commercial vessels with their nation's flags.

Cleric urges India to stop acting against Muslims

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** – Tehran Friday prayer leader Ayatollah Mohammad-Ali Movahedi Kermani has urged the Indian government to stop its anti-Muslim actions in Kashmir, saying such measures would not be to the benefit of neither India nor the region.

Tensions have been running high in Kashmir since Monday, when New Delhi revoked Article 370, a constitutional provision that had come into effect in 1949 and grants special status to Kashmir, allowing it to have its own flag and constitution, among other rights.

In the lead-up to the move, India sent thousands of additional troops to the disputed region, imposing a curfew on parts of it, arrested political leaders and shut down telecommunication lines.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Ayatollah Movahedi Kermani pointed to the Yem-

eni crisis, saying Saudi Arabia has sunk into a quagmire in Yemen and has been trying to save itself to no avail.

He further said that Riyadh has been defeated in Yemen, adding that Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei had predicted such defeat.

On the other hand, Movahedi Kermani said, the UAE has changed its position on Yemen.

The cleric also pointed to the recent U.S. sanctions on Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, saying on the one hand U.S. President Donald Trump is after dialogue and on the other he sanctions Iran's foreign minister.

"They should know that if negotiations were to take place, which certainly won't, the negotiator would have been the foreign minister," he said. This demonstrates that American rulers have no logic, Movahedi Kermani added.

Advisor voices concerns over Kashmir tensions

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** – Hossein Amir Abdollahian, a senior foreign policy advisor to the Iranian parliament speaker, has voiced concerns over the escalation of tensions over Kashmir, saying the crisis has no military solution.

"Deeply concerned about escalation of tensions in Kashmir.

Welcome peaceful means and dialogue for securing interests of people in Jammu and Kashmir and resolving the crisis," Amir Abdollahian said in a tweet on Thursday.

"Kashmir has no military solution. Regional-International approach, especially under OIC initiative is a must," he added.

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1949 and grants special status to Kashmir, allowing it to have its own flag and constitution, among other rights.

In the lead-up to the move, India sent thousands of additional troops to the disputed region, imposing a curfew on parts of it, arrested political leaders and shut down telecommunication lines.

Kashmir has been split between India and Pakistan since partition in 1947. Both countries claim all of Kashmir and have fought three wars over the territory.

Islamabad was quick to denounce India's recent move as illegal, with Prime Minister Imran Khan saying he was weighing taking the matter to the United Nations Security Council.

Pakistan on Wednesday expelled the Indian envoy in Islamabad and announced a five-point plan that included downgrading its ties with New Delhi and suspension of bilateral trade.

Trump swats at Macron for Iran diplomacy

By staff and writer

President Donald Trump on Thursday accused French President Emmanuel Macron of sending "mixed signals" to Iran, Politico reported.

"Iran is in serious financial trouble. They want desperately to talk to the U.S., but are given mixed signals from all of those purporting to represent us, including President Macron of France," Trump wrote on Twitter.

"I know Emmanuel means well, as do all others, but nobody speaks for the United States but the United States itself," Trump continued. "No one is authorized in any way, shape, or form, to represent us!" The president's posts follow reports that Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has shared several

phone conversations with Macron in recent weeks seeking to tamp down tensions surrounding the 2015 nuclear deal and the rising tension in the Persian Gulf.

A French diplomat on Wednesday denied a report that Rouhani had declined a proposal from Macron to meet Trump at the G-7 summit in France later this month, emphasizing that Rouhani had not been invited to the forum of world leaders. The nuclear pact's European partners — France, Germany and the United Kingdom — have sought to salvage the agreement as Iran has steadily stepped away from its provisions in response to the return of sanctions. Iran has said the U.S. must lift all sanctions on Iran if it wants to enter negotiations with Iran.

In his phone call with Macron on Tuesday, Rouhani said

oil export and banking transactions are the "most important economic rights of Iran".

Rouhani insisted on the need to explore "expert and fair solutions" to salvage the nuclear deal from collapsing.

During the phone call, Macron, for his part, reiterated France's commitments to stand by the nuclear deal and to try to find a solution that could both benefit Iran and be accepted by all sides to the agreement.

The Iranian president also touched upon a recent escalation in the Persian Gulf region where the United States is seeking to form a military coalition to allegedly police the Strait of Hormuz, saying the move was a clear provocation at a time when countries like Iran and France were doing their utmost to deescalate the situation.

Iran's military is making strides into twenty-first century technology: National Interest

Whereas (Persian) Gulf Cooperation Council states spend lavishly on high-end, off-the-shelf, U.S.-built platforms, decades of sanctions and post-revolutionary strategic decisions to be militarily self-sufficient has led Islamic Republic to focus more on its own indigenous industries. Direct comparisons of defense spending between Arab states and Iran is difficult.

While a superficial reading of public statistics shows Saudi and Emirati spending far outstrips Iran's as a proportion of GDP, it would be a mistake to take public Iranian statistics at face value.

This should not surprise. Historically, many Middle Eastern countries have approached technology with suspicion, but Iran has been the exception.

In the early twentieth century, for example, Saudi clerics resisted first the introduction of the telegraph and then radio. Into the 1970s, some Saudi clerics complained that television was a plot dreamed up in the West to separate Muslim children from God (some savvy clerics subsequently embraced the medium to spread their radical Wahabi perspectives).

The Iranian Shah Nasir al-Din (r. 1848-1896) sponsored his own telegraph line in Tehran just over a decade after Samuel Morse laid America's first long distance line.

Both the Iranian government and public readily embraced almost every new generational technology. (The Iranian historian Hussein Ardakani, writing only in Persian, chronicled this embrace in his seminal History of the Institutions of a New Civilization in Iran).

The same dynamic has been true regarding the internet.

Many Arab countries initially rejected or sought to suppress internet access as much for cultural reticence as politics, but within the Middle East, Iran and Israel stood in sharp contrast. In 1993, Iran became the second country in the Middle East after Israel to connect to the internet.

As the Iranian leadership embraces new technologies, its whole-of-government approach means that its work occurs not only on military bases, but also in Iran's universities and civilian companies.

There is a persistent tendency within Washington to underestimate Iran.

Simply put, Iranian engineers and scientists are adept at developing cutting edge military technologies.

It has been ten years, for example, since Iran successfully launched its first satellite into orbit.

In the decade since, Iran's space agency has successfully launched more than a half dozen satellites; more satellite launches are slated for this year.

Perhaps this is why last year Iranian scientists developed a gyroscope to augment inertial navigation in Iran's ballistic missiles.

The Iranian government has also encouraged nanotechnology investment.

On January 31, 2015, for example, Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei visited a nanotechnology exhibition and said that Iran ranked seventh internationally in nanotechnology, urged even greater progress. "You should move forward and you should not abandon the thought of making progress—in this area—on a daily basis," he said.

Iranian students in Bushehr subsequently joined a rigorous nanotech education program, and the Iranian government has sponsored nanotechnology Olympiads in which top students can compete against each other and which the Iranian government can use for recruitment.

There have now been eleven nanotechnology festivals in Tehran meant to provide resources for Iranian students and to facilitate partnerships between Iranian firms and foreign partners, and a twelfth slated for October.

Recent incidents not only with the U.S. Navy in the Persian Gulf but also in Syria and Iraq have also highlighted Iran's unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) work.

Iran put its first drone into operation in 1985, a decade or two before many other regional states did.

Today the IRGC maintains perhaps a dozen different UAV models, the newest of which operate in day and night, utilize GPS guidance, and remain airborne for twelve hours at a time.

While diplomats continue to focus on Iran's nuclear program, the next generation of military technology involves hypersonic weaponry, robotics, and autonomous systems.

Tehran and Beijing have created joint nanotech centers in China and active links between Iranian and Chinese nanotech companies. Russian leaders, especially, seem willing not only to export technology to Iran, but also to allow Iranian scientists to manufacture it themselves.

Just this year, Tasnim News announced that Iranian engineers were seeking to manufacture a version of Russia's Pantsir anti-aircraft missile system inside Iran.

Robotics might be the next target of Russo-Iranian cooperation.

On June 24, 2019, Iran's deputy defense minister visited Moscow to attend a "Military-Technical Forum" attended by over twelve hundred Russian and foreign companies, many of which work in robotics.

Russia might be willing to share.

Iran has also said to have reverse-engineered the U.S. RQ-170 downed over Iran in December 2011. As for cyber espionage, the growing Iranian cyber bureaucracy is well-documented, well-resourced, and growing. However it acquires technology, Iranian military tacticians increasingly appear to be incorporating artificial intelligence if not fully autonomous systems into their platforms.

The IRGC has recently drilled "Fuji assaults" in which artificial intelligence helps coordinate boats, planes, tanks, and drones in a broad attack. The IRGC used similar tactics during the battle against the Islamic State in the eastern Euphrates region.

On June 12, 2019, Iranian Air Defense

Armenian PM invites Iranian president to EAEU leaders' meeting

POLITICAL d e s k **YEREVAN (Mediamax)** – Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has invited the Iranian president to participate in Supreme Eurasian Economic Council meeting which will be on October 1 in Yerevan.

Nikol Pashinyan said this in his speech at the session of the Eurasian Intergovernmental Council in Kyrgyzstan.



"In accordance with the agreement between the leaders of the EAEU member states, I have invited the president of Iran to participate in Supreme Eurasian Economic Council meeting in Yerevan," Prime Minister Pashinyan said.

MP: U.S. coalition in Persian Gulf doomed to failure

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** – A top lawmaker has slammed the U.S. decision to form a naval coalition in the Persian Gulf, saying such efforts will definitely lead nowhere.

Hossein Naqavi Hosseini, spokesman for the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, said on Friday that the U.S. coalition would only foment insecurity in the region, Mehr reported.

"Prior to the U.S. interventions in the affairs of the Persian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz, every country used the waterway without any security issue," explained Naqavi Hosseini.

He added that the strategic passage was dragged into challenges as soon as the Americans started their illegal interferences.

Today, the Americans are trying to establish a maritime coalition on the pretext of safeguarding the Strait of Hormuz while they themselves are the main elements sowing insecurity in the region, the top MP said.

"They are not after maintaining security in the region but seek to stir up the conflicts," he added.

Naqavi Hosseini also pointed to the important role of Iran in preserving the security of the Persian Gulf of the Sea of Oman.

"Based on the legal regime of the Strait of Hormuz, Iran is responsible for ensuring the region's security, and every country should respect the legal status," he said.

The U.S. has announced plans to form a Washington-led force amid its attempts to zero out Iran's foreign oil sales as part of its sanctions targeting the Islamic Republic.

On June 30, the U.S. officially asked Germany — alongside Britain and France — to participate in the coalition, a request that was declined by German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas a day later.

This is while Israel has announced that it will join the coalition.

According to Israel-based Y-Net news, Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz said on Tuesday that his country is part of what he called the U.S.-led coalition to protect the security of the Persian Gulf.

Tehran condemns Bahrain for hosting anti-Iran summit

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** – Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi has denounced the Bahraini government for hosting of an anti-Iran summit on maritime security, saying such moves would lead to disruption of security in the Persian Gulf.

In a statement on Thursday, Mousavi also denounced the accusations levelled against the Islamic Republic in recent statements issued by Bahrain's Foreign Ministry.

On July 31, Bahrain, where the U.S.

Fifth Fleet is based, hosted a conference on "maritime security" in the Persian Gulf, after a number of mysterious attacks in the strategic waters, for which Washington has blamed Iran without offering any credible evidence.

The monarchy in a statement on the meeting slammed what it called "repeated attacks and unacceptable practices of Iran.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman says: "Regional countries are expected to ward off tension-provoking foreign interference in the region with prudence and far-sightedness."

"Manama did not release details on who participated in the conference, but the British media reported that the UK had called for a meeting with the participation of other European countries and the United States.

Manama also plans to co-host another anti-Iran international meeting with the U.S. in late October with a focus on what the kingdom and its allies call "Iranian threats" to the security of navigation in the Persian Gulf.

The forum would be a follow-up to the February hostile meeting co-hosted by the U.S. and Poland in Warsaw against Iran.

In his statement, Mousavi said such meetings are a move to disrupt stability and security and pave the way for interference in the Persian Gulf by trans-regional powers and the Zionist regime, the Foreign Ministry website reported.

The spokesman urged Bahraini officials to stop their "injudicious" moves and adopt a constructive approach rather than paving the way for the realization of the common enemies' demands and plots. He said security in each country of the region is closely intertwined with that of others.

"It would not be possible for some [countries] to enjoy security by compromising the security of others," he remarked.

"Regional countries are expected to ward off tension-provoking foreign interference in the region with prudence and far-sightedness."

Iran's military industries have not been able to field the robotic and autonomous systems that now populate American, Chinese, and Russian arsenals, but they may not remain far behind for long.

STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	255163.3
IFX	3418.88

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	47,082 rials
GBP	51,110 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: cbi.ir

COMMODITIES

Brent	\$58.27/b
WTI	\$53.33/b
OPEC Basket	\$57.82/b
Gold	\$1,504.60/oz
Silver	\$17.06/oz
Platinum	\$865.05/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

VP inaugurates industrial, development projects in Khorasan Razavi

1 → Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Reza Rahmani, Agriculture Minister Mahmoud Hojjati, Economy Minister Farhad Dejpasand, and Director of Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation Morteza Bakhtiari as well as managers of some state-run organizations accompanied Jahangiri in his trip. During his visit, Jahangiri also attended a conference on Khorasan Razavi's contribution to resilient economy. The Iranian first vice president also inaugurated some projects finished by Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation in Khorasan Razavi Province via video conference. Last month, Jahangiri visited the southern province of Fars and inaugurated several water, electricity projects.

Iran to dispatch trade delegation to Austria in early-Oct.

ECONOMY **TEHRAN**— Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) in collaboration with Iran-Austria Joint Chamber of Commerce plan to dispatch a trade and marketing delegation to Austria in early-October, the portal of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture



(ICCIMA) reported. The delegates active in a variety of areas including pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, construction, tourism, food industry, energy, recycling, water and wastewater and auto parts are scheduled to visit the European country during October 2-5.

Turkey posts first current account surplus of Erdogan era after crisis

Turkey posted an annual current account surplus for the first time since President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's ruling party came to power 17 years ago after a currency crisis ripped through the economy. According to ahvalnews.com, the surplus for the 12 months to June was \$538 million, the central bank said on its website on Friday. Economic activity in Turkey has slumped since last summer, when the lira slid to a record low against the dollar. The decline in the lira pummeled demand for imports and spurred inflation and interest rates to the highest levels in a decade and a half. Turkey reported the rolling 12-month current account surplus after posting a deficit of \$548 million for June alone, \$2.47 billion lower than the same month a year earlier. The central bank said its foreign currency reserves posted a net outflow of \$2.5 billion. The bank has sought to defend the lira through sales of dollars and euros. The lira fell 0.2 percent to 5.48 per dollar at 10:58 A.M. in Istanbul, weakening from the highest levels since early April. It had hit a 15-year low of 7.22 per dollar last August at the height of the currency crisis. Erdogan's government has sought to portray the erosion of the current account deficit – it had reached 6.5 percent of GDP early last summer – as a reflection of Turkey's economic progress and strength. But the disappearing deficit is largely the result of a slump in imports, which have declined by an annual 20 percent in the first six months of the year. Turkey relies on imports for nearly all its energy needs and imported materials and intermediary goods constitute around 70 percent of the finished products that Turkey exports. Tourism income in Turkey has also helped the deficit to narrow as lower prices drew more visitors to the country. Turkish exports increased an annual 1.9 percent in the first half of the year, official data shows.

TSE value of trades rises 25% in a week

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** – The value of trades at Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE) stood at 50,324 trillion rials (about \$1.198 billion) during the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday) increasing 25 percent from 42.46 trillion rials (about \$1.01 billion) worth of trades in its preceding year, IRIB reported. As reported, some 13,319 billion securities were traded during the past week, showing 28 percent growth compared to its preceding week. TEDPIX, the main index of TSE, rose 718 points to 255,446 in the past week which indicates 0.2 percent rise. The first market index fell 751 points while the second market index gained 7,114 points in that week; price index also increased 197 points. Based on the already released reports and data, Iran's exchange markets witnessed fruitful performances and results in the past Iranian calendar year 1397 (ended on March 20, 2019). Applying new financial instruments in Iranian capital market was another achievements



of the exchange markets during the past year, as TSE officially launched “futures” in mid-December 2018 for more risk management and

IME launched “option” in early March 2019 in an approach to diversify financing methods for agricultural products.

This progressive trend is also continuing in the current year, as TSE Head Ali Sahraei has recently announced that TSE plans to launch a new market named “prime market” in which the price range for the shares increase. He said that only companies with a minimum transparency score of 70 (out of 100) and floating stock of at least 25 percent would be accepted in the prime market. Sahraei also said that there is no difference regarding rules governing market makers in this and other markets, adding that participation of market makers is mandatory in the prime market. TEDPIX has increased 56,220 points or 20.4 percent to 234,879 during the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21). As reported, some 258,055 billion securities worth 723.503 trillion rials (about \$17.226 billion) were traded through 17,999 million deals at TSE during the three-month period.

Passenger transport via railway up 4.7% in 4 months on year

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** – The number of passengers carried on Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (known as RAI) in the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 22) increased by 4.7 percent on year. According to Saeed Rasouli, the head of RAI, in the mentioned four months, altogether 10.3 million passengers were transported by rail across Iran, IRIB reported. The official also mentioned the positive trend of the country's rail freight turnover, saying “very positive agreements have been reached with neighboring countries on increasing the number of freight trains in border areas.” Rasouli also noted that in the first quarter of this year, 172 locomotives, as well as freight and passenger wagons

have been built or overhauled by domestic manufacturers and companies. “In the first four months of the current Iranian year, total domestic products entered into the country's rail freight fleet increased by 64 percent compared to the same period a year ago, and this trend will continue to increase,” he added. Earlier this week, Rasouli said that domestic manufacturers are set to supply over 1000 locomotives and wagons and also 40,000 tons of rails to RAI by the end of the next Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2021), IRIB reported. Currently, Iran has 13,000 kilometers of railway laid, and based on the country's Sixth National Five-Year Development Plan (2016-2021), the railway network is due to expand to more than 16,400 kilometers.



5-month imports of basic goods rise 69% yr/yr

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** – Imports of basic goods recorded at Iran's ports since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21) have increased by 69 percent compared to the similar five-month period last year, IRNA reported, quoting governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) as saying on Thursday. According to Abdolnasser Hemmati the surge was mainly due to the good coordination between the CBI and Iran's agriculture and trade ministries when it comes earmarking foreign currencies to the importers. In mid-November last year, CBI issued a directive which obliged the country's exporters

to re-inject their foreign currency incomes into the country's domestic Forex Management Integrated System (locally known as NIMA) in order to be used to import basic goods. Hemmati, who visited customs yards at Imam Khomeini Port southwest of Iran earlier in the mentioned day, said current port inventory figures, around three million tons of stocks, were almost double those that existed last year and before the United States imposed its sanctions on Iran. He said there was no concern about the imports of the basics like animal feeds which are highly needed in Iran's agriculture sector.



Earlier in March, Head of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) Mehdi Mirashrafi

said “Regarding the basic goods, the country is well supplied and even the imports of some commodities like corn and meat have increased.” The surge in Iran's import of basic goods come as the country has faced problems in normal trade with traditional partners mainly due to the U.S. sanctions that have restricted businesses' access to banking services and obtain required guarantees. In late June, Hemmati announced that the NIMA system has supplied €4.564 billion for imports of basic goods since the beginning of current Iranian calendar year.

Export malaise hits Germany as EU economic heavyweights struggle

Momentum in German exports slowed in the first half of 2019 and abruptly reversed in June, data showed on Friday, adding to signs of broad-based weakness in an economy increasingly relying on domestic demand to eke out even meager growth. As per reuters.com, a global growth slowdown accompanied by tariff disputes and uncertainty over Brexit has impacted growth across western Europe, but Germany's traditionally export-reliant economy - the continent's largest - has been particularly vulnerable. Those headwinds have been offset by stimulus at home, where record-high employment, inflation-busting wage hikes and low borrowing costs have driven a consumer and construction boom. However, that may not prevent German GDP - for which preliminary data is due on Wednesday - from joining the continent's second largest economy Britain in having contracted in the three months to June. Reflecting the foreign/domestic split, Germany's trade surplus narrowed to 109.9 billion euros from 122.4 billion in the half year to June as imports rose 3.0% and export growth slowed to 0.5% from the previous six months, Federal Statistics Office data showed on Friday. In June, exports fell 0.1% from May while year on year they plunged 8% to mark their steepest rate of annual decline in

nearly three years - and the DIHK business association said it expected exports to nearly stagnate in 2019 as a whole. “Rising protectionism and a noticeably weakening global economy are burdening Germany's export-reliant economy,” DIHK economist Volker Treier said. **■ The U.S.-China trade dispute** The “U.S. trade dispute with China and the tenacious struggle for Brexit are unsettling investors worldwide and clouding the prospects for German producers of capital goods in particular.” June also marked a potential watershed for industrial output in both Germany and in Europe's third largest economy, France. German output fell 1.5% from May, data showed on Wednesday, while corresponding figures from France on Friday showed a drop of 2.3%. Both readings were weaker than expected. Both countries' export sectors - including their high-profile car industries - have been hit by flagging demand from China, the world's number two economy, as its trade dispute with the United States has deepened. “We no longer expect the Chinese government to significantly boost its stimulus package,” Commerzbank economist Joerg Kraemer said. “Instead, it accepts the growth loss that comes with the trade war.” Citing weaker demand from emerging markets and from China in particular, the bank's economic research team cut its 2020 growth forecast for the German economy to 0.8% from 1.3% previously.



Carsten Brzeski, from ING-Diba, said the weak export figures had made a small second quarter economic contraction more likely. That would put in on an equal footing with Britain, whose economy unexpectedly shrank for the first time since 2012 in the second quarter, in a severe hangover from a pre-Brexit stockpiling boost in early 2019 that bodes ill as the country prepares to leave the EU on Oct. 31.

Singapore's economy could shrink further, poll predicts

The Singaporean economy is expected to have contracted further in the second quarter of this year, a Reuters poll indicated. While the expected shrinking of nearly three percent is already an improvement from previous estimates, recession risks are still rampant. According to en-businesstimes.cn, the poll suggested that Singapore's final GDP may have dropped by 2.9 percent during Q2 as economists pointed out that the city-state is now more at risk of recession than ever before. In earlier estimates, the government predicted that GDP may have contracted by 3.4 percent. The forecast is already lower than the expansion in the first quarter, which reached 3.8 percent. Some of the known reasons for slower GDP growth in Singapore are weaker domestic exports on non-oil products. Another potential culprit is weaker retail sales - a key driver in the Singaporean economy. Singapore is not exempt from the possibility of a global recession, experts said. The central bank is expected to cut rates when the second semi-annual policy announcements are made sometimes October.



As for the third quarter, Credit Suisse analysts said they are expecting a “technical recession” driven by a sharp decline in Singapore's manufacturing segments as well as its key electronics production sectors. Amid the pessimism for Singapore's economic expansion, Prime Minister Lee Hsien

Long said on Thursday, during the National Day commemoration, that the government will continue to support citizens amid “troubled period.” **■ Easing citizens' troubles** As part of the government's efforts in helping ease the citizens' troubles, Lee an-

nounced that the government is planning to offer more affordable options for tertiary and preschool education. The cheaper education plans will be focused on lower to middle-income families, he said. Lee went on to encourage his people, noting that the city-state has overcome similar slowdowns in economic expansion in the past. “Should it become necessary to stimulate the economy, we will do so,” he promised. On the other hand, Lee admitted that the road ahead will be tough to stride. He said the Singaporean community should brace itself for a “very different future,” seemingly nodding to pessimistic views about the economy. Amid the economic struggles that Singapore is faced with, several investors expressed optimism over the world's resilience in weathering difficult storms. A UBS Investor Sentiment survey released on Thursday indicated that Asian investors are those who are still hopeful of the global economy's recovery. A large number of Singaporean investors, according to the survey, are interested in sustainable investments as they see these as a way of curbing the impact of global trade tensions and other external headwinds.

217 water, electricity projects to be inaugurated by March 2020

ENERGY TEHRAN—Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian said on Wednesday that 217 major water and electricity projects will be inaugurated by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 19, 2020).

Ardakanian noted that several new energy projects will also be commenced during the current year, IRNA reported.

The official stressed the importance of developing the country's energy infrastructure, saying that constructing new power plants is a non-stop part of the ministry's planning.

He further underlined the country's renewable development and noted that based on Iran's Sixth Five-Year National Development Plan (2016-2021), every year 1000 megawatts should be added to the country's renewable power generation capacity.

"However, due to the unjust U.S. sanctions we are facing some difficulties in following our plans," he added.

The official further announced that by the end of the current Iranian calendar year over



1,440 villages will be supplied with drinkable water through pipelines.

"The statistics indicate that every week 30 villages are getting connected to the country's

national water supply network and this is a significant achievement for the government," Ardakanian said.

Last week, Ardakanian who accompanied

President Rouhani during his visit to East Azarbaijan Province, inaugurated several energy projects in the northeastern province.

Speaking in the opening ceremony of a dam project in East Azarbaijan, Ardakanian noted that major energy projects worth 320 trillion rials (about \$7.62 billion) will be inaugurated by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 19, 2020).

"The ministry will also commence 23 new projects worth 360 trillion rials (nearly \$8.6 billion) during the current year," he added.

Heading a high-ranking delegation, including some cabinet members, Rouhani paid a one-day visit to East Azarbaijan province.

Some 518 development projects worth over 100 trillion rials (about \$2.38 billion) were inaugurated during President Rouhani's visit to the northwestern province.

As reported by IRNA, the inaugurated projects included major power plant, water and dam projects as well as construction and infrastructure projects plus several economic, agriculture and mining ones.

Oil edges up on expectations of more OPEC output cuts, but trade worries linger

Oil prices inched higher on Friday as expectations of more OPEC production cuts provided some support, although concerns over the long-running U.S.-China trade dispute kept a lid on gains.

As stated by reuters.com, International benchmark Brent crude futures, were at \$57.54 a barrel by 0646 GMT, up 16 cents, or 0.3%, from their previous settlement.

U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) futures were at \$52.68 per barrel, up 14 cents, or 0.3%, from their last close.

Both contracts jumped more than 2% on Thursday to recover from January lows, buoyed by reports that Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter, had called other producers to discuss the recent slide in crude prices.

Oil prices have still lost more than 20% from peaks reached in April, putting them in bear territory.

Global financial markets have been rocked over the past week after U.S. President Donald Trump said he would impose 10% tariffs on more Chinese goods starting September and as a fall in the Chinese yuan sparked fears of a currency war.

The "tentative oil rebound could be short-lived as the U.S.-China trade dispute is providing no real reasons to be optimistic," said Edward Moya, senior market analyst at Oanda in New York.

Bloomberg reported that Washington was holding off a decision about licenses for U.S. companies to restart business with Huawei Technologies.

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia, de facto leader of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), plans to maintain its crude oil exports below 7 million barrels per day in August and September to bring the market back to balance and help absorb global oil inventories, a Saudi oil official said on Wednesday.

"Saudi's production in September will also be lower than it is currently. This helped crude oil rebound from its lowest level since January," ANZ bank said in a note.

The United Arab Emirates also will continue to support actions to balance the oil market, the country's energy minister Suhail al-Mazrouei said in a tweet on Thursday.

The minister said the OPEC and non-OPEC ministerial



monitoring committee would meet in Abu Dhabi on Sept. 12 to review the oil market.

OPEC and its allies including Russia agreed in July to extend their supply cuts until March 2020 to boost oil prices.

Oil supply growth under fire from low oil prices

By Nick Cunningham

Fears of weakening demand continue to drag down oil prices, which in turn could cut into supply growth.

"Concerns about demand and the escalating trade conflict are still keeping the oil market in a stranglehold," Commerzbank wrote on Tuesday. Brent fell below \$60 per barrel this week for the first time in six months as expectations surrounding a slowing global economy set in following the escalation of the U.S.-China trade war.

"We believe the oil market is starting to price in the fear of a severe and multiyear breakdown in U.S.-China economic relations," Standard Chartered wrote in a note.

"Money-manager positioning in oil is already heavily concentrated on a negative trade view." The investment bank said that the negative positioning from speculators would "deepen and extend further along the curve across all risk assets." The bank slashed its forecasted 2019 Brent price to just \$66 per barrel, down from \$74 previously, and it also cut its 2020 price to \$70 from \$83. For WTI, Standard Chartered lowered its estimate to \$57 from \$66 previously. The trade war could undercut global economic growth, which in turn will drag down oil demand. Major forecasters such as the IEA, EIA and OPEC have repeatedly slashed their demand growth estimate as the economic outlook has darkened. The IEA stuck with its 1.2-million-barrel-per-day forecast in



its July Oil Market Report, which it based on the assumption that the trade war would ease and growth would accelerate in the second half of the year.

■ Basis for lower prices

With the trade war only escalating, more downward revisions seem inevitable. For its part, Standard Chartered said that demand growth is on track to reach only 0.94 mb/d. As "consensus started the year above 1.4mb/d growth, we think the move to a sub-1mb/d consensus will likely have a strongly negative effect on sentiment, reinforcing the basis for lower prices," the bank concluded.

Meanwhile, Vitol Group estimated demand growth at a paltry 650,000 bpd this year.

But, of course, lower prices would feed through to the supply side as well. The shale sector is already suffering from significant financial stress. Lower prices would only magnify the pressure on struggling E&Ps.

The EIA warned about the slowdown in U.S. oil production, after years of blistering growth. "EIA expects monthly growth in Lower 48 onshore production to slow during the rest of the forecast period, averaging 50,000 b/d per month from the fourth quarter of 2019 through the end of 2020, down from an average of 110,000 b/d per month from August 2018 through July 2019," the agency said in its latest Short-Term Energy Outlook released on Tuesday. Still, the EIA said U.S. production would average 12.3 mb/d this year, which is down only slightly from 12.4 mb/d forecasted in previous months. One of the reasons that production growth may not be derailed by lower prices is that new drilling is increasingly in the hands of the oil majors, rather than the independent shale companies that drove growth in the Permian in the past. As shale E&Ps cut costs and idle rigs, the integrated oil majors – Chevron, ExxonMobil and ConocoPhillips,

primarily – continue to spend heavily.

■ The shale evolution

It's not clear that their returns are any better, with data on the specifics a bit murky. Analysts generally assume that the majors have a better ability to turn a profit than the rest of the shale industry. Goldman Sachs wrote in a report that the "concentration of productivity/efficiency gains and production growth (are) in the hands of fewer producers, driven by technology and shale evolution that prioritizes contiguous acreage."

The majors boast of low break-evens and their "manufacturing approach" to shale drilling, which should keep costs low. But the reality is that the majors have the ability to post losses in shale for years in the pursuit of positive cash flow, because they are making money in other sectors. The Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis took ExxonMobil to task, pointing out that even as production rose in the second quarter, so did the company's debt as it needed to borrow to cover its dividend.

The "only difference between ExxonMobil and the dozens of companies that are failing under the fracking sector's inability to prove financially sustainable, is that the once-mighty oil giant has more assets to burn through before it hits bottom," Tom Sanzillo and Kathy Hippie wrote in the IEEFA report. Sinking oil prices won't help matters. On Wednesday, WTI fell to the low-\$50s, a six-month low. Sentiment is deteriorating rapidly and a price handle beginning with a "4" may not be far away.

(Source: oilprice.com)

Japan is bargain hunting as LNG prices slump

Utilities in Japan, the world's single largest importer of liquefied natural gas (LNG), are seeking price reviews in their short term LNG supply contracts as the Japanese energy market liberalization boosts competition and as Asian spot prices slump to their lowest in years.

According to oilprice.com, Japanese LNG buyers are increasingly aggressive in the price reviews of their long-term supply contracts indexed to oil prices, analysts and lawyers tell Reuters.

In the wake of the Fukushima disaster when Japan shut down almost all of its nuclear reactors that used to provide around 30 percent of Japanese power supply, utilities had little choice but to sign long-term LNG supply contracts that are typically linked to the price of oil.



Some of those contracts have yet to take effect, while Japanese power providers are now finding themselves in quite different LNG and power generation markets than a few years ago, and even just one year ago.

Japan has restarted some of the reactors, and more nuclear capacity is set to return online over the next decade. Yet, the resource-poor country has boosted its LNG imports and consumption. But it has also liberalized its energy markets, meaning that utilities are competing against each other and for lower-cost power sources, as the old 'pass the higher costs on to consumers' strategy doesn't work anymore in this more competitive market.

■ Long-term energy supply deals

This gives one reason to Japan's power providers to seek renegotiation of their long-term LNG supply deals.

The other key reason for intensified price reviews of LNG contracts is that this year's depressed spot LNG prices in Asia are now half the price compared to the average price of the term contracts that Japanese utilities have signed, according to Japanese trade data and Reuters estimates.

The need to remain competitive in a liberalized energy market, especially in view of the much cheaper spot Asian LNG prices, emboldens Japan's utilities to look to renegotiate their long-term LNG import prices. Some utilities are said to have even resorted to arbitration after talks didn't end in settlements.

Osaka Gas, for instance, is reportedly looking for price review arbitration against the PNG LNG venture led by ExxonMobil. Interfax reported last month, citing Australia-based energy specialist at Credit Suisse, Saul Kavonic. This is the first time a Japanese LNG buyer has resorted to arbitration, and the move could be a sign that utilities might be ready to be more aggressive in their efforts to cut long-term LNG import costs, Intefax says.

Even if Osaka Gas were to bring the price down in arbitration, it's unlikely that the contract price would drop by more than 5 percent from the originally agreed price, a gas executive who has worked on many price reviews told Reuters.

■ The Asian spot prices

While Japanese buyers are looking to review their long-term import prices, they are also looking to buy more spot LNG cargoes, considering that Asian spot prices have now slumped to more than a three-year low of \$4.10 per million British thermal units (MMBtu), and spot cargo deals have been made even at below \$4/MMBtu in the past weeks. Still, the binding contracts for long-term LNG supply limit Japanese buyers from going all in on the spot market despite the very favorable prices right now.

Going forward, "Japanese buyers will continue to take a lead in contracting innovation with developments such as hybrid deals, coal indexation, joint procurement and carbon neutral cargoes," Wood Mackenzie's Senior Research Analyst Lucy Cullen said last week.

"As several long-term contracts wind down from the early 2020s and with gas and power market liberalization underway, this innovation will provide buyers more leverage and opportunities in future contracting discussions," Cullen noted.

Japan will continue to import significant volumes of LNG in the coming years, but it is likely to lose its top buyer status to the current number two – China – as early as 2022, WoodMac said last month, attributing an expected decline in Japanese imports to competition from coal, nuclear, and renewables, and to slow economic growth.

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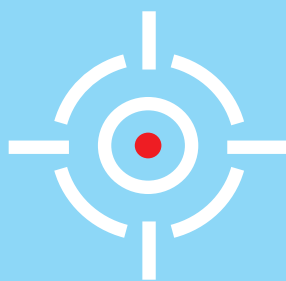
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Items	Material Description	Quantity
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The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit .a bid bond of 6,643 EURO or 313,413,017 RIAL,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

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Individualism, American exceptionalism root causes of gun violence: U.S. analyst

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — An American political commentator and social justice activist said sense of individualism and American Exceptionalism are at the root of gun violence and gun-related crimes in the U.S.

"An underlying reason for inaction is our sense of individualism and also American Exceptionalism. The very idea that we as Americans have a right to own a gun and not be interfered with by our government is a long-standing, yet probably minority, position.

That we feel the US is the best in the world means we don't like to copy what's good or what works in other countries, such as gun legislation or health care," Myles Hoenig, who ran for the U.S. Congress in 2016 as a Green Party candidate, told the Tasnim news agency.



Following is the full text of the interview.

■ A gunman armed with a powerful assault-style rifle on Saturday opened fire at the Cielo Vista Walmart store in El Paso, Texas, killing at least 20 people and injuring 26 others. Another shooting in Ohio killed nine people and wounded 16 others at in downtown Dayton, Ohio. What is your take on the deadly incidents?

A: The only thing truly unusual about these two incidents is the timing, that they were back to back, all within 24 hours. Most mass killings in the U.S. happen weeks apart, in enough time for politicians to offer their 'thoughts and prayers', make a lot of political noise, or simply shrug it off until the next one happens.

Ever since Columbine where two teenagers shot up a high school, the nation thought that Congress would really get serious about gun legislation.

And when Sandy Hook happened, where an elementary school was shot up, and nothing came of it, then it is pretty much written off that any reasonable legislation will ever happen. In 1988, a lawn dart killed a child and they were banned.

The toy industry is powerful but immediate and effective. The gun industry is almost untouchable.

But there is one difference now that just may effect change and that is that Trump is president and no rules apply for anything.

■ At public events and on television, several candidates pointed to a need for more gun restrictions, such as universal background checks. But they directed much of their criticism at Trump.

They called on him "I say to stop "the racist anti-immigrant rhetoric" and "the hatred in this country which is creating the kind of violence that we see."

What are your thoughts on this?

A: Democrats, in particular, like to think that President Trump invented violence.

They look for single actors and blame them for all the evils that befall us. Hillary Clinton was a miserable candidate and was the only person who could lose to Trump but they blamed Russia and the Kremlin for her loss.

The Republicans are no better at the blame game as during the Cold War Russia, again, was the 'Evil Empire', as President Reagan called them.

And both parties call whichever foreign leader they wish to remove in order to take their countries' resources another 'Hitler', as a way to justify their actions.

President Trump is being called out by Democrats, in particular, for exacerbating racial hostilities, and in this case, rightly so.

His entire adult history has been predicated on demonizing immigrants and people of color, whether as a landlord or now as a politician.

But racial animosity did not begin with Trump, either, as having a black president, Obama, was reason enough for the white supremacists to start feeling 'justified' in acting out on their bigoted and racist views.

■ Following the two mass shootings, President Trump said that "hate has no place in our country".

What is the root cause of this violence? Do you think it is related to the imperial system and the exercise of extreme individualism?

It seems that modern individualism has no place in the US and the country is still using the nineteenth-century individualism. Kindly explain.

A: No president or administration has done enough to stop this kind of hatred but this president has done its fair share in flaming the hostilities and tensions.

Its immigration policies, and campaigning before election are based on racism and hatred.

Their indifference to the working poor and people of color is really no different than past administrations but the tone of their rhetoric is far more lethal.

Although his entire administration stayed away from the talk shows on Sunday morning, as a way of avoiding discussing what needs to be done, public pressure just might push Congress to do something, but if it does, it will be so watered down that it would remain insignificant and fuel for campaign rhetoric and promises for the 2020 election.

An underlying reason for inaction is our sense of individualism and also American Exceptionalism.

The very idea that we as Americans have a right to own a gun and not be interfered with by our government is a long-standing, yet probably minority, position.

That we feel the US is the best in the world means we don't like to copy what's good or what works in other countries, such as gun legislation or health care.

By Saeed Sobhani

TEHRAN — In recent days, the US-China economic dispute has reached its climax. The dispute is heightened when US President Donald Trump has failed to take action against Beijing during his two and a half years in the White House.

At present, China has been able to respond well to Trump's anti-Chinese economic policies. This has led even some traditional Republicans to criticize the White House's policies toward Beijing. Here's a look at the latest analysis and news on the US-China economic dispute:

Powell Speaks, Trump Tweets, China Reacts, Markets Freak. Repeat

As Bloomberg reported, The ups and downs of asset prices on any given day are being determined, more and more, by the words and actions of three men.

First, of course, is Donald Trump, who has rediscovered his power to send markets soaring—or into a tailspin—with less than 280 characters on Twitter.

Then there's U.S. Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell, who repeatedly finds himself on the receiving end of nasty Trump tweets for abiding by his mandate to do what's best for the U.S. economy, which isn't necessarily always the same thing as what's best for the sitting president. And in Beijing, it's Xi Jinping, the president of China who sits atop a Communist Party in which politicians and central bankers famously sing from the same hymnal, at least when the audience is outside observers.

The financial markets have been like a mosh pit where these three players bang against one another.

Powell, under pressure from Trump to cut interest rates aggressively, sent markets reeling by signaling the central bank's rate cut last month was a "mid-cycle adjustment" and not the start of an aggressive loosening of monetary policy. The very next day, Aug. 1, Trump exacerbated the sell-off by saying he would place tariffs on practically any U.S. imports from China that don't already have them, starting in September. The response from Beijing on Aug. 5 caused the biggest waves in global markets, as the People's Bank of China allowed its currency to depreciate by the most since 2015 and reach more than 7 per dollar, a threshold it had prevented the yuan from crossing in recent years. China also asked state-owned companies to suspend purchases of U.S. crops, renewing pressure on the beaten-down prices of American corn and soybeans.

With each of these collisions, the fragility of the global economy and markets is exposed.

It seems increasingly possible that something big and important is broken. Investors who'd believed U.S.-China relations were stabilizing, if not improving, were caught on the wrong foot when tensions abruptly escalated.

The prevailing assumption that President Trump won't allow the trade war to continue through the 2020 presidential campaign season is being reconsidered, as the two sides appear further apart than ever. Economists at Goldman Sachs Group Inc., for example, no longer expect a trade agreement before the election and see the Fed cutting its benchmark interest rate two more times this year in an effort to counteract the economic damage that will be done by the impasse.

The constant whiplashes in expectations can be seen in an index that measures how often news stories mention uncertainty surrounding U.S. trade policy.

It almost tripled in June to a 25-year high, before dropping by more than half in July after a comparatively uneventful stretch. The drama of August isn't yet reflected in the index, which is calculated monthly.

As troubling economic data pile up, the question being openly debated on Wall Street is whether lower borrowing costs will be enough to fend off a recession.

An Institute for Supply Management index for the U.S. manufacturing businesses that Trump's policies were meant to support dropped to an almost three-year low of 51.2 in July.

A similar gauge of the service industries had dropped from 60.8 in September to a three-year low of 53.7 in July. For both indexes, readings below 50 are a sign that economic activity is shrinking. In Europe, whose factories are caught in the crossfire between China and the U.S., manufacturing barometers already point toward recession.

Growth in U.S. corporate profits, which the tax cuts put on steroids last year, has all but halted, and forecasts for the timing of a rebound keep getting deferred. As the trade war morphs into a potential currency war—in which countries race to devalue to get a competitive edge for their exports—there are whispers about how and where the tensions could escalate further. Could the U.S. thumb its nose at China and sell F-16 fighter jets to Taiwan? Or

White house despair against Beijing

The red dragon does not give up on Trump



could Washington signal support for the anti-Beijing protesters who've paralyzed Hong Kong this summer? And what could be at risk among more than a quarter of a trillion dollars of U.S. investments in China since 1990?

All these questions are arising in the dog days of summer, a time of year when Wall Street's vacation calendars are jammed and markets seem especially easy to rattle. Measures of stock market volatility tend to rise on average in August, and some of the ugliest swoons in equities over the past decade have occurred in this month. The S&P 500 index has shed about 6% from its last record, in late July, leaving it below the peak it reached in January 2018 at the height of optimism surrounding Trump's corporate tax cuts. Even the most reliable big spenders in the market these days—corporations themselves—have had trouble keeping share prices afloat. Shares of Google parent Alphabet Inc. surged almost 10% after the company announced a \$25 billion share buyback plan on July 25. The stock proceeded to lose almost all of that gain in the following week.

Before the latest swoon, there were signs

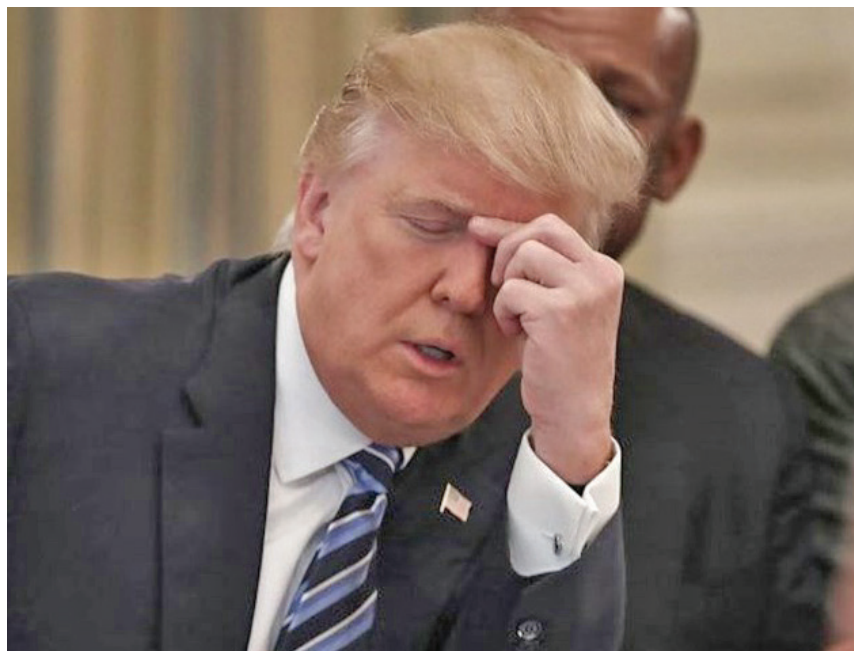
rates to come down in response to weak economic growth.

"We may well be at the most dangerous financial moment since the 2009 Financial Crisis with current developments between the U.S. and China," tweeted Larry Summers, Treasury secretary under Bill Clinton and economic adviser to Barack Obama. One might detect a partisan edge in that comment, but there's no doubt markets are trying to see their way through a lot of potential chaos. Bulls may hope that Trump will tweet about a breakthrough with "his good friend Xi," and stocks will be off to the races again. But for now the cacophony in the mosh pit just seems to get louder and louder.

US-China trade war is hurting farmers, but they're sticking with Trump!

As CNBC reported, Donald Trump may be a resort-dwelling real estate magnate who entered politics via golden escalator, but even a trade war with China hasn't tarnished his image as a champion for an unlikely group: farmers and ranchers.

Farmers are one of the most visible casualties of the U.S.-China trade war, which



that some investors were getting nervous about the balance of risk and reward offered in the market. Some measures of valuation look high. Warren Buffett's preferred metric, the ratio of the total market value of U.S. stocks to gross domestic product, is at about 1.49, higher than it was just prior to the financial crisis. The cyclically adjusted price-to-earnings ratio, based on the last 10 years of earnings, is about 30, well above the 50-year average of 20. Both measures capture roughly the same thing: how much it costs to buy a piece of the wealth that businesses are generating.

Neither number can tell you when the market is about to turn, but they both suggest prices are high. For Buffett, there doesn't seem to be much worth buying at current valuations.

The latest earnings report from his Berkshire Hathaway Inc. showed the holding company sold more stocks than it bought in the second quarter, and its pile of cash rose to a record \$122 billion. He's not the only one sitting on the sidelines: assets in money-market mutual funds—the mattresses investors tuck money under when other choices look too risky—have climbed to an almost 10-year high of \$3.3 trillion.

The recent rush into safe havens sent gold to a five-year high and triggered a rally in Treasuries that pushed 10-year yields to their lowest since Trump was elected in 2016. (Yields drop when prices rise.) At the same time, rates on three-month Treasury bills were higher than those on 10-year bonds—a phenomenon known as a yield-curve inversion that's widely considered a reliable warning of an impending recession. The lower long-term yields signal that markets expect interest

escalated sharply this week as both sides landed blows that could hold potentially devastating consequences for U.S. agriculture. Yet farmers appear to be sticking by Trump—not just the Republican they largely supported in the 2016 election, but the trade warrior who has put their industries in China's sights. And while they're far from the largest group in Trump's corner, farmers could prove to be a crucial voting bloc in the 2020 election. The Purdue Center for Commercial Agriculture's latest producer survey, which was conducted last month and released Tuesday, showed a record-high 78% of farmers said they believe the trade war will ultimately benefit U.S. agriculture.

That roughly matches Trump's overall approval rating of 79% among farmers, according to a Farm Pulse survey conducted around the same time. That data was collected before this past week, however, when Trump said he would impose on Sept. 1 new 10% tariffs on the remaining \$300 billion in Chinese goods.

Trump tweeted the announcement just after the two countries had restarted trade talks in Shanghai.

He claimed China had broken its promises to buy "large quantities" of U.S. agricultural products and stop selling fentanyl. China swung back on Monday, taking the severe step of canceling all purchases of U.S. agriculture products.

That's no small loss: The U.S. made \$9.2 billion in agricultural exports to China last year according to the Department of Agriculture, making that country the fifth-largest U.S. agricultural export market. The Treasury labeled China a currency manipulator late Monday. "My heart sunk a little bit" after China's announcement, said Mary Kay Thatcher,

a fifth-generation Iowa farmer and current farm lobbyist on Capitol Hill, in an interview with CNBC. "That's a hard hit for us, it's going to make life difficult," she said. "Farmers are still a bit stunned about the announcement that they're not gonna buy anything."

Farmers aren't the only ones affected. Trump's battle with China over trade deficits, alleged intellectual property theft and forced tech transfers has repeatedly spooked investors around the world. And polls show that his biggest moves in the trade war—namely, slapping tariffs on billions of dollars' worth of Chinese goods—aren't especially popular with the broader public.

But U.S. soybean, pork and dairy farmers in particular have seen their revenue from China evaporate as China scaled up its own tariffs on U.S. imports, now worth \$110 billion. Chinese buyers imported \$19.5 billion in U.S. farm goods in 2017, a number that was more than halved the following year as the tariffs made U.S. agriculture products more pricey. The Wall Street Journal reported. The U.S. currently leverages 25% tariffs on \$250 billion in Chinese goods. And Trump has shown no indication that he's willing to back down against Beijing, though his surrogates have suggested that the White House is willing to be flexible on the new tariffs, depending on what happens in the next round of trade talks, scheduled for September.

rump, who has dubbed himself a "tariff man," has often asserted that China bears the brunt of the tariffs and that the U.S. is taking in "tens of billions of dollars" from the import taxes.

But while tariffs make Chinese goods more expensive for Americans to buy, U.S. importers are the ones who directly pay the taxes. The 2020 field

Farmers aren't a huge constituency: There were only about 3.2 million U.S. farmers in 2012, according to the Agriculture Department, a decline of 3% from 2007. But they could still prove invaluable to Trump's reelection campaign. While he lost the popular vote in 2016, Trump eked out narrow victories in key battleground states where just a few thousand votes made all the difference.

Thatcher said that farmers can be counted on to turn out to the polls.

"They're the ones showing up at these town hall meetings ... they're very politically active."

Recent census data also shows that many of the expected toss-up states export relatively little to China—some of the biggest exporters, like Texas, reliably vote for one party or another in presidential contests. That could effectively shield Trump from taking a hit in the electoral college even if the trade war worsens.

Pennsylvania-based Democratic strategist Aren Platt said that farmers may wield an outsize influence for Trump's conservative base. "The farmer represents this idealized rural life.

And I think that a trade war with a foreign country who has an incredibly strong economy is something that rural America, rural Pennsylvania wants to see," Platt said. Whether or not the trade war pans out in America's favor, political analysts don't foresee farmers wavering on Trump any time soon—let alone voting against him in the 2020 presidential election.

More than 75% of rural farmers voted for Trump in his successful campaign against Democrat Hillary Clinton in 2016, according to The Washington Post. They've largely remained supportive of Trump even as the trade war weighs on their industries. "They are sticking with him," Thatcher said, adding that they largely "look at Mr. Trump as still being the better option" compared to the current slate of Democrats running for president.

"Most farmers in the rural parts of the U.S. have conservative values" and align with the GOP, said Republican political strategist Ray Zaborney.

"Between their values and the president standing up for them, they're willing to give him some leeway" on the trade war.

It also doesn't hurt that the Trump administration has authorized billions of dollars in subsidies for farmers harmed by retaliation from China.

A total of \$28 billion has been either authorized or handed out since last year, the Journal reported. Zaborney said that many farmers see Trump's strategy with China as a long game. But Jared Bernstein, a senior fellow at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, believes that's a "huge mistake."

"Trump has shown many times over that he's acting on pure impulse and that he doesn't have a coherent long term plan," Bernstein said. Bernstein recognized that farmers "still believe he's got their backs, even when they face significant costs."

But "there's a bailout in there too. We can't forget that," he added.

Alarm for Abdul-Mahdi's gov't: Time running short in land of political executions

By Ali Heidari

IFP— It took more than eight months for Adil Abdul-Mahdi to complete his cabinet after being elected prime minister of Iraq (from October 2018 when the government was formed with 14 ministers), and the full-fledged government has been active for more than a month.

Nonetheless, and although only the ministries of defence, interior, education and justice had remained vacant and the rest of ministers had been already appointed, a review of the government's performance gives warnings to Abdul-Mahdi's cabinet. The Iraqi government's performance over the past one year could be evaluated in the internal and foreign sectors.

Foreign Policy: Developing Initiatives and Active Regional Policy

Since the formation of government, the prime minister and the president have been performing their tasks with calculated separation of authorities. The president, whose power as a figure in Iraq's parliamentary system is much lower than the prime minister, has been trying to enhance the foreign relations, attending international meetings, and visiting various countries, particularly the regional ones, in order to clearly explicate Iraq's new policy in the post-ISIS era.

The main topic of negotiations in all of Barham Salih's trips have been Iraq's policy of non-involvement in the regional clashes and factionalism, its refusal to allow the Iraqi soil to be used for attacks and aggression against the neighboring states, and Iraq's regional initiatives for regional cooperation. Barham Salih's foreign policy doctrine is called "regional system", which includes Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Jordan, Syria, the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council, and the five members of the UN Security Council. The meetings would revolve around Iraq, and the participants would boost their political, security, and economic relations.

In this course, Iraq is a bridge connecting Iran to the regional Arab countries. Iraq can take advantage of its strategic position to reduce the tensions and crises among the countries. Such a doctrine has received support from Iraqi Prime Minister Adil Abdul-Mahdi, who has more authority than the president, as Abdul-Mahdi has a complementary role in Barham Salih's activities during his



The Iraqi government has emerged successful with initiatives in the foreign policy arena, but faces problems in the domestic sector that are gradually deepening.

regional visits. In terms of foreign policy, one can say that Iraq's new government has been much more active and is gradually going to preside over Iraq's special position in the region.

In the meantime, the two top Iraqi leaders have been paying multiple visits to the regional and foreign countries, and the senior officials of different countries have also made major visits to Iraq, something seen as diplomatic traffic. Moreover, Iraq is given certain roles to play in the course of its regional activities, one of which is the role of a mediator between Iran and Saudi Arabia, or between Iran and the UK amid the oil tankers row.

Domestic Policy: Alarm Goes Off

The Iraqi government has emerged successful with initiatives in the foreign policy arena, but faces problems in the domestic sector that are gradually deepening.

Some examples are the performance of government in handling the infrastructural affairs and providing social services, which has not been acceptable. Although the prime minister and the members of his cabinet are technocrats with a good knowledge of economy, it seems that turning such economic knowledge into economic development and overcoming

the current unsuitable conditions has encountered problems and has failed to materialize. One of the reasons for that failure is the prime minister's old age that has forced him to make decisions slowly and with a high degree of conservatism. While the Iraqi society is faced with tough crises whose settlement requires rapid action and initiatives, the prime minister prefers to carry out his economic ideas patiently, which may be too late. In particular, the shortage of water and power in the hot seasons, which exhaust public patience gravely, as the bulk of demonstrations and riots over the past decades have taken place in the summertime. The very subject has been even mentioned by Saddam Hussein, who had told his investigator that people of Iraq would rise up against the government in the hot season, because it is extremely difficult to tolerate such intense heat. It also appears that Abdul-Mahdi's economic team is unable to operate in the current circumstances, in which decades of economic and industrial underdevelopment has been exacerbated by the civil war and a devastating war against ISIS. It is necessary to reconstruct the devastation with strong, serious and immediate measures.

Given Abdul-Mahdi's spirit and the demands for a share of power from all parties, the rate of corruption and discrimination under the current government has risen remarkably, and the relative order in Abadi's tenure has gone away.

The situation has been further complicated in Iraq by the great influence of the parties and groups. While a minister is practically unable to take any specific measure, the parties and groups controlling various ministries seek to fulfill their own interests. The most recent polls on the government's performance indicate that Abadi's government had a 10 percent approval rating among people of Iraq, and the other people polled said they despaired of the ongoing situation and of the future, and had no positive outlook. Such disapproval of the government prevails also among the clerics and even the parties and factions. It is believed that only a few parties and movements, including the Sadrist Movement, the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Masoud Barzani, and the Fatah Alliance pursue their own interests, and the other groups have no role in the government.

This forced a number of groups such as the National Wisdom Movement and the Victory Alliance to announce formally that they had no role in the government and to join the opposition. The occasional popular demonstrations in different cities of Iraq, the religious authorities' dissatisfaction with the government's performance, and the discontent from political groups and movements indicate unsuitable internal situation in Iraq. The persistence of the current circumstances in Iraq could trigger social crises. Known as the biggest supporter of the government, the Sadrist Movement has announced that it has given Abdul-Mahdi a period of only one year, not four years, to prove his success. Only a couple of months from that period is now remaining.

However, Abdul-Mahdi has pledged that he will be ready to resign if his performance is unsatisfactory, a move he has made twice in the past as the minister of finance and as a vice president. Iraq is the "land of political executions", and its people can no more experience a lengthy period of trial and error or sluggish enforcement of policies for addressing the problems, a point that Abdul-Mahdi needs to take into account.

Countries should say no to U.S. weaponizing Asia

TEHRAN (FNA) — After binning the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty with Russia earlier this week, war-party Washington says it now wants to quickly deploy new intermediate-range missiles in Asia.

New US Defense Secretary Mark Esper says he doesn't know where and this shouldn't take China by surprise: "Washington is no longer bound by the INF Treaty. We would like to deploy a capability sooner rather than later."

Although the new Pentagon chief and top Washington lobbyist for weapons-maker Raytheon hasn't specified where the US intends to deploy these weapons, it's not that hard to speculate. The stated idea is to compete with China everywhere, which has no intention to weaponize the restive region in the first place. Still, Esper insists: "And I want to say that 80 percent of their inventory is INF range systems. So that should not surprise that we would want to have a like capability."

These false arguments should worry the international civil society and the global anti-war movement. They symbolise the twisted morality of those for whom conflict remains the natural state of human existence. The intended message is certainly received loud and clear in many capitals across the region too. Whatever this is, the new plan is in defiance of international law and ethical statutes in pursuit of such weapons deployments. It's not hard to understand given the enormous profits American businesses and the cult of military-industrial complex will be able to rake in and its potential of reviving a new arms race.

Together with the Trump White House, the War Party wants permanent distrust and conflict to drag on without end in Asia. Previously talking up how the wars in Afghanistan and Syria can't last forever, President Donald Trump now wants troops to stay in these countries forever, which is as close to a recipe for permanent war and occupation as one can get. That seems to also be the case in Iraq and Yemen, where Trump says the US will continue to support the war against the Yemeni army and Houthi Ansarullah or that US troops will remain in Iraq, seemingly forever, to "watch Iran". It might just be that the US will never get around to leaving China at peace with itself and its neighbours either. In other words, when it comes to the Pentagon, there is no such thing as over, ever. But why are we not surprised?

Esper's announcement has coincided neatly with the Senate's recent resolution expressing opposition to leaving the Middle Eastern countries. For all the war paths that might be taken again in this terrible new situation, a recent Pentagon report suggests that, "Even if a successful political settlement with the Taliban emerges, the US military should still maintain a robust counter-terrorism capability for the foreseeable future in Afghanistan."

In that mind-boggling context, the same assumption apparently exists for Asia, where Esper insists, "That should be no surprise because we have been talking about that for some time now." This is where Washington's forever war lobby and self-styled triumphalist warriors will soon insist US troops would also be staying more or less forever. The phoney justification is that their troops and missile deployments would allow them to "contain" China. Trump swears it also "creates American jobs".

By every conceivable indicator, Washington's trigger-happy officials and resource-war planners have every intention to remain on the path of arms trade in Asia. And to one degree or another, they all know that triggering a large-scale, state-sanctioned arms race is unlawful per international law.

No Asian nation should ever adhere to this irredeemably flawed and deeply harmful practice in US foreign policy. It would bring no peace or stability by even the loosest definition of the word. Countries in the region should remain assertive and defy American meddling in their affairs, and instead invest more in regional cooperation and dialogue. Asian nations know fully well that there is no nobility in falling into Trump's trap of regional arms race or in normalizing his belligerence and falsehoods regarding China, Iran and Russia. They can expect anything from Washington now as Trump is a very unpredictable international actor. Asian nations can and should disregard Washington's fake China, Iran and Russia concerns, go against the institution of immoral/illegal arms race, maintain normal ties with China, ignore the Disrupter-in-Chief's 'with us or against us' tweets and publicity stunts, and work for regional peace and International stability.



El Paso Mass Shooting: Symptomatic of an American malignancy

1 → The same contemptuous attitude is often exhibited by whites towards Mexicans and Latin Americans, as is exemplified by the current U.S. president and his racist remarks on social media and at rallies. Last October, he wrote of an "invasion" of immigrants at the U.S. - Mexico border and even sent troops to stop them. Oddly enough, the White House resident even accused Mexico of "abusing" the United States and must "stop the invasion of our Country by Drug Dealers, Cartels, Human Traffickers, Coyotes and Illegal Immigrants." The U.S. president denied any connection between his racially inflammatory rhetoric and the admission by the El Paso Walmart gunman that he wanted to shoot as many Mexicans as possible in "response to the Hispanic invasion of Texas."

If there is a "Hispanic invasion" the U.S. itself is primarily responsible for creating it. After the American war on Mexico, tens of thousands of immigrants began to enter the U.S.; the numbers rose due to increased demand for agricultural workers after the Civil War and again after the First World War. Likewise during the Second World War, the Bracero program brought migrant workers from Latin America to fill the labor gap. The Latinos, 75 percent of whom may be undocumented, work hard at agricultural and other jobs that whites refuse to fill. These workers, most native to Mexico, are frequently targets of injustices and abuse by their employers, and live and work in constant fear of deportation by U.S. immigration authorities.

Then there is the pandemic of gun violence in a country that has an estimated 390 million firearms, the highest in the world. The United States has the highest rate of murder and manslaughter in the so-called developed world. Nearly 40 percent of U.S. citizens own firearms, a right attributed to the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which reads: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." It is not clear and has been a matter of debate whether the amendment was intended to grant a collective right to the state or an individual right for gun ownership. In fact, the individual right to possess firearms was not confirmed until 2008 in the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in the case of District of Columbia v. Heller.

The gravity of the societal malignancy in America is illustrated by the unconscionable statistics. Guns are the second leading cause of death for white children and teens, and the leading cause of death for Black children and teens. In an average month 52 women are shot to death by an intimate partner and some 4.5 million have been threatened. An astounding 3 million children witness gun violence every year. Rather than protect, access to a gun increases the risk of death by homicide twofold. Strangely enough, as if inflicting hatred upon themselves, white men commit 74 percent



of the suicides by firearms.

Band-Aid fixes are proposed for the gushing wound of American gun violence. Politicians promise to pursue "responsible legislation" for gun control. Yet no one dares to ask why the sale of military assault weapons is permitted in the first place. No one connects the gun violence on an individual level with the cultural violence perpetrated by the American government. A casual review of American history will convince the reader that violence is the American solution to all problems, even the problem of inadequate diplomatic skills.

Such violence began with the much lauded founding father, George Washington, who was a slave owner, and viewed Native People's claims to their land "as an obstacle to easy and fluid commerce." William Henry Harrison considered "the murdering of Indians in the highest degree meritorious." Of course the "merciless Indian Savages," as Native Americans were referred to in the U.S. Declaration of Independence, honored their Law of Innocents, which forbade the killing of women, children and elders, and dated back to at least the 12th century.

At the heart of all the vigils and gatherings, outpourings of sympathy and empathy, speeches by politicians and pleas for love and forgiveness by clergy, lies a failure to address the depth of the societal malignancy driving mass shootings: namely, the futility and object pointlessness of the American way of life. "The shooter is just a momentary concentration of everything else grinding the dignity and meaning out of American lives," explains American author and social critic James Howard Kunstler. Appearing to confirm this analysis, the shooter in the El Paso massacre reportedly has written, "I'm not really motivated to do anything more than what's necessary to get by. Working in general sucks..."

What, then, is the cure, if there indeed is one? For starters, Mann suggests, "Open admission of past transgressions must be required." She continues by giving the example of Germany, where the U.S. organized tribunals at the end of the Second World War, as a possible paradigm to follow in setting up what she refers to as Truth and Justice Tribunals. Similar tribunals were established in South Africa following the long-awaited collapse of the apartheid regime there.

"We await a restructuring of American life into real communities of people working together at things that matter," writes Kunstler, "and it will require the demise of the things that have worked so hard to destroy all that, namely, the tyranny of the giants, the town-killing Walmarts, the suffocating monster of government, the media manipulators of reality, the too-big-to-fail banks." Concurring while urging more definitive action, scholar and activist Ward Churchill notes, "The U.S., at least as it has come to be known, and in the sense that it knows itself, must be driven from North America."

The racially-motivated massacre in El Paso is, as are all such abysmal acts, the antithesis of what the Holy Quran recommends: that we should come to know one another—not kill one another. Seyyed Hossein Nasr explains that the verse points to the diversity of humanity, which should cause people to gain a deeper appreciation of one another. By dividing human beings into diverse peoples of different colors, customs and languages, God has placed us under perhaps the greatest test of all; a test that white America is failing miserably.

Second Announcement



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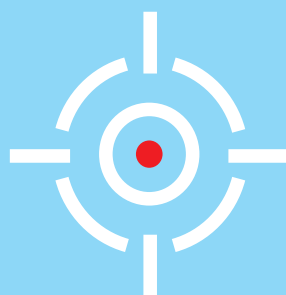
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Western media are suppressed if they criticize Israel: Italian filmmaker Diego Vida

Part 2

Following is the last part of Tehran Times' interview with Italian filmmaker Diego Vida:

In the movie named "Armageddon" (1998) in the beginning scene asteroids strike New York just a taxi driver says "Saddam is attacking us", so how come 3 years before the 11 September and 5 years before the second war in Iraq, Touchstone Pictures production knew everything? Touchstone Picture made "The Da Vinci Code" against the Vatican. In "Rules of Engagement" (1999), the story begins with the war in Yemen, so how come Paramount knew 5 years before the start of the Yemen war?

The 2014 "RoboCop" remake shows Tehran devastated like Iraq or Afghanistan in a war with Jihadists and suicide bombers. The film also shows Iranian mothers using their children in suicide attacks. The first thing I did it was to show my friends the video I shot in Iran with my cell phone to say look, this is the real Iran and Iranians aren't like what is portrayed in the movie. Who knows when, but as the Palestinian journalist of Watania said the Anglo Zionists are preparing a war against Iran soon or later. They did the same with "Rocky 4", released in 1986 when Sylvester Stallone as the boxer Rocky Balboa beats Drago, the Soviet Russian boxer. The president of the Soviet Union [in the movie], who really looks similar to Mikhail Gorbachev, stands up and cheers for the American. Indeed, five years later the Soviet Union collapsed.

Also these companies shoot films against Islam and Catholics. Basically according to them, all Muslims are terrorists and all Christian priests are pedophiles. But this is strange because in the Talmud, the book of Jewish law, it was the Jews that created and used stoning or lapidation. During the rite of circumcision a rabbi, a leading Jewish scholar, did a pedophile act to remove the blood. Nowadays this rite still is practiced and in the United States many cases of virus have come from the lips of a rabbi who infected the child and some kids have died.

So why doesn't the TV news talk about that? Isn't it a fact regarding the act of a pedophile? Maybe because they are Jewish it is not possible talk about this? Zionists, who have killed people for centuries by making wars around the world and till now are still killing people, aren't terrorists either? There is a day for the remembrance of [deceased] Jews but there isn't any day for the others, like the Native Peoples of America who have almost become extinct. Thanks to the Anglo-Zionists who for more than two centuries during the colonization of the USA killed many Native Americans, even kicking the belly of pregnant women to save bullets, just so in the end they could make a party for giving thanks and eating a Turkey?

So why don't the television channels say this? How come in my country on the square of the Italian parliament, in front of the door, is a painted Menorah, there since 1998 when they remade our square? Would Israel allow Christians to put a cross in front of the door of their parliament? They produce movies against Catholics and Muslims with horror, terrorism and adult content but it's so strange that there aren't any movies with horror, terrorism and adult content about Judaism?

In the West, when some corrupted journalist talks bad about Iran, or the Christian Catholic, there is no problem. But when somebody talks bad about Israel or Judaism, they are immediately censored or fined or arrested or blocked. Is this fair? The corrupt media say in Iran, information is not free because the government controls most of the media. So why is it that in Italy, there are several Jewish families who own the media and the mainstream of newspapers as well. Indeed one of these Jewish families control five national journals that of course speak badly about Iran and positively about globalization. Perhaps a single person controlling media is much more dangerous than a government anyway. Writer Voltaire had said, "To learn who rules over you, simply find out who you are not allowed to criticize."

I recommend watching these films to understand the reality about globalization of imperialism. "They Live" (1988), "Lord of War" (2005), "Blood Diamonds" (2006) and "The International" (2009) You will understand how everybody is in on the deal and are playing every role, like Russia and the ex-republics that will enter the United States of Europe. Indeed right now for the European citizens it is possible to go to Kazakhstan without any passport just using only the ID card. Strangely, all Israeli citizens can enter Russia without any visa, is that normal?

Jews come from Khazaria, an ancient territory located near the actual Kazakhstan (later a territory of the Russian Empire)



as the Palestinian journalist of Watania said, and they migrated until reaching the Middle East and Africa. They created communism to overthrow the Czar of the Russian Empire, then afterwards they created the Soviet Union. Indeed, Lenin was Jewish. After that, they destroyed it and created capitalist Russia. They did the same with China and in Europe, during the world wars.

These Askenazi Jews (from Khazaria origins) are the owners of the world. That's why are called Anglo Zionists. They hate Catholics and Muslims and all minority religions, as they want to make all of them combined into one, recognizing their religion as the only one. Once they destroy Islam and Christianity, the game will be over; Aryan-Caucasian people will cease to exist. Only Afro-Euro-Asian people will exist for Black supremacy, but with no identity, and same black skin color as a uniform for a fully obedient slave. That's the New World Order. India is like that so you'd better pay attention for [the sake of] your Iran.

■ How will you adapt yourself to working in Iranian cinema, which is totally different from what is happening in Hollywood?

Well in the Iranian film market, we can find several genres of films like action, drama, comedy, adventure, documentary, fantasy with special effects and animation. For example: The movie "Bodyguard" was very similar to our Italian movie named "La Scorta" (1993). Of course there isn't horror, thriller, adult and so on. But I think that's good, basically any other country across the world should stop producing this garbage full of violence and sadism.

In the West, when some corrupted journalist talks bad about Iran, or the Christian Catholic, there is no problem. But when somebody talks bad about Israel or Judaism, they are immediately censored or fined or arrested or blocked.

I'm not saying this because the Tehran Times is interviewing me, I had declared this last year during an interview in Italy. So I want to make clear one important thing: I worked in the past making horror films, eros action films in Japan. As a Western citizen I grew up with this American stuff. So in the end, it was inevitable that I liked these films, but I cannot be a liar and say everything is okay, that these movies are good. Like rap music inciting hate and full of bad language, of course not, these movies are un-healthy, disturbing, and really sadistically violent. Garbage should get censored; something terrible like that shouldn't be screened because people will learn violence, get a taste of free sex, or sadisms and many other dirty things like prostitution, decreasing the dignity of the human being. All of these things are imperialistic weapons for destroying family relations, showing how good it is to be single, trading partners, being gay, and becoming a prostitute to make easy money faster, and showing a secure woman who can play with men, having all the men she wants and never having to marry because she can sell her body. Honestly, I think this tends to view the woman as an object rather than respect her dignity as human being. All in all, this is just to avoid further increase of the human population, as we are rapidly approaching a population of eight billion.

So as a producer, I must tell the truth. In fact, I want to say that it is possible to shoot a good movie without violent stuff. Then films in action, fantasy, adventure and so on could be easily delivered; no problem if the plot, screenplay, direction, production and post[-production] are good. And Iran is full of wonderful locations waiting only for some beautiful movie. As for myself, I can shoot all I want with no restriction because I know how, given that I'm not indoctrinated by Anglo-fashioned fake democracy. Indeed, I avoid distasteful movies.

■ You have also worked as a videogame producer in "Bomberman", "AdventureQuest", "Bloodstained" and

"King of Avalon". Do you have any plans to collaborate with Iranian game developers?

I already developed Super Mario, approved by Iran's Entertainment Software Rating Association (ESRA) and playable on PS3, and I gave some as gifts to some of my fans during a game festival in Europe while I was on stage talking about Iran's production of videogames and movies with Iranian talent in the CGI and PAL systems used by Iran for making Western-compatible products. Also there's a good chance to buy original software like Adobe After Effects, Photoshop, Premiere, 3D MAX and so on for next to nothing. Some of these American companies would claim piracy but they are the real pirates for selling this software at the same price of an expensive laptop, while billions of clients are making them rich and doing them a favor by buying their products for a game - movie production, and even advertising them.

As I am a fan of retro games, and liking a lot Arcade videogames, I will be developing my next game on a 2D platform like Metroid in a futuristic Iran. Honestly, making these games is much more practical than a 3D game because in the latter case, the pre-production and post is pretty hard and full of elements to be created and inserted, which takes some years, while a good quality 2D game easily is possible to do in 1 year and the result is very enjoyable.

Basically in a game saloon, the arcade cabinet was an old slot machine playable using a coin. Actually in Iran, there are some of these machines in the Kourosh Shopping Center on the top of floor of the amusement park and on Kish Island, too.

■ Iranian film productions in visual effects are growing faster, so what's your idea regarding the foreigner investors? Do you think any chance to produce in Iran movies in computer graphic would be the next frontier?

Of course yes, Iran is modern country for modern investors. All the time, I see colleagues going to Western countries like the UK, USA, Canada, France and Germany but making nothing because of the economic crisis, higher taxation and too many competitors. Instead, they could relocate to Iran and keep working there, open a company, invest, and produce films, games and TV formats.

Iranian film producers do a lot with visual effects and CG in live action movies; the realism is amazing, and there are good artists in special effects. VFX (visual effects) are in computer graphics while the SFX (special effects) are in live, like an explosion, scenography, costumes, masks, weapons, and animatronics: the robots controlled by remote RC by a techno director in the same way that they use drones for video in the air and on the ground. Actually many TV studios are replacing cameraman by using ground drones controlled by a techno director in front of a workstation.

Iranian visual effects franchise is certainly the next frontier for getting successful, high quality film productions. I'm really well satisfied working Iranian products.

■ Is there anything else in conclusion that you would like to say?

When I watch fake news on TV about INSTEX, saying the Iranian people are poor like Afghans, Iraqis or Pakistanis in need of humanitarian aid for goods like food, drink, clothing, medicines, or equipment, I just laugh a lot because first of all Iranians are richer than most in the Western countries; [they have] no need for food, and certainly no need for clothing, and they don't need any medical equipment.

One of my friends works at the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), and

one time he brought me to his hospital showing me the modern equipment they use frequently and that their manufacturers sell abroad, too. So maybe the Western countries are in need of medical equipment from Iran considering nowadays the Western economy is collapsing. I wonder who will send us humanitarian aid? I guess the Western governments will have to stop being disrespectful towards Iranians and pay Iran in advance for the oil and gas they want, by giving gold bars to Iran, and once they have paid for it in full, only then will they be allowed to transport the oil in their Western ships.

Muammar Gaddafi, the Muslim leader of Libya didn't care about the embargo of the Anglo-Zionists because he used to get paid in advance by gold bars, that's why in 2011 when the Anglo-Zionists destroyed Libya they stole all the gold of Libya: €220 billion in gold bars.

Why hasn't someone said Sarkozy is Jewish and he betrayed Muslim leaders like Gaddafi after being paid by him to do business with France? Isn't Iran risking the same [fate] after doing business with the West? Why do rumors always spread lies like Iran has no products? Or perhaps because, like Libya, Iran is rich and this is just an excuse to steal their resources? What! They want to get more?

In fact, Iran has many products made by Iranian companies like the car called Tiba. Moreover, Iranian pharmaceutical companies produce medicines. And in architecture everyday they build many facilities: houses, malls, cinemas, schools etc. So why would Iran have a need for humanitarian aid? For what? Really this story is getting ridiculous... specifically towards a strong country like Iran with a powerful military as we could see recently in the Hormozgan Sea, where the Sepah Navy Special Force intercepted a British oil tanker. The green beret marine raiders are always deployed to the front lines, ready to defend Iran, and to prevent any attacks from outside. This elite force of the Iranian navy is specialized in parachuting, diving, martial arts, CQC (Close Quarters Combat) and explosives and weapons. Only the ten percent of the Iranian soldiers are successful in becoming a member of the Sepah Navy Special Force. Comparing them with [U.S.] Navy Seals, certainly there is no chance for the Americans—mostly drunks or drug addicts—the Iranians SNSF are much more professional and better educated to fight as they don't drink, and they do their duty with honor to protect their nation Iran at any cost.

Another interesting thing about Iran is their government is respectful towards its soldiers who have fallen in action. Indeed around the cities are pictures of Iranian soldiers, missing in action as a result of defending their land, on the walls of buildings, but in the West, no. Why shouldn't our European regime government be grateful towards our soldiers? But no, instead, they prefer to display commercial advertising in the building, since doing business is always good under any circumstances. By contrast in the West, it is impossible to admire the graffiti on the dirty walls made by vandals (or, excuse me, artists) using spray paint, making anything they touch dirty by writing bad words in the same style as American rap gangs, but that's democracy.

Also good in Iran is the possibility of entry into the army permanently, making it a career after the first 2 years, but in the West no, not anymore. Until 2000 it was like Iran but after that everything got privatized. Even the army now is part time, so our soldiers risk their lives but can't have a career later... I don't think is normal. 20 years ago, I was a tenant in the Italian Army in a specialized unit of the special mountaineer corps named Alpines, an elite army that is called even for national calamities like earthquakes, tsunamis and raising funds for helping people to buy new homes. Unfortunately now the European regime is reducing this corps, which is approaching its end as many commands and troops are deactivated.

I really like it that in Iran women and men stay together; there is no confusion and the word "gay" doesn't exist. But in the West, no; of course, if men stay with women, this is not a good thing, rather, it is a racist thing, so the European regime extensively promotes how good it is being gay, lesbian and trans. Recently a disgusting advertisement about condoms showing women making love: of course, they are mixed races because, simultaneously, they must promote the beauty of being globalized and destroying all the races, thus making everybody Afro, and if any European citizen would say something against that, they just get labeled as racist, xenophobic, homophobic and so on. So when I want to find the real democracy, I prefer to stay in Iran where it is still possible to live according the proper values of the family. Inshallah!

Astronomers just found an absolutely gargantuan black hole the mass of 40 billion suns

Black holes can get pretty big, but there's a special class that is the biggest of the big, absolute yawning monster black holes. And astronomers seem to have found an absolute specimen, clocking in at 40 billion times the mass of the Sun.

It's at the center of a galaxy called Holmberg 15A, a supergiant elliptical galaxy around 700 million light-years away, which in turn sits at the center of the Abell 85 galaxy cluster.

The object is one of the biggest black holes ever found, and the biggest found by tracking the movement of the stars around it.

Previous calculations based on the dynamics of the galaxy and the cluster had resulted in Holm 15A* mass estimates of up to 310 billion times the mass of the Sun. However, these were all indirect measurements of the black hole. This new research marks the first direct measurement; the paper has been submitted to The Astrophysical Journal, and awaits peer review.

"We use orbit-based, axisymmetric Schwarzschild models to analyze the stellar kinematics of Holm 15A from new high-resolution, wide-field spectral observations obtained with MUSE at the VLT. We find a supermassive black hole (SMBH) with a mass of $(4.0 \pm 0.80) \times 10^{10}$ solar masses at the center of Holm 15A," the researchers wrote in their paper.

"This is the most massive black hole with a direct dynamical detection in the local Universe."



Now, it's not the most massive black hole ever detected - that would be the quasar TON 618, which apparently has a black hole clocking in at 66 billion times the mass of the Sun, based on indirect measurements.

But Holm 15A* is up there. At 40 billion solar masses, the black hole's event horizon (also known as the Schwarzschild radius) would be huge, engulfing the orbits of all the planets in the Solar System, and then some.

Quite a lot of some. Pluto is, on average, 39.5 astronomical units (AU) from the Sun. The heliopause - where the solar wind is no longer strong enough to push against interstellar space - is thought to be around 123 AU.

At the mass of Holm 15A* as determined by the new paper, its Schwarzschild radius would be around 790 AU.

Try to imagine something that size. The mind reels.

In fact, it's even bigger than other measurements taken by the researchers have suggested - which may explain why Holm 15A*'s mass has been difficult to pin down via indirect methods.

"The SMBH of Holm 15A is not only the most massive one to date, it is also four to nine times larger than expected given the galaxy's bulge stellar mass and the galaxy's stellar velocity dispersion," the researchers wrote.

However, it fits the model of a collision between two early-type galaxies with depleted cores. That's when there are not many stars in the core, based on what is expected from the number of stars in the outer regions of the galaxy.

"We find that black hole masses in cored galaxies, including Holm 15A, scale inversely with the central stellar surface brightness and mass density, respectively," the researchers wrote.

They intend to continue studying the breathtaking beast, conducting more complex and detailed modelling and comparing their results against their observations, to try to figure out exactly how the black hole formed.

In turn, that can help figure out how often such a merger takes place - and therefore how many such ultramassive black holes are yet to be discovered.

(Source: sciencealert.com)

United Launch Alliance rocket blasts off from Florida carrying Air Force communications satellite

United Launch Alliance, a joint venture between Boeing Co and Lockheed Martin Corp, blasted off into space on Thursday morning, one of the final satellites for the U.S. Air Force's new secure communications network.

The satellite was launched at 6:13 a.m. (1030 GMT) from Florida's Cape Canaveral Air Force Station atop ULA's Atlas V rocket, the same vehicle primed to send a manned space capsule into orbit for NASA by 2020.

Thursday's successful launch followed a rare spate of technical delays with the venture's flagship rocket.

The Lockheed Martin-built Advanced Extremely High Frequency (AEHF) satellite is one of six in a constellation upgrade to the Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center's older Milstar network.

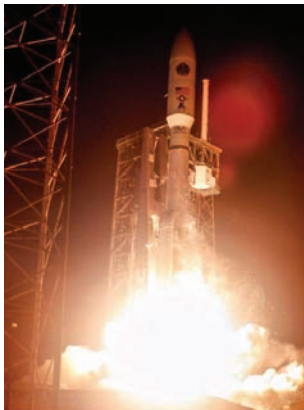
The AEHF-5 mission was originally slated for lift-off on June 27, but a battery issue pushed that date to July 9. Launch was again delayed due to a mishap with a supplier's component of the rocket, which "demands that all parts are suspect until we can prove otherwise," ULA chief executive Tory Bruno wrote on Twitter after suspending a separate ULA launch for the Air Force over the same mishap concern.

The joint venture is transitioning from its Atlas V rocket — a legacy workhorse for U.S. national security missions — to Vulcan Centaur, a heavy-lift vehicle tailored to compete for lucrative defense contracts and wean the United States off the Russian-made RD-180 engines that power Atlas.

ULA is one of a handful of companies vying for a five-year, 25-mission Air Force contract that will be awarded in 2020 to two winners, posing a high-stakes battle between the launch stalwart and newer entrants such as Elon Musk's SpaceX and Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin, which are also expected to submit bids.

The \$1.1 billion satellite launched Thursday marked ULA's 74th mission for the U.S. defense department and the fifth secure communications spacecraft for the Air Force's new constellation that will serve military-grade ground, sea and air communications for the U.S. troops, Canada, Britain, Australia, and the Netherlands. The final satellite in the constellation is due for launch in March 2020.

(Source: Reuters)



10 smart tips for cheap train travel in Germany

By Abi Carter

The Schones-Wochenende-Ticket is no more, but there are still many other ways you can travel cheaply by train in Germany - perhaps even faster and cheaper than ever before! Take a look at our top 10 tips for securing the best train ticket prices in Germany.

■ Book as early as possible

Okay, this one might be obvious, but did you know that you can book train tickets up to 180 days before departure? Prices are calculated according to how busy the train is expected to be, so if not as many tickets are booked as expected, fares may be lowered. However, this is generally the exception rather than the rule, so early booking should be your guiding principle.

■ Book online or at vending machine

We all like a bit of face-to-face contact. But when it costs you two euros extra? No thank you! Save yourself on "consulting fees" by booking online or via a ticket machine in the station. Often there's a helpful soul standing nearby to help you find the cheapest fares anyway!

■ Select less popular travel days

Mondays, Fridays and Sundays are the most popular travel days in Germany, as well as those just before and after school holidays and national holidays. Save yourself a couple of euros (and avoid the crowds!) by travelling on Tuesdays, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturdays.

■ Deselect ICE

This one really depends on how highly you value your time. If you can afford to dawdle a little on the way, travelling without ICE connections is a cheaper alternative. If you're a tech-whizz dependent on charging your laptop, however, you'd best stick to premium trains, as there are no power outlets anywhere else.

■ Change to regional traffic

If you know your route well and are not afraid of changing trains a couple of times, hop off the ICE and do a stretch of your journey on a regional train. It may be cheaper, for example, on the route Berlin - Frankfurt to take the high-speed train to Kassel and then switch onto regional transport.

■ Switch off "Prefer fast connections"

This is a tricky little feature on the Deutsche Bahn website that may elude you. If you cannot find a ticket at the price you were hoping for, deactivate the search option "Prefer fast connections." You will then be shown some slower, cheaper options that were hidden from you before.

■ Choose alternative route

This follows the same principle as switching to regional traffic - by breaking up your journey or travelling a slightly strange route, you can make some huge savings. For instance, if you're travelling from Munich to Bremen, you will usually change in Hannover. If you continue to Hamburg and change there, however, the price suddenly drops.

■ Don't bother with seat reservations

If you don't mind scrambling for a seat, this is a way to save a cool 4,50 euros each way. This is an especially good option if you are getting on the train right at the start of its journey, where there are still plenty of free seats to choose from in the unreserved carriage. Just be sure to arrive in plenty of time to secure a space, or you may find yourself standing.

■ Use group offers

You might still be mourning the Schones-Wochenende-Ticket, but there are still cheap group options available via the Cross-Country and Lander tickets from Deutsche Bahn. And the more people you travel with (up to a maximum of five), the cheaper it gets. If you're more than five, you can get groups savings tickets, starting at 19,90 euros each.

■ Use a third-party vendor

Deutsche Bahn doesn't always have the cheapest options. This is especially the case if you have no choice but to book your tickets last-minute. For example, train companies sell a small amount of their discount tickets to other websites such as L.Tur. It might even be worth seeing if anyone's selling an unwanted ticket on eBay!

(Source: iamexpat.de)



ROUND THE GLOBE

Singapore Botanic Gardens

The UNESCO-listed Singapore Botanic Gardens is situated at the heart of the city of Singapore, a sovereign city-state in Southeast Asia.

The cultural landscape includes a rich variety of historic features, plantings and buildings that demonstrate the development of the garden since its creation in 1859.



The property reveals the evolution of a British tropical colonial botanic garden from a 'Pleasure Garden' in the English Landscape Style, to a colonial Economic Garden with facilities for horticultural and botanical research, to a modern and world-class botanic garden, scientific institution and place of conservation, recreation and education.

The Singapore Botanic Gardens is a well-defined cultural landscape which includes a rich variety of historic landscape features, plantings and buildings that clearly demonstrate the evolution of the Botanic Gardens since its establishment in 1859.

Through its well-preserved landscape design and continuity of purpose, the Singapore Botanic Gardens is an outstanding example of a British tropical botanic garden which has also played a key role in advances in scientific knowledge, particularly in the fields of tropical botany and horticulture, including the development of plantation rubber.

■ Authenticity

The authenticity of the Singapore Botanic Gardens is demonstrated by the continued use as a botanic garden and as a place of scientific research. The authenticity of material remains in the property is illustrated by the well-researched historic trees and other plantings (including historic plant specimens), historic elements of the designed spatial lay-out, and the historic buildings/structures which are being used for their original purposes or adapted to new uses that are compatible with their values.

(Source: UNESCO)

Tehran, Beijing stress expansion of tourism ties

TOURISM

TEHRAN – Iran tourism chief Ali-Asghar Mounesan on Wednesday met with Chinese Ambassador to Tehran Chang Hua, stressing the need for expansion of cooperation to exchange more travelers.

"Thank you for your efforts to strengthen tourism relations between Iran and China," CHTN quoted the envoy as saying.

"China is ready to cooperate with Iran in tourism arena. In meetings with Iranian president and foreign minister, I said that China will [facilitate] sending its people to Iran.

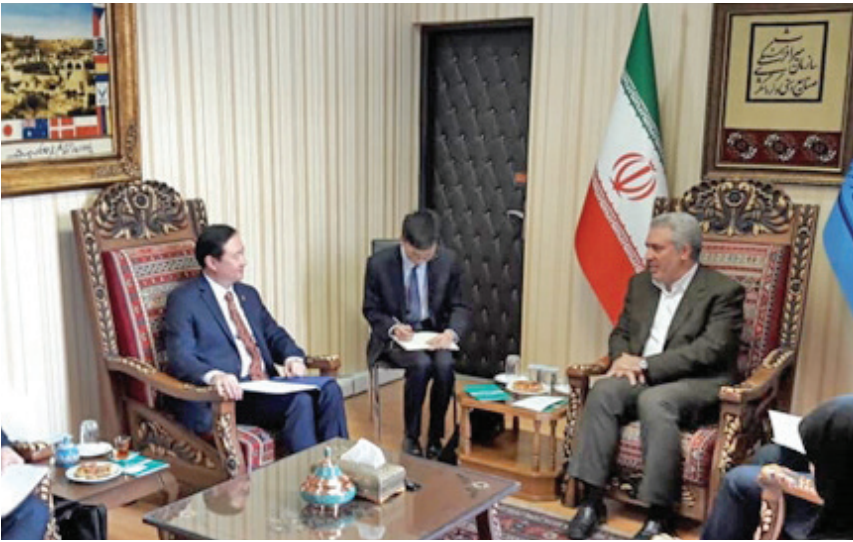
Mounesan for his part invited the ambassador to embark on a tour across the Islamic Republic.

"We are ready to help you visit all the [tourist] destinations across Iran, though it is a vast country and has many historical sites," Mounesan said.

"Iran is house to some one million historic [monuments] and sites, of which 34,000 are registered on national cultural heritage list. There are also 24 UNESCO-registered ones that demonstrate history and civilization of the country."

Chang appreciated Iran's move for implementing visa-free travels for Chinese passport holders.

"I thank Iran for waiving visas for Chinese travelers. I believe this will help expand tourism in both countries. I always refer to Iran



Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization Director Ali-Asghar Mounesan (R) and Chinese Ambassador to Tehran Chang Hua meet at the CHHTO headcounters in Tehran on August 7, 2019.

as a safe country for my family and friends. In my opinion, Iran is a safe country and it is indeed the safest country in the Middle East," he noted.

"In a meeting with Iranian Majlis speaker Ali Larijani, I said that I am ready to introduce

Iran to Chinese travelers, like an ambassador to China, and I will start that from my family."

Mounesan who also doubles as vice president proposed closer cooperation to educate Iranian travel guides, saying "I ask China's Embassy to help running Chinese courses

Silk Road a suitable opportunity to introduce ancient Iran

TOURISM

TEHRAN – The possible inscription of the ancient Silk Road on the UNESCO World Heritage list will open up a suitable opportunity for Iran to present its cultural, literary, historical and scientific achievements to the world, the secretary general of the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO has said.

"Although the mainstream view of the Silk Road is economic, the road has various cultural values and capacities as well," Hojjatollah Ayoubi said on Wednesday.

He made the remarks at a plenary session for the 6th Meeting of the Coordinating Committee on Serial Transnational World Heritage Nomination of the Silk Road, which will be held in the city of Hamedan in the Iranian calendar month of Mehr (Sept.23-Oct. 22), the report said.

The meeting will be attended by representatives from Iran, Afghanistan, China, India, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, as well as some observers from other countries.

Addressing the session, Cvetan Cvetkovski, the officer in charge of UNESCO Cluster Office in Tehran, expressed hope that all these programs could create a good image of the UNESCO, the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO, Hamedan, and Iran.

"One of these activities is the International Conference on Interfaith Dialogue along the Silk Road," Cvetkovski said.

"We will compile a record of all activities at the conference and, in November, at the UNESCO General Conference, we will present the results."

Another speaker at the session was Mohammad-Hassan Talebian, Iran's deputy tourism chief, who saw a bright prospect for Hamedan as the host of the UNESCO-affiliated event.

"A main part of the Silk Road passes through Iran and Hamedan is situated on this route," Talebian said, adding

"So, Hamedan as the host of the meeting, can be properly introduced in terms of tangible and intangible cultural heritage and tourism destinations."

Together with five Central Asian countries and China, the World Heritage Center has coordinated the preparation of the serial transnational World Heritage nomination of the Silk Roads since 2003.

Central Asia and China have supported the project through organizing regional and sub-regional consultation meetings, the establishment of the inter-governmental coordinating committees regrouping the 14 participating countries, and the elaboration with ICOMOS and the World Heritage Center of a Thematic Study on the Silk Roads.

The ancient Silk Road has existed for thousands of years, passing through many different empires, kingdoms, reigns and societies throughout history. At certain times in its long history, traders could travel freely along these routes, whereas at others, travel was difficult or dangerous.

According to UNESCO, the Silk Road enriched the countries it passed through, transporting cultures, religions, languages and of course material goods into societies across Europe, Asia and Africa, and uniting them all with a common thread of cultural heritage and plural identities.

There are over 40 countries today alongside the historic Land and Maritime Silk Roads, all still bearing witness to the impact of these routes in their culture, traditions and customs.

These vast networks carried more than just merchandise and precious commodities however: the constant movement

The ancient Silk Road has existed for thousands of years, passing through many different empires, kingdoms, reigns and societies throughout history.



Caravan on the Silk Road, 1380 CE

and mixing of populations also brought about the transmission of knowledge, ideas, cultures and beliefs, which had a profound impact on the history and civilizations of the Eurasian peoples. Travelers along the Silk Roads were attracted not only by trade but also by the intellectual and cultural exchange that was taking place in cities along the Silk Roads, many of which developed into hubs of culture and learning. Science, arts and literature, as well as crafts and technologies were thus shared and disseminated into societies along the lengths of these routes, and in this way, languages, religions and cultures developed and influenced each other.

How to check the safety of a charter airline



assure yourself this is a safe and experienced operation?"

Air travel has never been safer than it was in the year just past with just two fatal accidents among commercial airlines worldwide. Still, risk varies by region. The Middle East and North Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and the Commonwealth of Independent States in Eurasia have the highest accident rates; between 2.8 and 5.8 accidents per million flights. That's three to five times the rate in North Asia and North America, according to statistics compiled by the International Air Transport Association.

Many factors contribute to the disparity including how pilots, mechanics, ground personnel and air traffic controllers are hired and trained, how airplanes are maintained and the state of the runways, radar, weather forecasting and communication systems. Governmental oversight is critical, safety specialists said.

As a former air accident investigator and the author of two books on the subject, I am often told by people that they assume regulation is the same around the world, but that is not the case.

"Oversight can be anywhere from pretty good in the U.S. and Europe while in many other places it's a crapshoot," Mr. Alexander said.

Travelers need to keep safety in perspective. A government not controlling hazards in aviation is probably equally lax on other modes of public transport. Statistically speaking, long distance commercial aviation is safer than driving or

any other form of transportation, according to the I.A.T.A.

Here, some ideas for checking out air charter services.

Inspect the facility Aviation requires attention to detail and an aversion to hazards. Consider it a warning if you arrive at the airport and the appearance of the company, the airplane or the flight crew doesn't seem professional. Michele Markarian, the director of strategic accounts for the website Air Charter Guide and an experienced traveler, once walked away from a flight she had booked because the airplane didn't look up to snuff.

Allow extra time Travelers may be tempted to set aside their worries if rushing to the next destination. Having extra time to find an alternative will alleviate the pressure of getting on a plane you don't feel comfortable about.

Check references Call the company and ask for references. Trip Advisor also has an airline review page, and a Twitter search using a hashtag with the airline name can also be illuminating. Already there? Frank Craven of Air Charter Guide recommends asking locals for their opinion by saying, "I'm about to fly with ABC, what's their reputation?" They might tell you, 'My drunk uncle is one of the pilots.' So asking for information is good."

See the paperwork There are three documents that all charter airlines ought to be able to show you, according to Wyvern's Mr. Dawley: its air operations certificate, its insurance certificate and the pilots' qualifications — all should be available at the airline office.

Network protection Any domestic or regional carrier, including those that offer charter flights that are associated with an airline alliance like Oneworld or Star Alliance, will have to pass a safety audit; if it has an intercarrier ticketing arrangement, the major carrier, is responsible for auditing their operations, according to John Darbo, a retired safety manager for a United States airline who is now a private safety consultant. Recently, I.A.T.A. started a review process for small planes. The few companies participating can be found online.

Google it Aviation's thriving online community makes it possible to find out nearly everything you want to know about airplanes. The Air Charter Guide offers information about planes, pilots, operators and a glossary of terms.

(Source: The New York Times)

Can food act as medicine? all you need to know

What you choose to eat has profound effects on your overall health.

Research shows that dietary habits influence disease risk. While certain foods may trigger chronic health conditions, others offer strong medicinal and protective qualities.

Thus, many people argue that food is medicine.

Yet, diet alone cannot and should not replace medicine in all circumstances. Although many illnesses can be prevented, treated, or even cured by dietary and lifestyle changes, many others cannot.

This article explains the medicinal effects of food, including which foods should and shouldn't be used for healing.

■ **How food nourishes and protects your body**

Many nutrients in food promote health and protect your body from disease.

Eating whole, nutritious foods is important because their unique substances work synergistically to create an effect that can't be replicated by taking a supplement.

■ **Vitamins and minerals**

Although your body only needs small amounts of vitamins and minerals, they're vital for your health.

However, Western diets — high in processed foods and low in whole foods like fresh produce — are typically deficient in vitamins and minerals. Such deficiencies can substantially increase your risk of disease.

For example, insufficient intakes of vitamin C, vitamin D, and folate may harm your heart, cause immune dysfunction, and increase your risk of certain cancers, respectively.

■ **Beneficial plant compounds**

Nutritious foods, including vegetables, fruits, beans, and grains, boast numerous beneficial compounds, such as antioxidants.

Antioxidants protect cells from damage that may otherwise lead to disease.

In fact, studies demonstrate that people whose diets are rich in polyphenol antioxidants have lower rates of depression, diabetes, dementia, and heart disease.

■ **Fiber**

Fiber is an essential part of a healthy diet. It not only promotes proper digestion and elimination but also feeds the beneficial bacteria in your gut.

Thus, high-fiber foods like vegetables, beans, grains, and fruits help protect against disease, decrease inflammation, and boost your immune system.

On the other hand, low-fiber diets are associated with an increased risk of illnesses, including colon cancer and stroke.



■ **Protein and healthy fats**

The protein and fat in whole, nutritious foods play various critical roles in your body.

Amino acids — the building blocks of protein — aid immune function, muscle synthesis, metabolism, and growth, while fats provide fuel and help absorb nutrients.

Omega-3 fatty acids, which are found in foods like fatty fish, help regulate inflammation and are linked to improved heart and immune health.

■ **A healthy diet can decrease disease risk**

Notably, nutritious foods may decrease your risk of disease — while the opposite is true for highly processed foods.

Unhealthy diets high in sugary drinks, fast food, and refined grains are a main contributor to conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and obesity.

These processed foods harm your gut bacteria and promote insulin resistance, chronic inflammation, and overall disease risk.

A study in over 100,000 people found that every 10% increase in ultra-processed food intake resulted in a 12% increase in cancer risk.

Additionally, a study on worldwide mortality and disease showed that in 2017, 11 million deaths and 255 million disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) were likely due to poor diet.

DALYs measure the burden of disease, with one unit representing the loss of one year of full health.

■ **Nutritious diets protect against disease**

On the other hand, research indicates that diets abundant in plant foods and low in processed products strengthen your health.

For instance, the Mediterranean diet, which is rich in healthy fats, whole grains, and vegetables, is linked to a reduced risk of heart disease, neurodegenerative conditions, diabetes, certain cancers, and obesity.

Other eating patterns shown to safeguard against disease include plant-based, whole-food-based, and paleo diets.

In fact, some diets may reverse certain conditions.

For example, plant-based diets have been found to reverse coronary artery disease while very-low-carb lifestyles may help eliminate type 2 diabetes in some people.

What's more, nutritious eating patterns like the Mediterranean diet are tied to better self-reported quality of life and lower rates of depression than typical Western diets — and may even boost your longevity.

Such findings prove that robust diets indeed function as preventative medicine.

■ **Can food treat disease?**

While some dietary choices can either prevent or increase your disease risk, not all diseases can be prevented or treated through diet alone.

Disease risk is quite complex. Although a poor diet can cause or contribute to illnesses, many other factors need to be considered.

Genetics, stress, pollution, age, infections, occupational hazards, and lifestyle choices — such as lack of exercise, smoking, and alcohol use — also have an effect.

Food cannot compensate for poor lifestyle choices, genetic disposition, or other factors related to disease development.

■ **Food should not be used as a replacement for medicine**

Though shifting to a healthier dietary pattern can indeed prevent disease, it's critical to understand that food cannot and should not replace pharmaceutical drugs.

Medicine was developed to save lives and treat diseases. While it may be overprescribed or used as an easy fix for dietary and lifestyle problems, it's oftentimes invaluable.

As healing does not hinge solely on diet or

lifestyle, choosing to forgo a potentially life-saving medical treatment to focus on diet alone can be dangerous or even fatal.

■ **Beware of false advertising**

While scientific evidence shows that food can aid various health conditions, anecdotal claims of curing or treating diseases through extreme dieting, supplements, or other methods are often false.

For example, diets advertised to cure cancer or other serious conditions are typically not backed by research and often prohibitively expensive.

Eschewing conventional treatments like chemotherapy for alternative, unproven diets can worsen diseases or lead to death.

■ **Foods with powerful medicinal properties**

Transitioning to a diet based on whole foods can improve your health in countless ways. Foods that offer particularly powerful benefits include:

● **Berries.** Numerous studies have found that nutrients and plant compounds in berries combat disease. In fact, diets rich in berries may protect against chronic conditions, including certain cancers.

● **Cruciferous vegetables.** Cruciferous vegetables like broccoli and kale contain a wide array of antioxidants. High intake of these vegetables may decrease your risk of heart disease and promote longevity.

● **Fatty fish.** Salmon, sardines, and other fatty fish fight inflammation due to their high levels of omega-3 fatty acids, which also protect against heart disease.

● **Mushrooms.** Compounds in mushrooms, types of which include maitake and reishi, have been shown to boost your immune system, heart, and brain.

● **Spices.** Turmeric, ginger, cinnamon, and other spices are packed with beneficial plant compounds. For example, studies note that turmeric helps treat arthritis and metabolic syndrome.

● **Herbs.** Herbs like parsley, oregano, rosemary, and sage not only provide natural flavor to dishes but also boast many health-promoting compounds.

● **Green tea.** Green tea has been thoroughly researched for its impressive benefits, which may include reduced inflammation and lower disease risk.

● **Nuts, seeds, avocados, olive oil, honey, seaweed, and fermented foods** are just a few of the many other foods studied for their medicinal properties.

Simply transitioning to a diet rich in whole foods like fruits and vegetables is the simplest way to reap the medicinal benefits of food.

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

Protein discovery could lead to new hearing loss treatments

A new genetic study in mice has identified two proteins that help organize the development of the hair cells that pick up sound waves in the inner ear.

New treatments for hearing loss may be on the horizon. Researchers at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore, MD, believe that their findings could hold the key to reversing hearing loss that arises from damaged hair cells.

A recent paper in the journal *eLife* gives a full account of the investigation.

"Scientists in our field," says Angelika Doetzlhofer, Ph.D., an associate professor of neuroscience at Johns Hopkins, "have long been looking for the molecular signals that trigger the formation of the hair cells that sense and transmit sound."

"These hair cells are a major player in hearing loss, and knowing more about how they develop will help us figure out ways to replace hair cells that are damaged," she adds.

In mammals, the ability to hear relies on two types of cell that detect sound: inner and outer hair cells.

Both types of hair cell line the inside of the cochlea, a spiral shaped hollow in the inner ear. The hair cells form a distinct pattern comprising three rows of outer cells and one row of inner cells.



The cells sense sound waves as they travel down the shell-like structure and convey the information to the brain.

■ **Development and loss of hair cells**

Problems with hair cells and the nerves that connect them to the brain are responsible for more than 90% of hearing loss.

Most mammals and birds have the ability to automatically replace lost or damaged hair cells, but this does not happen in humans. Once we lose our hair cells, it seems that hearing loss is irreversible.

The production of hair cells in the cochlea during embryo development is a highly organized and intricate process involving precise timing and location.

The process begins when immature cells at the outer cochlea transform into fully formed hair cells.

From the outer cochlea, the orderly transformation then proceeds like a wave along the internal lining of the spiral until it reaches the innermost region.

Although scientists have uncovered much about hair cell formation, the molecular signals that control the "precise cellular patterning" have remained unclear.

How do the signals make the right part of the process happen at the correct time to "promote auditory sensory differentiation and instruct its graded pattern?"

■ **Signaling proteins and gradients**

To try to answer the question, Doetzlhofer and her colleagues studied cochlear development in mouse embryos. They investigated signaling proteins that play a role in hair cell formation in the developing cochlea.

Two of the proteins that the researchers investigated caught their attention: Activin A and follistatin.

■ **Hearing loss and cognitive decline: Study probes link**

Recent research on older men adds more evidence to support a link between hearing loss and a decline in memory and thinking skills.

They saw how the levels of the two proteins changed during the transformation of precursor cells into mature hair cells along the inside of the cochlear spiral.

The protein levels appeared to vary according to the timing and location of the development pattern.

Activin A levels were low at the outermost part of the cochlea when immature cells started to develop into hair cells and high at the innermost part of the spiral, where immature cells had not yet begun to transform.

The authors refer to such high-to-low protein level changes as signaling gradients.

"Signaling gradients play a fundamental role in controlling growth and differentiation during embryonic development," they note.

■ **The two proteins 'work in opposite ways'**

While the Activin A signaling gradient went one way, moving in a wave that went inward, the follistatin signaling gradient went the other way, like a wave moving outward.

"In nature, we knew that Activin A and follistatin work in opposite ways to regulate cells," Doetzlhofer explains.

These findings seem to suggest that the two proteins control the precise and delicate development of hair cells along the cochlear spiral by balancing each other.

Further investigation using both normal and genetically engineered mice confirmed this notion.

Increasing Activin A in the cochleas of normal mice made hair cells mature too soon.

Conversely, hair cells formed too late in genetically engineered mice that either produced too much follistatin or produced no Activin A at all. The result was a disorganized pattern of hair cells on the inside of the cochlear spiral.

"The action of Activin A and follistatin is so precisely timed during development that any disturbance can negatively affect the organization of the cochlea."

Doetzlhofer suggests that the findings could lead to new treatments for restoring hearing that becomes impaired due to the loss of hair cells.

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

Fathers' stress during pregnancy leads to child behavioral problems, study finds

Fathers who are stressed during pregnancy are more likely to have children with emotional and behavioral problems, a new study has found.

Infants tended to show increased spitefulness and restlessness, as well as having more temper tantrums than those whose fathers' wellbeing had been healthy before birth.

Previous research has shown links between mothers with prenatal mental health problems and behavioral problems in their children.

However, the new study, led by the University of Cambridge, is the first to involve both mothers and fathers and to track the development of the child over two years.

Its authors say the results reveal the "unique impact" of mental health problems during pregnancy.

They have already shared their findings with the NCT (National Childbirth Trust), the UK's largest parenting charity.

Professor Claire Hughes, who led the research, said: "For too long, the experiences of first-time dads has either been side-lined or treated in isolation from that of mums.

"This needs to change because difficulties in children's early relationships with both mothers and fathers can have long-term effects."

"Our findings highlight the need for earlier and more effective support for couples to prepare them better for the transition to parenthood."

The researchers also found that two-year-olds were more likely to exhibit emotional problems - including being worried, unhappy and tearful, as well as scaring easily or being clingy in new situations - if their parents had been having early postnatal relationship problems.

These ranged from a general lack of happiness in the relationship to rows and other kinds of conflict.

Although genetic factors may partly explain the link between prenatal paternal well-being and children's emotional and behavioural development, they cannot fully account for the correlation.

The authors said it could be explained by intrauterine transmission of maternal physiological stress in mothers living with partners who are unhappy or anxious, even if they are

not unhappy or anxious themselves.

Published in the journal *Development & Psychopathology*, the study drew on the experiences of 438 first-time expectant mothers and fathers who were followed up at four, 14 and 24 months after birth.

Using standardized questionnaires and interviews, participating mothers and fathers reported on their symptoms of anxiety and depression in the third trimester of pregnancy and as their child grew older.

At each of these interviews, parents also completed standardized questionnaires measuring the quality of the couple's relationship, and the children's emotions and behavior.

These parents were recruited in the East of England, New York State and the Netherlands.

"There has been an assumption that it's really difficult to get dads involved in research like this," said Professor Hughes.

"But our study draws on a relatively large sample and is unique because both parents answered the same questions at every stage, which enabled us to make direct comparisons."



The research is part of an ongoing project examining the wellbeing and influence of new mothers and fathers.

In a linked study, published in *Archives of Women's Mental Health* in July, the team found that fathers share in traumatic memories of birth with their partners far more than has previously been recognized.

The research compared the wellbeing of parents in the third trimester of pregnancy with that when their child was four months old.

(Source: [The Telegraph](#))

The end of endoscopy? New technique may be the future of medical imaging

Breakthrough research showcases an innovative imaging technique that uses ultrasound to provide in depth images in a noninvasive way.

A breakthrough in ultrasound imaging could soon eliminate the use of endoscopies.

Endoscopy is currently one of the most common methods for medical imaging. Its uses include diagnosing conditions that affect the lungs, the colon, the throat, and the gastrointestinal tract.

During an endoscopy, medical professionals insert an endoscope — a long, thin tube with a strong light and a small camera at the end — into a small opening, such as the mouth or a tiny incision that a surgeon makes.

Endoscopies are an invasive procedure, albeit minimally so. They can create discomfort and are not without risks. Potential side effects of endoscopies include oversedation, cramps, persistent pain, or even tissue perforation and minor internal bleeding.

Now, an innovative discovery may put an end to endoscopy altogether. Maysam Chamanzar, an assistant professor of electrical and computer engineering at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Matteo Giuseppe Scopelliti, a doctoral researcher in the same department, have devised a noninvasive ultrasound imaging technique that promises to replace the endoscope.

The researchers detail their novel technique in the journal *Light: Science and Applications*.

■ **Replacing the physical lens with a virtual one**

Chamanzar and Scopelliti explain in their paper that biological



tissue, being a turbid (or dense and opaque) medium, limits the possibilities of optical methods.

Specifically, the tissue is made of large particles and membranes and restricts the depth and resolution of optical imagery, "especially in the visible and near infrared range of the spectrum."

The new technique, however, uses ultrasound to devise a "virtual lens" in the body instead of inserting a physical one. The operator can then adjust the lens by "changing the ultrasonic pressure waves inside the medium," write the authors, and so take in depth images that were never accessible before, using noninvasive means.

Ultrasound waves can compress or rarefy the medium that they penetrate. Light travels more slowly through compressed media, and more quickly in rarefied media.

The authors explain that they were able to create the virtual lens by using this compression/rarefaction effect:

"As the ultrasonic waves propagate through the medium, they modulate its density and hence its local refractive index; the medium is compressed in the high pressure regions, resulting in a higher density, while it is rarefied in the negative pressure areas where the local density is reduced."

"As a result," they write, "the pressure standing wave creates a local refractive index contrast."

Moreover, adjusting or reconfiguring the ultrasound waves from the outside can move the lens around inside the medium, allowing it to travel to different regions and take images at different depths.

"We used ultrasound waves to sculpt a virtual optical relay lens within a given target medium, which, for example, can be biological tissue," says Chamanzar. "Therefore, the tissue is turned into a lens that helps us capture and relay the images of deeper structures."

The researcher further explains how the technique works and why it is a progressive step for visualizing inside the body.

"What distinguishes our work from conventional acousto-optic methods is that we are using the target medium itself, which can be biological tissue, to affect light as it propagates through the medium," continues Chamanzar. "This in situ interaction provides opportunities to counterbalance the [obstacles] that disturb the trajectory of light."

(Source: [Medical News Today](#))

U.S. states face water crisis as global heating increases strain on supplies

A handful of U.S. states – including New Mexico and California – are facing significant strains on their water supplies that will only intensify with global heating, according to new rankings.

New Mexico tops the list and is the only state with “extremely high” pressures on its water availability. The state’s score is on par with the United Arab Emirates in the Middle East and Eritrea in Africa, the World Resources Institute (WRI) found.

California ranks second, followed by Arizona, Colorado and Nebraska. “We’re stretching our water supply pretty much as far as it can go ... and even further,” said Leah Schleifer, a spokeswoman for WRI’s water program.

Experts with WRI said the data shows a global water crisis. “The picture is alarming in many places around the globe, but it’s very important to note that water stress is not destiny,” said Betsy Otto, WRI’s global water director. “What we can’t afford to do any longer is pretend that the situation will resolve itself.”

New Mexico faces the highest water pressures, followed by California, Arizona, Colorado and Nebraska.

The global research organization compared the water available in aqueducts to the amount withdrawn for homes, industries, irrigation and livestock.

Around the world, stress on water supplies can exacerbate conflict and migration, threaten food supplies and pose risks for water-dependent industries, including mining and manufacturing, WRI notes.

The U.S. overall is not among the world’s most at-risk countries, although Mexico ranks No 24. A 2010 study predicted that climate-driven changes in crop yields in Mexico would lead to more emigration to the United States. And the global climate crisis is increasingly being recognized as a major factor in the exodus from Central America to the U.S.

Worldwide, at the top of the list are Qatar, Israel, Lebanon, the Palestinian Territories and Iran. A total of 17 countries are facing “extremely high” risks and another 27 are facing “high” risks.

Scientists have also linked the violence and civil war in Syria to a drought driven by rising temperatures and massive water withdrawals. In the African Sahel, a semi-arid region that stretches coast to coast across northern Africa below the Sahara, they have documented similar water stresses as millions have migrated out of the countryside.

WRI’s experts explained that water stress is different from drought. But places where people are using water at a faster rate than it is replaced could see serious problems if they hit a drought – or a prolonged period without enough rain.

“With respect to climate change we know that in many places what we’re going to be seeing is more erratic, more unpredictable hydrology, precipitation. Either too much or too little, often in the same places,” Otto said.

The mid-latitudes around the globe are likely to receive less rainfall as temperatures rise. And they will be using more water, as crops draw up more water during dry periods and people use water-dependent electricity to run air conditioners, Otto said.

A recent analysis of 12m wells in the US found that as ground-water supplies are depleted, people and industry are digging deeper. Researchers called the trend an “unsustainable stop-gap” that is only available to those who can afford it and where hydrologic conditions allow.

The last widespread drought in the U.S. was in 2012, when more than 80% of the country experienced abnormal dryness or worse, and two-thirds of the country experienced drought, said Brad Rippey, a meteorologist for the agriculture department.

California saw an extended drought with conditions beginning in 2011 and not subsiding across the state until the last couple of years.

(Source: The Guardian)

WORDS IN THE NEWS President Bush visits NATO

(June 13, 2001)

As President George W. Bush prepared to meet NATO heads of State and Government, there was unease among NATO members about his missile defense plans. BBC Defense Correspondent Jonathan Marcus sent this report before the meeting at NATO’s headquarters in Brussels.

In an age of smart missiles and precision-guided weaponry President Bush is going to have to rely upon **good old-fashioned charm** if he is **to win over** America’s skeptical NATO allies. There’s **a growing mood of transatlantic tension**, both real and imagined; a feeling that European capitals and Washington no longer view the world in quite the same way. The Bush team has spoken with a number of different **accents** in the security field: Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld emphasizing, as one US newspaper editorial put it, that the allies should simply **fall into line** behind the US, while Secretary of State Colin Powell has stressed Washington’s desire for consultation and discussion. Missile defense has become the issue that **crystallizes** these US-European tensions, but there are many other problems ahead, ranging from the European Union’s **growing interest** in defense, to NATO expansion and the crisis in the Balkans. President Bush **is likely to stress** that the growing US strategic role in Asia will not compromise America’s fundamental interests in NATO. He may well stress his desire to see European allies do more in the defense field. Such an improvement in capabilities is **the sweetener** that makes the EU’s defense efforts **tolerable** in American eyes.

Words

good old-fashioned charm: simple, traditional politeness **to win over:** if you win someone over to your point of view you persuade them that you are right through friendly argument. **a growing mood:** a feeling which is steadily getting stronger **transatlantic tension:** tension which exist between countries on either side of the Atlantic Ocean - in this case between America and Europe.

accents: accents here is a diplomatic way of saying different statements or views.

fall into line: a military idiom used here to mean ‘conform’ **crystallizes:** when an opinion, idea or issue crystallizes it becomes fixed in people’s minds

growing interest: increasing involvement with **is likely to stress:** the phrase illustrates that the report is speculative because it was written before the actual meeting - ‘to stress’ here means to emphasise

the sweetener: something that you give to someone to persuade them to do something they do not want to do

tolerable: if something is tolerable it is acceptable or bearable but not pleasant or good

(Source: BBC)

Relief foundation creates 22,000 jobs in 4 months

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Imam d e s k Khomeini Relief Foundation has generated 22,000 jobs in the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (started March 21), ISNA quoted the foundation’s head Morteza Bakhtiari as saying on Thursday.

“It is projected that by the end of the year 170,000 jobs to be created,” he said at a ceremony to inaugurate 2,500 job creation projects for those financially struggling under coverage of the foundation in Khorasan Razavi province.

He went on to say that based on the sixth five-year national development plan (2016-2021), some 70,000 jobs should be created annually by the foundation. “To this end, 35 trillion rials (about \$830 million) has been allocated this year,” he noted.

Last year, 148,000 jobs were created by the foundation, he said, adding that from the year 1374 (March 1995-March 1996) to the year 1397 (March 2018-March 2019), more than 700,000 families have become financially independent and no longer under the Foundation coverage.

Hojjatollah Abdolmaleki, deputy director



Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation head Morteza Bakhtiari speaking at a ceremony to inaugurate 2,500 job creation projects in Khorasan Razavi province

of the foundation, said in June that some 70,000 job opportunities will open up through entrepreneurs who started their own businesses using the foundation’s loans.

‘Part of German soul’ under threat as forests die

A catastrophic combination of heat, drought, storms, forest fires, beetle plagues and a fungi blight have so far this year destroyed swathes of German forest equivalent to more than 200,000 football fields.

Forests are one of the most efficient ways to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, and in Germany alone they are able to absorb 62 million tons of CO₂ – about 7% of the country’s emissions – every year.

But forests have also been at the heart of Germany’s cultural identity for centuries, and politicians are now seizing the issue – known as waldsterben (dying forest) – as a top priority.

The agriculture minister, Julia Klöckner, has announced a forest summit next month, at which national forestry and climate experts are to agree on a multimillion-euro action plan. Klöckner has pledged €500m (£460m), to be paid out of the government’s energy and climate fund, to finance it.

“Our forests are massively damaged,” Klöckner said, visiting Moritzburg near Dresden, which has been badly hit, many of its trees brown and dying, mainly due to drought and beetle infestations.

“Only if everyone unites will we manage the mammoth task that lies ahead of us – to save our forests not only for ourselves but for future generations,” she said.

The society for the protection of the German forest, SDW, believes the extent of the destruction goes even beyond the government’s estimate. It has said the trees being lost at the most rapid rate are those that make up the bulk of the forests, including spruces and firs, pines, beeches and oaks.

In last year’s dry summer and this year’s, the forests have been hit by a shortfall of 200 liters of rainwater per square meter, according to SDW, which Germany’s meteorological service says is the driest it has been for 50 years.

The association of German foresters (BDF) has said German forests are close to collapse. “The forest is the best way to save the climate, but right now the forest itself is a victim of the climate catastrophe,” it said.

A third of Germany is made up of forest, or 11.4m hectares

(28 macres) – about a half of which is private property.

The crisis is being keenly felt, not least after a recent survey on national identity in which 50% of participants cited forests as being central to their idea of heimat or sense of home.

Germans have for centuries had a mythological, even spiritual, identification with their forests. Woodlands have formed the inspiration for much German music and literature – most famously the 19th-century folk tales of the Brothers Grimm. In everything from Red Riding Hood to Hansel and Gretel the forest is portrayed as a place of foreboding and threat and as well as retreat, safety and learning.

For German romanticists in the late 18th century, the forest was an important symbol of unity and purity, the word waldeinsamkeit, forest loneliness, embodying the sense of inner peace to be found in the forest. This was later exploited by the Nazis, who encouraged the idea of the forest as a sign of German cultural solidity, encouraging people to plant German oaks to honor Adolf Hitler.

The tabloid Bild recently published an ode to the German



Fossils of largest parrot ever recorded found in New Zealand

Fossils of the largest parrot ever recorded have been found in New Zealand. Estimated to have weighed about 7kg (1.1st), it would have been more than twice as heavy as the kakapo, previously the largest known parrot.

Palaeontologists have named the new species *Heracles inexpectatus* to reflect its unusual size and strength and the unexpected nature of the discovery.

Prof Trevor Worthy of Flinders University in Australia, the lead author of the re-

search published in the journal *Biology Letters*, said: “Once we decided it was something new and interesting, the challenge was to figure out what family it was from.

“Because no giant parrots have been found previously, parrots were not on our radar – thus it took some time to differentiate all other birds essentially from parrots to conclude that the unique suite of characters was definitive of a parrot.”

Paul Scofield, a senior curator of natural

history at Canterbury Museum, said the fossil had been excavated in 2008, and initially the team had thought the bones were part of a giant eagle.

The bones, which will go on display at an exhibition in November, were found in a fossil deposit from the early Miocene epoch, about 19m years ago, near Saint Bathans in Central Otago, New Zealand.

Although the area is now very cold and known for its skiing, Scofield said the climate

Currently, there are about 400,000 entrepreneurs in the country, he said, adding, only if each of them employ 10 job seekers, the country’s unemployment problem will be solved.

Pointing out that the foundation’s priority is to eliminate poverty in the society and empower families through job creation and income generation, he added that 1.4 million job opportunities have been created in 2011-2017.

“According to statistics published by the government, the foundation accounted for one fifth of total jobs created in the country in the aforementioned period,” he noted.

Moreover, last year, the foundation created one third of the country’s total job opportunities, he said.

“We try to train individuals under the foundation’s coverage in the fields of production, marketing and sales, in order to achieve vocational skills and become financially independent,” he added.

“Last year, we succeeded in supporting over 150,000 business plans and this year it is planned to launch 5,000 others, he concluded.

forest, calling it “part of the German soul”.

“It is, alas, not some made-up fairy tale ... that our forest is in a state of emergency ... and if we don’t do something to save it and ourselves, we might end up with the story: ‘Once upon a time, there was a place called the German forest,’” the paper stated.

Experts are divided over the best plan of action. Solutions range from introducing more robust tree species to naturally allowing forests to adapt to the conditions. The opposition Greens are calling for a return to primeval forests – woods left to their own devices, after researchers at Zurich’s Technical University calculated that there was room on the planet for a third more forests than at present without encroaching on urban or agricultural spaces.

While owners of private forests are tending towards planting Douglas firs and northern red oaks, the Association for Environmental and Nature Protection in Germany, a leading NGO, says non-native species are an ecological risk.

The trees that are most under threat are said to be spruce, beech, ash, Norway maple and sycamore. Those most able to weather the climate crisis are robinia, plane, and sweet and horse chestnut trees.

Among those likely to be increasingly imported in future are Turkish hazel, Italian acorn, silver lime, and Lebanon cedar. The challenge is to find varieties able to cope with hot summers as well as harsh winters.

Klöckner believes that as many varieties as possible are necessary, referring to experts who say nature cannot be left to cope on its own. “We need mixed forests and trees that are adapted to their habitat,” she said.

Tanja Sanders, an expert in forest ecology who researches what the forest of the future might look like, said: “Forests are a vital part of our lives. They form groundwater, give us wood, filter the air, reduce CO₂ and the temperature and offer space for species conservation and human relaxation. But we must face up to having to say goodbye to the forest as we’ve known it.”

(Source: The Guardian)

Second 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

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Syrian constitution body could convene soon

TEHRAN— Russia hopes that an agreement can be reached soon under U. auspices on forming Syria's new constitutional committee and that it can convene in Geneva as early as September, Moscow's envoy said on Friday.

Formation of a constitutional committee is key to political reforms and new elections meant to unify Syria and end an eight-year-old war which has killed hundreds of thousands and displaced about half of Syria's pre-war 22 million population.

Special Envoy Geir Pedersen said in Damascus last month after talks there that the United Nations was close to agreement with Syria on setting up the constitutional committee, a long-awaited step in the stalled peace process.

Gennady Gatilov, Russia's ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, told a briefing on Friday that he expected Pedersen to announce agreement on its composition soon after the conclusion of negotiations between the Syrian government and the



opposition.

Asked whether the body might convene by year-end, Gatilov replied: "Even earlier,

hopefully in September."

"It is a significant progress and it opens the way for first of all starting the work of

the constitutional committee and in general the way to a political solution of the Syrian crisis," he said.

According to Reuters, Jenifer Fenton, Pedersen's spokeswoman, said: "The Special Envoy looks forward toward the conclusion of the composition and the rules of procedures for the Constitutional Committee. Russia's active support of the UN political effort toward ensuring a comprehensive political solution that is Syrian owned and led, and in line with Security Council resolution 2254 - is appreciated."

In Ankara, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on Thursday the process of establishing a Constitutional Committee had reached the final stage.

"We currently objected to one name. Russia is doing what is necessary for this person to be changed. In the process ahead of us, we want to come together as the foreign ministers of Russia, Turkey and Iran and announce this," Cavusoglu said speaking at an ambassadors meeting in Ankara.

American surveillance drone crashes near Baghdad

TEHRAN— An American surveillance drone has crashed northwest of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, according to a report.

The Iraqi Arabic-language Burath news agency cited informed sources on Friday saying that the drone, registered under the number "52187," had probably crashed due to hacking or electronic jamming from an "unknown source."

The report said that the aircraft, which had fallen in a farming area, appeared undamaged. Iraqi authorities later transported the drone to an unspecified location.

No further details regarding the drone have been disclosed. American and Iraqi authorities have yet to confirm the incident.

The report comes nearly a month after Iraqi sources said that "unidentified drones" had attacked a base be-

longing to Iraq's Popular Mobilization Forces (PMU) in the Arab country's Salahudin Province, killing one PMU member and injuring another four.

Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi later ordered an investigation into the incident.

A few days after the attack, the Arabic-language al-Ahd news website cited informed security sources saying that the Hashd al-Sha'abi positions were targeted by three Israeli Harop missiles fired from Israeli F-16 aircraft which had infiltrated the southeastern province of Anbar.

Western diplomats speaking to the Saudi-owned Asharq al-Awsat daily also confirmed the Israeli attack but attributed the assault to an Israeli F-35, Press TV reported.

More than two million Muslims begin Hajj pilgrimage

TEHRAN—Muslims gathered from around the globe in the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia have begun this year's Hajj pilgrimage.

According to local media, about 2.5 million believers are participating in the annual Hajj pilgrimage, which started on Friday.

Each and every able-bodied Muslim, male or female, is required to complete the religious trip at least once in their lifetime if they also have the sufficient financial capacity to do so.

The nearly month-long pilgrimage features various rites, including stoning a column representing the devil, sacrificing sheep in remembrance of Prophet Abraham's offered

sacrifice, and Tawaf, which consists of walking and praying around the Kaaba, Islam's holiest shrine, at the Grand Mosque in Mecca.

■ **'An indescribable feeling'**

"It's an indescribable feeling. You have to live it to understand it," said an Algerian pilgrim describing his first time taking part in the spiritual trip.

"It's a golden opportunity and moment," said his female companion.

According to Press TV, the gathering is also seen as a symbol of Muslim unity, with all participants required to wear a simple and identical outfit during the processions.

The clothing consists of a two-piece white seamless garment for men, and a loose cover-all dress for women.

U.S. sanctions will worsen situation for long-suffering Venezuelans: UN warns

TEHRAN— The United Nations' human rights chief has warned that the latest U.S. sanctions against Venezuela will worsen the situation for millions of "long-suffering" people across the oil-rich country.

U.S. President Donald Trump issued an executive order on Monday, stating that "all property and interests in property of the government of Venezuela that are in the United States... are blocked and may not be transferred, paid, exported, withdrawn, or otherwise dealt in."

The order is also designed to prevent third-party countries doing business with the government of President Nicolas Maduro.

The new measures alarmed the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, who said the sanctions were "extremely broad".

The sanctions, she feared, "will have far-reaching implications on the rights to health and to food in particular, in a country where there are already serious shortages of essential goods."

She said there is much evidence to show that the unilateral sanctions "can end up denying people's fundamental human rights, including their economic rights as well as the right to food and health."

Bachelet said the measures were "still likely to significantly exacerbate the crisis for millions of ordinary Venezuelans."

Washington has already imposed several rounds of sanctions against the oil-rich country to oust Maduro and replace him with opposition figure Juan Guaido, who declared himself interim president earlier this year.

The Trump administration has even confiscated Venezuela's state oil assets based in the US to channel them to Guaido.



Venezuela's Vice President Delcy Rodriguez criticized Washington for imposing new sanctions against the country, saying they are likely to bring additional hardship to the Venezuelan people.

■ **Maduro halts talks with opposition**

In a reaction to Washington's move, the Maduro government announced on Wednesday that it would not attend a new round of talks with the opposition, set to be held in Barbados on Thursday and Friday.

The president decided not to send his representative due to "serious and brutal aggression" carried out continuously by the Trump administration against his country, according to a statement posted on Twitter by Information Minister, Jorge Rodriguez.

"Venezuelans have noted how the leader of the opposition delegation, Juan Guaido, has celebrated and promoted these actions that are harmful to national sovereignty,"

said the information ministry in a statement.

Guaido already welcomed the U.S. sanctions, arguing that they punish those "who do business with the regime".

Since May, the Maduro government has engaged in negotiations with the opposition in a bid to resolve the political deadlock. However, the talks have so far failed to bridge the differences between the two sides.

In the meantime, U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton threatened that Washington would use "every tool to end Maduro's dictatorship in Venezuela."

"The time for dialogue is over. Now is the time for action," Bolton said while addressing a summit on Venezuela in Peru's capital, Lima.

He also called on China and Russia — two of Venezuelan's allies — to abandon their "intolerable" support for the Maduro government.

Last month, Washington threatened Russia with new sanctions over its support for Maduro, shortly after announcing punitive measures against several individuals and groups for their involvement in an emergency food program.

A former U.S. diplomat and vice-president of the Council of the Americas Eric Farnsworth said, "Obviously the goal here is to get Maduro out of power ... [But] I don't know what the trigger is to force him out — I don't think anybody does. That's part of the issue."

According to Press TV, Venezuelans are suffering from a lack of basic necessities as a consequence of U.S. sanctions. According to United Nations statistics, a quarter of Venezuela's 30-million-strong population is in need of humanitarian aid.

At least 3.3 million people have fled the country since the end of 2015, according to the data.

Anger builds in Kashmir as Friday prayers held amid security

TEHRAN— Anger was mounting in Kashmir against India's decision to revoke the special status of the Muslim-majority region, residents and officials said, although authorities eased some curbs to allow people to offer Friday prayers.

Seeking to tighten its grip on the region also claimed by neighboring Pakistan, India this week scrapped the state's right to frame its own laws and allowed non-residents to buy property there.

Since Sunday telecoms links have been suspended, at least 300 leaders detained and public gatherings banned, effectively confining residents to their homes in the revolt-torn region.

Television images showed dozens of people walking on the streets of Srinagar, the region's main city, for the first time this week to offer prayers at mosques guarded by police.

"Every time we have embraced India,

they have cut our throats," read a handwritten poster at one mosque, which also urged Kashmiris not to sell land and to hold protests after Eid prayers on Monday.

Leaders in Kashmir had warned that scrapping the special status would be seen as an act of aggression against the people of the Himalayan state, where more than 50,000 people have died in a 30-year revolt against Indian rule.

There have been no major protests, barring sporadic instances of stone-throwing in the last few days, but several residents and a police official told Reuters resentment against the decision was building.

"There is a lull right now ... the situation can go out of control," said the police official, who declined to be named as he was not authorized to speak to the media < Reuters reported.

Russia summons U.S. envoy for Washington's meddling in internal affairs

TEHRAN— Russia says it summoned a senior U.S. diplomat in Moscow to lodge a formal protest against Washington's interference in the country's internal affairs, following a controversial move by the U.S. embassy to support an unauthorized rally in the Russian capital late last week.

The US embassy in Moscow published a map on social media showing the proposed route of the march.

Russia's Foreign Ministry reacted to the move on Friday, saying it had summoned a senior American diplomat over the published post.

"We underlined that we consider the publication of the route ... as promoting participation in (the protest) and calling for action, which constitutes interference in the internal affairs of our country," it said.

On August 3, demonstrators gathered in Moscow as a sign of protest to the government's decision to disqualify

a number of opposition candidates from standing in local elections.

The U.S. has already come under fire for meddling in the internal affairs of China by triggering and encouraging anti-government protests in Hong Kong.

A recent report uncovered a photograph of a U.S. diplomat meeting with members of the Hong Kong political party, Demosist, in the Chinese city.

Russia and the U.S. have already been engaged in tensions; the most recent of which sparked after the U.S. formally terminated a Cold War-era treaty with Russia that had banned nuclear-capable missiles with ranges of 500- 5,500 kilometers.

The withdrawal followed accusations by the U.S. administration that Moscow had violated the treaty by deploying a new type of cruise missile, a charge Russia denies.



The U.S. already planned to start testing a new class of missiles later this summer.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, however, warned on Monday that Moscow will be forced to begin developing short- and intermediate-range land-based nuclear missiles if Washington starts doing so.

Abdul-Malik al-Houthi's brother assassinated

TEHRAN— Yemen's Interior Ministry says Ibrahim al-Houthi, the brother of Houthi leader Abdul-Malik al-Houthi, has been assassinated.

"The treacherous hands affiliated with the U.S.-Israeli aggression and its tools assassinated Ibrahim Badreddin al-Houthi," a statement from the ministry, cited by al-Masirah TV, said on Friday.

The statement did not provide any further details regarding al-Houthi's assassination, who is said to have been an influential military commander among the Houthi forces.

Other Yemeni sources reported that al-Houthi's body, along with a number of Houthi commanders, had been discovered in a house following a Saudi strike in the city of Haddeh in Yemen's west-central province of Sana'a.

Saudi Arabia and a number of its regional allies launched a devastating campaign against Yemen in March 2015, with the goal of bringing the government of former president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi back to power and crushing the Houthi Ansarullah movement.

According to Press TV, resistance by Yemen's armed forces, led by the Houthi Ansarullah movement, has, however, pushed the Saudi war to a stalemate, with Yemeni forces increasingly using sophisticated weaponry in retaliatory attacks against the coalition.

The assassination takes place at a time when Saudi Arabia's main ally in the conflict, the United Arab Emirates, is withdrawing its troops from the conflict, largely because Abu Dhabi believes the war appears to have become "unwinnable."



Trump appoints counter-terrorism chief to head national intelligence

TEHRAN— U.S. President Donald Trump has appointed Admiral Joseph Maguire, current Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, to head the Office of Director of National Intelligence starting August 15.

The appointment was preceded by the announcement that Sue Gordon, the current deputy director at ODNI, will be leaving at the same time as her boss Dan Coats. Under the law that established the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, he was obligated to make Gordon acting director upon Coats's departure.

Maguire was previously in charge of the Naval Special Warfare Command and retired from the US Navy in 2010. "I have no doubt he will do a great job!" Trump said of the retired admiral, RT reported.

Trump's first pick to head ODNI was Rep. John Ratcliffe (R-Texas), but that sparked an avalanche of criticism from Democrats and former intelligence officials, worried about the Texas congressman's criticism of the 'Russiagate' probe. He ended up withdrawing that nomination on August 2, blaming the "LameStream Media" who he said treated Ratcliffe "very unfairly."

S. Korea picks new envoy to U.S. who called Trump 'treacherous'

TEHRAN— South Korean President Moon Jae-in appointed on Friday a new ambassador to the United States who described Donald Trump as "treacherous", only a month after Britain's envoy to Washington had to step down over his criticisms of the US president.

In the early 2000s, Lee Soo-hyuck, a career diplomat before becoming a ruling party MP, was Seoul's chief negotiator in the six-party talks on North Korea's nuclear programme. He also served as a deputy foreign minister.

Now he will be responsible for guiding the relationship between Seoul and Washington, who have not always seen eye-to-eye over nuclear-armed North Korea or their own ties.

But only last year the South's Chosun Ilbo newspaper cited him as criticising Trump.

Lee had been asked about an incident at the White House when the U.S. president declined to have Moon's answer to a reporter's question translated, saying "I'm sure I've heard it before."

"That's Trump's style. I don't think he's only done that to Moon. He's treacherous," Lee told the paper, adding that as a former businessman, the U.S. leader had a tendency to say insincere things.

"To be honest, I really don't like," Lee went on, without making clear whether his disapproval was of Trump personally or his manner.

His appointment comes only a month after Britain's ambassador to Washington resigned after Trump targeted him over highly critical comments that put London and Washington's relationship on edge.

No law needed for U.S. exit from Iraq: Fatah Alliance

➔1 Leading a new coalition of its allies, the U.S. returned to Iraq in 2014, when the Takfiri Daesh terror group unleashed a campaign of destruction in the country. Widespread reports, however, said the Washington-led operations largely spared the terrorists and led, instead, to civilian deaths and inflicted damage on Iraqi infrastructure.

Iraq's armed forces, backed by mainly Shia volunteer forces, managed to liberate all Daesh-held areas thanks to military advisory assistance from neighboring Iran.

Baghdad declared the end of the anti-Daesh campaign in late 2017. Curbing foreign influence has become a hot-button issue in Iraq after parliament elections in May in which Shia volunteers made significant gains. The militias fought alongside U.S.-backed Iraqi troops against IS in recent years, gaining outsized influence and power along the way.

Two guilty of taking photos of body of dead soccer player Sala

Two workers from a British CCTV firm pleaded guilty on Friday to accessing graphic mortuary footage, later circulated on social media, of the body of the late Argentine soccer player Emiliano Sala, who was killed in a plane crash in January.

Sala, 28, was flying from his previous club Nantes in western France to Wales to join Cardiff City when the Piper Malibu aircraft disappeared over the English Channel.

The wreckage was finally located following a privately funded search and his body was recovered three days later.

Police launched an investigation in February after officers became aware that a graphic image showing the post-mortem of Sala was appearing on social media.

They raided the officers of the closed circuit TV firm which held the out-of-hours contract to monitor the mortuary and discovered that the company's director, Sherry Bray and another member of staff Christopher Ashford, had illegally accessed the footage.

Bray had taken photographs of the footage on her mobile phone and then sent the pictures to another person on Facebook Messenger, police said. Evidence showed Bray had also taken pictures of another body in the mortuary.

"It has been the two families who have been at the forefront of our minds throughout the investigation; they have been significantly impacted at what was already a difficult and traumatic time for them," said Detective Inspector Gemma Vinton.

"The actions of Bray and Ashford caused additional unnecessary distress and heartache."

Bray, 48, pleaded guilty at Swindon Crown Court to three counts of computer misuse and perverting the course of justice and Ashford, 62, admitted three counts of computer misuse. They are due to be sentenced on Sept. 20.

(Source: Mirror)

Police raid S. Korean sports agency in Ronaldo row

South Korean police raided a sports agency as part of a fraud inquiry after Juventus superstar Cristiano Ronaldo sat out a friendly in Seoul, enraging thousands of fans.

Police said the raid, which followed a criminal complaint, was intended to investigate whether whether the agency lied by claiming Ronaldo was guaranteed to play.

"We raided the office on Thursday," a Seoul police officer told AFP.

"We are looking into whether the agency proceeded with the match even though they were well aware prior to the game that Ronaldo may not -- or was not going to -- play."

A criminal complaint filed by a prosecutor-turned-lawyer accuses agency The Fasta of swindling some 6 billion won (US\$4.9 million) worth of ticket sales by saying the contract with the Italian club obliged Ronaldo to play for at least 45 minutes, and not warning buyers that he might not appear.

The lawyer, Oh Seok-hyun, did not go to the match himself but filed the complaint because he "thought it was very unjust", one of his colleagues told AFP.

The Portuguese striker stayed on the bench throughout last month's friendly against a K-League all-stars team, with Juventus saying he was rested on medical advice because of muscle fatigue.

The sell-out 65,000 crowd made its displeasure known during the game, which was delayed for an hour after Juventus arrived late from the airport.

The K-League has accused Juventus of "deception" and demanded an apology.

But the club has rejected accusations of deception and misbehaviour, with chairman Andrea Agnelli writing to the K-League: "Ronaldo was... obliged, according to our medical staff's advice, to rest due to a muscle fatigue.

"I definitely reject your accusation of irresponsible behaviour, arrogance, of disregard for fans, which we always honour," he added.

The head of The Fasta, Robin Jang, has been banned from leaving the country and will soon be questioned, police added.

(Source: AFP)

Casillas included in Porto squad for new season

Porto goalkeeper Iker Casillas, who suffered a heart attack in May, has been registered by the club to play in this season's Portuguese league.

The 38-year-old former Spain and Real Madrid goalkeeper features in the Porto squad list which has been published on the league's official website ahead of their opening game away to Gil Vicente on Saturday.

Casillas, who captained Spain to their only World Cup triumph in 2010 and played 725 games for Real Madrid before joining Porto in 2015, suffered a heart attack in a training session on May 1 and spent five days in hospital.

Two weeks later, Portuguese sports newspaper O Jogo suggested that Casillas would shortly announce his retirement.

However, in July, Porto said that Casillas had been given a role on the team's technical staff "while he recovers from his health problem."

Porto last month signed Argentine goalkeeper Agustin Marchesin from Mexico City club America and the 31-year-old made his debut on Wednesday in the 1-0 win away to Krasnodar in a Champions League qualifying match.

(Source: Reuters)

Brazil prosecutors ask judge to close Neymar rape case

Prosecutors in Brazil said Thursday they agree with a police finding that there is not enough evidence to prove rape allegations against Neymar and have asked a judge to close the case.

"What happened between four walls is impossible to know, we have her word against his," prosecutor Flavia Merlini told reporters. "We have decided to ask for the closure of the case."

Neymar has denied the allegations he raped a Brazilian woman in a Paris hotel in May. The ugly affair dominated headlines and conversations in the soccer-mad country for weeks.

The scandal blew up on June 2 when Neymar published a seven-minute video on Instagram, where he had first been in contact with Najila Trindade, revealing that he had been accused of rape.

In an attempt to defend himself against the allegations, Neymar's video was accompanied by WhatsApp messages and images of his encounter with Trindade.

(Source: Goal)

Nadal, Federer made joint decision to re-enter ATP politics

World number two Rafael Nadal said Thursday that he and long-time rival Roger Federer made a joint decision to stand for the ATP Player Council.

The 33-year-old Spaniard, an 18-time Grand Slam singles winner, confirmed the choice by the pair of icons at the ATP Montreal Masters after reaching the quarter-finals by beating Argentina's Guido Pella 6-3, 6-4.

Federer, a 20-time Slam singles champion, and Nadal were elected by fellow players to fill two of the vacancies caused by the resignations of Robin Haase, Jamie Murray and Sergiy Stakhovsky prior to Wimbledon.

"We decided to be together out there," Nadal said. "I will not be alone there. He will not be alone there."

"Both of us can (combine to) be a good power, good help for the sport in some way -- hopefully in a better way."

"We are here to help and to know a little bit better what's going on. Last year have been some up and downs in a lot of things."

Controversy has arisen over the past months concerning various issues, with ATP Council president Novak Djokovic often on the opposite side of discussions from Nadal and Federer.

The world number one Serb has clashed with many fellow players with disagreements



centered on the decision to dispense with the services of ATP chief executive Chris Kermode, a popular figure in tennis. Splits widened at Wimbledon when Djokovic was taken to task over his relationship with the disgraced Justin Gimelstob. Former player Gimelstob, who has

sat on the player council, pleaded no contest to assault charges in Los Angeles earlier this year for attacking a man in front of his wife and children at Halloween in 2018. Djokovic has come under fire for refusing to rule out a possible return to the board for Gimelstob.

"I have friendly relationship with Justin," said Djokovic at Wimbledon.

An ATP spokesman said that Nadal and Federer, who turned 38 Thursday, will begin their roles with immediate effect and will serve until the end of the existing term, which runs through to Wimbledon next year.

"(There have been some) tough moments in terms of discussions -- a lot of important things to have to be done," Nadal said in vague reference to various ATP situations.

"I will try and give my opinion after more than 15 years on the tour. I can probably give a different perspective on how the game has to be or things that we can add."

"It's just trying to help the game to be better. If I am there, I believe that I can be helpful." Djokovic, who won his 16th Slam singles crown last month at Wimbledon, will try to defend his title at the upcoming US Open. "Novak has been there for a while. We have been there in the past. It's good that players are interested on what's going on in our sport," Nadal said.

"(Over) all of our careers, Roger and I cared a lot about this sport. There are a lot of things that have been going on. We want to be part of it. That's why we are there now."

(Source: AFP)

Saudi Arabia a strong contender to host Joshua v Ruiz rematch



Saudi Arabia has emerged as a strong contender to host Anthony Joshua's much anticipated rematch with unified world heavyweight champion Andy Ruiz Jr.

The Middle East country has delivered a lucrative proposal which is under serious consideration by Joshua's team.

An offer from Dubai was also put forward but Saudi Arabia and Cardiff's Principality Stadium are the destinations now likely to play host.

The IBF, WBA and WBO world title bout is set for 7 or 14 December.

An announcement on the destination could take place as soon as Friday if final talks progress adequately.

Joshua has said his preference is to stage the fight in Cardiff, but odds on Saudi Arabia playing host have fallen to 1-20 with one bookmaker.

The venue for the repeat fixture has been a topic of uncertainty since Ruiz, 29, said he would not be making the first defence of his titles in the UK.

Promoter Eddie Hearn has said returning to the US - where 29-year-old Joshua fell to a shock defeat at New York's Madison Square Garden - is unlikely.

A potential stumbling block for Saudi Arabia could be the country's time zone, which is three hours ahead of GMT. Joshua's bouts are televised on Sky Sports Box Office in the UK and the DAZN streaming service in the US.

If the bout started at midnight in the Middle East in December it would be

taking place in early afternoon in Los Angeles and early evening in New York - times which could prove unpopular with fans paying to stream what will be the biggest fight in the sport this year.

Saudi Arabia has made plays to hold significant sporting events in recent years, and hosted British boxer Amir Khan's recent win over Billy Dib and Callum Smith's success over George Groves in the World Boxing Super Series final in September.

The country hosted the opening race of the Formula E season in December, is in talks to host a Formula 1 race before 2021 and recently announced it will stage the richest race in horseracing history in February.

However, when Khan accepted his bout with Dib, Amnesty International highlighted Saudi Arabia's "abysmal human rights record".

The country's controversial Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman has said he wants to reform the country both in social and economic terms as part of his 'Vision 2030' plan - but he has also been strongly linked with the murder of Saudi journalist and critic Jamal Khashoggi inside Saudi Arabia's consulate in Istanbul.

Social reforms have included lifting the ban on women being able to drive, while high-profile pop stars have been enticed to perform in Saudi Arabia in order to enhance the country's image.

(Source: BBC)

Premier League clubs spend \$1.7 billion in summer transfer window



The English Premier League transfer window, a window that never simply closes but rather "slams shut," came to an end Thursday as the country's leading clubs splashed out £1.41 billion (\$1.7 billion) during the shopping bonanza -- including £170m (\$205 million) on the final day alone.

Just a day before Liverpool kicks off the new Premier League season against Norwich at Anfield Friday night, clubs were desperately trying to bolster their options in a last-ditch attempt to strengthen their chances of success and, for many, survival.

Driven by rolling news channels, an insatiable appetite for transfer rumors, deadline day itself has arguably become one of the most entertaining days in the football calendar.

Since the latest transfer window opened on May 16 for domestic deals, 11 clubs have smashed their own transfer records, according to the Deloitte Sports Business Group which tracks football finances. In fact, in the case of Premier League newcomers Sheffield United, the club record was smashed on four separate occasions in one single window.

The figure of £1.41 billion (\$1.7 billion) is the second-highest total spent since the transfer window system was introduced in 2003, falling just short of the £1.43 billion (\$1.72 billion) set in the summer of 2017. It also represents the fourth successive transfer window where spending by England's top clubs has been in excess of £1 billion (\$1.2 billion).

Arsenal, the biggest spenders of the window with an outlay of £155 million (\$187 million), according to Deloitte, led the way ahead of Manchester City on £150 million (\$181 million), Manchester United £145 million (\$175 million), Aston Villa £125 million (\$151 million) and Everton £110 million (\$133 million).

"Premier League clubs' transfer spend continues to be driven by the desire for success on the pitch, ranging from competing at the top of the Premier League and qualification for the UEFA Champions League to simply survival in the top division," said Dan Jones, partner at the Sports Business Group at Deloitte.

"This summer has seen over half of the Premier League clubs break their individual player transfer records in pursuit of these objectives."

According to Deloitte, the average gross player transfer expenditure for a Premier League club in the 2019 summer window was about £71m (\$86 million), up from approximately £61 million (\$74 million) last year.

In addition, the net spend of Premier League clubs during the 2019 summer transfer window is the lowest since 2015. As of August 8, net player expenditure was £625 million (\$754 million) with only three clubs, Chelsea, Liverpool and Crystal Palace, in a net receipts position.

"We would expect wages to increase at a greater rate than revenue, returning to a wages to revenue ratio of 60%," Jones said.

(Source: CNN)

United offload Lukaku, Spurs strengthen as window shuts

Manchester United succeeded in offloading striker Romelu Lukaku to Inter Milan on a transfer deadline day which saw plenty of business but few jaw-dropping deals from Premier League clubs.

Belgian Lukaku, who spent two years with United after 75 million-pound move from Everton, joined Inter for a fee reported to be around 80 million euros.

United had been keen to move on the forward who disappointed last season and whose style of play did not suit the approach being taken by Norwegian manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer.

With United unable to sign a replacement, the pressure will be on 21-year-old England forward Marcus Rashford to deliver the goals in a more central role than he has previously operated in.

United had already invested heavily to bring in centre-back Harry Maguire from Leicester City for 80 million pounds, making him the most expensive defender in the world.

Solskjaer has also added right back Aaron Wan-Bissaka and winger Dan James, while some fringe players may yet move out as the European transfer window remains open until Sept. 2. Tottenham Hotspur famously spent nothing in the window a year ago before reaching the Champions League final but tied up two deals for manager Mauricio Pochettino on deadline day. Argentina midfielder Giovanni Lo Celso joined from Spanish side Real Betis on a season-long loan with an option for a permanent switch.

Highly-rated 19-year-old Ryan Sessegnon was bought from Fulham for a reported initial fee of 25 million pounds -- the left wing-back signing a five-year deal.

■ Arsenal ACTIVE

Tottenham's north London rivals Arsenal were also active, spending a reported 25 million pounds on Celtic's Scotland left back Kieran Tierney.

Unai Emery's side also brought in Brazilian defender David Luiz from Chelsea for about eight million pounds but forward Alex Iwobi joined Everton in a deal reportedly worth 28 million pounds. Former England striker Andy Carroll has rejoined his boyhood club Newcastle United, 8-1/2 years after leaving them to join Liverpool in a then British record transfer.

The injury-plagued 30-year-old was a free

agent after being released by West Ham United at the end of last season. Watford signed Senegal winger Ismaila Sarr from French club Rennes on a five-year deal for a club-record fee.

Watford did not disclose the cost but French media reported it was in the region of 32 million pounds, eclipsing the 18.5 million pounds the Hornets paid for forward Andre Gray in 2017.

Chelsea midfielder Danny Drinkwater, who has struggled to get game time in the two years at Stamford Bridge since his move from Leicester, joined Burnley on a six-month loan deal. Australia midfielder Aaron Mooy moved from second-tier Huddersfield Town, who were relegated from the top flight last season, to Brighton & Hove Albion on a season-long loan.

■ Lukaku hails 'world's best' Conte after Inter move

Romelu Lukaku said on Friday that having the chance to play for Antonio Conte drove him to join Inter Milan, hailing the Italian as the world's best coach after arriving from Manchester United. Asked by club media how the arrival of former Italy boss Conte at Inter this summer had influenced

his decision to move to Serie A, he replied "a lot... he's the best manager in the world"

"He's somebody that can make players better all the time. You can see his record," said Lukaku. Conte has been a long-time admirer of Lukaku and tried to sign him for Chelsea before the Belgian's move from Everton to United in 2017. The 26-year-old completed his long-awaited move to Inter on Thursday, joining a club with ambitions of breaking fierce rival Juventus' stranglehold on domestic honours.

Belgium's all-time top scorer with 48 goals, he will be at the centre of Inter's attack, taking the number 9 shirt away from former club captain Mauro Icardi after the Argentina international was frozen out last season following a bitter and public contract row.

He hadn't played a single minute in United's pre-season campaign after being sidelined by Ole Gunnar Solskjaer despite scoring 42 times in all competitions while at Old Trafford. "I think Inter is a club with a lot of upsides. I think for me it was something I needed," Lukaku said.

(Source: Staff & Agency)

Iranian girls win two more gold medals at World Cadet Taekwondo Championships

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran took two gold medals on day two of the World Cadet Taekwondo Championships at Universal Sports Palace in Uzbekistan's capital Tashkent.

Zahra Zarin Naal defeated Thailand's Pacharaporn Sukhamon 39-28 in the women's under-41 kilograms final.

The bronze medals went to Turkey's Zeynep Nur Sariccek and Australia's Tiarnagh Sweeney.

Mobina Bakhshi also beat Colombia's Natalia Andreda Mendivelso 15-14 in the women's under-47kg gold medal match.

Rounding out the women's under-47kg podium were Chinese Taipei's Chiang Chih Yun and Great Britain's Beth Christy.

In the men's under-37kg final, Thailand's Ittiporn Sinsang beat Russia's Damir Akhmetov 21-14.

The bronze medals went to Iran's Pooyan Jafarsalehi and Belarus' Aliaksandr Kazlou.

Russia's Ramazan Ramazanov claimed a gold, beating Bulgaria's Denis Dimitrov 34-14 in the men's under-53kg final.

Joining the two players on the podium were Azerbaijan's Nizami Hajiyev and Iran's Amirhossein Mataji Nimvar.

On the first day of the competition, Mobina Nematzadeh had snatched a gold medal in the women's under-51kg final, overpowering South Korea's Kim Gahyeon 24-4.

Mohammad Mahdi Taherkhani had also won a bronze medal in the men's over-65kg.

A total of 550 athletes, aged from 12 to 14, from 64 countries are competing at the Universal Sports Palace in Uzbekistan's capital Tashkent.



Saman Ghoddos's move to Brentford breaks down



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Amiens winger Saman Ghoddos will not be heading to Brentford on transfer deadline day.

The Sweden born Iran international has scored four goals in 28 appearances last season in Ligue 1, and despite a fee allegedly being agreed with the Championship side, it all came crumbling down at the last minute, sportwitness.

co.uk reported.

The reason for this was the personal terms as Ghoddos didn't manage to reach an agreement with Brentford.

After the two parties walked away from talks, the player flew back to France, where he could still get an exit if he so wishes, as most transfer windows don't shut elsewhere before September 2nd.

Friendly: Iran basketball fall short against Greece



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran national basketball team lost to Greece 82-69 as part of preparation for the 2019 FIBA Basketball World Cup on Thursday.

Greek iconic power forward Giannis Antetokounmpo did not play against Iran since he is suffering from abdominal pain.

Iran will face Hungary in Crete on Saturday and meet once again Greece on Sunday.

Mehran Shahintab's side have been drawn with world's second-ranked Spain, Puerto Rico and Tunisia in Group C of the FIBA World Cup.

The competition will be held in China from 31 Aug. to 15 Sept.

The 2019 FIBA Basketball World Cup will be the 18th tournament of the FIBA Basketball World Cup for men's national basketball teams.

Mes Sungun and Oceans impress

Defending champions Mes Sungun Varseqan and Nagoya Oceans showed their class in their Group D opening matches at the AFC Futsal Club Championship Thailand 2019 on Thursday.

Mes Sungun began their title defense in style with a convincing 8-2 win over debutants Kazma SC of Kuwait at the Bangkok Arena.

The Islamic Republic of Iran club lead the Group D standings by a superior goal difference over three-time champions Nagoya Oceans, who came back from a goal down to defeat United Arab Emirates' Al Dhafra 4-2.

Saeid Taghizadeh, who scored two goals against Kazma, was pleased with his team's performance and stressed that Mes Sungun have their eyes fixed on the title.

"I'm really happy and thank God we won this game and grabbed three points. The first match is always the toughest but we could manage it.

"The Kazma team played well. Hopefully we can continue this method and this way of playing and become champions for the second consecutive year."

Mes Sungun head coach Esmaeil Taghipour was happy with the victory over Kazma but wants Mes Sungun to score



more goals.

"This is our first match but we played well and I'm happy we came up with the win. Kazma is a good side, they looked dangerous at times, but we could read their game and in the end it worked out for us.

"Mes Sungun's aim is to score as many goals as possible. We are here to win, but at the same time the goals are important to us."

Meanwhile, Nagoya Oceans showed their resilience when they saw off a strong charge from Al Dhafra and Shota Hoshi claimed it was down to hard work.

"It was a tough game. We used the opportunity in the corner kick as they gave us space and we used that to score," said the 34-year-old.

"We have three new players who are still adjusting and the hard work that we put in, especially in defence, gave us the victory."

Oceans head coach Juan Zamora revealed that his players were highly motivated and followed his instructions well.

The first match is always important and we just finished the domestic season after winning the championship. So, there were adjustments to be made but we responded well to the situation when they (Al Dhafra) scored the first goal.

"We controlled the game after that and focused on winning the match. We discussed tactics before the game and my players followed my instructions well."

(Source: the-afc)

Young aces set for Central Asian showdown

Tajikistan will play host to some of Central Asia's best young talent for the second time in less than a month as the region's future stars converge on Dushanbe for the 2019 CAFA U-19 Championship, starting Friday.

With Central Asia's U-16 Championship - won in style by the hosts - fresh in the memory, a slightly older generation of players are set to battle for regional bragging rights, as well as prepare for this year's all-important AFC U-19 Championship 2020 Qualifiers.

The tournament, which runs until next Thursday, will see each team meet once on a round-robin basis, with the team on top of table at the end of the 10-match schedule to be crowned Central Asian champions.

Uzbekistan are the defending champions, having defeated Kyrgyz Republic to win the inaugural staging in 2016.

Despite the absence of some players due to club duties, head coach Otobek Gulyamkhodjaev is satisfied with the depth of his squad.

"Every month we collect guys and conduct training," he explained at the pre-tournament press conference on Thursday.

"Here in Dushanbe, we were unable to bring a few players who play in the Uzbekistan Super League but, nevertheless, this generation of players is very strong. We have two equal teams, and each player is ready to replace each other."

Uzbekistan will begin their campaign against an Islamic Republic of Iran side led by former Esteghlal Khuzestan and Foolad boss Siros Pourmousavi, who is similarly confident of his side's chances in the tournament.

"We brought our strongest squad," he declared. "We will try to perform as successfully as possible and take first place in the tournament."

That clash between regional heavyweights is set to headline opening day, with Ahmad Ziyi Azimi's Afghanistan to face Aziz Kambarov's Turkmenistan in the tournament's



first match at Dushanbe Central Stadium.

Tajikistan will be the last team to begin their campaign, with the hosts having to wait until Saturday to begin their campaign against Turkmenistan in what local fans hope will be the latest step in a series of success stories in youth football in country.

In addition to the current U-16 crop going undefeated on the way to the regional title earlier this month, Zayniddin Rakhimov - Tajikistan's coach in the coming tournament - led the nation to the unprecedented

(Source: the-afc)

Iran start Tokyo Volleyball Qualification on high

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran came from behind to beat Cuba 3-2 (23-25, 26-28, 25-17, 25-16, 15-10) at the first day of men's Tokyo Volleyball Qualification on Friday.

Ali Shafiei scored 20 points and Osniel Lazaro Mergarejo Hernandez led Cuba with 15 points.



The teams are divided into six pools of four, with the table toppers punching their tickets for next year's Olympic Games.

The six table toppers will be joining Japan at Tokyo 2020, with the hosts having already claimed one of the 12 available berths.

A further five teams will emerge in January from the Continental Olympic Qualifying Tournaments to complete the Tokyo 2020 line-up.

Iran will face Mexico on Saturday and meet Russia in Pool E on Sunday.

Wrestlers win seven medals at Tbilisi Grand Prix

MNA — Iranian wrestlers collected three golds, one silver and three bronze medals at 2019 edition of Tbilisi Grand Prix of V. Balavadze and G. Kartoza in Georgia on Thursday.

In the Greco-Roman competitions, Pouya Naserpour and Amin Kaviani Nejad snatched two gold medals at 55kg and 72kg categories respectively. Saman Abdevali and Meisam Delkhani bagged bronze medals of 63kg.

In the freestyle event, the gold medal of 79kg went to Iran's Younes Emami. Bahman Teimouri and Mohammadbagher Yakheshi received a silver and a bronze respectively in 79kg and 61kg.

Tbilisi Grand Prix of V. Balavadze and G. Kartoza kicked off in Tbilisi, Georgia, on August 7 and it will wrap up on August 11. The event is underway in both Greco-Roman and freestyle categories.

Hrvoje Milic reaches agreement with Esteghlal

TASNIM — Croatian winger Hrvoje Milic has reached an agreement with Iranian football club Esteghlal.

Milic started his footballing career at Hajduk Split in 2008 and has also played at Italian team, including Fiorentina, Napoli and Crotone.

Milic has six caps under his belts for Croatian national football team.

The 30-year-old winger will travel to Tehran to undergo medical exam.

Esteghlal will start the new season of Iran Professional League with a match against Machine Sazi.

Iran a direct opponent in FIBA World Cup, Puerto Rico guard says

Puerto Rico guard Gian Clavell says Iran is their direct opponent for a spot in the next round of the 2019 FIBA World Cup.

Puerto Rico's quest to advance through Group C in Guangzhou starts with a showdown against Iran on August 31 with the other two games coming against Spain and Tunisia.

"We have to start the competition the best way, and we are going to be 100 percent ready for this first game, which is a very, very important one for us," said Clavell, who will be playing in his first World Cup. "If you start winning in a competition like this, you gain confidence and you are in a positive dynamic, which is very helpful."

Most observers assume that Spain will win the group - or at the very least grab one of the two berths in the second group phase. That makes Puerto Rico's opener against Iran all the more important.

"Iran is a direct opponent for a spot in the next round, and we want to win as many games as we can to get into the first two spots of the group," Clavell said.

"We know that the battle for the first two spots is going to be intense, but we are going to be ready to fight for it. We don't want to go to China and go back home after a week of competition."

"We want to put all of our energy for this jersey, for our people, and have a good run to make them proud of us. We are going to China to represent Puerto Rico, the people, the island and all the fellow compatriots who live around the world, the best way," he added.

Puerto Rico finished among the top eight in three of the four World Cups from 1990 to 2002. But first-game losses in the three most recent tournaments have led to a 17th place finish in 2006 followed by 18th place in 2010 and 19th place in 2014.

The 25-year-old guard played in all 12 games in the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2019 Americas Qualifiers in his first competition for Puerto Rico. And he cannot wait to line up against the world.

(Source: FIBA)



Kayhan Kalhor wins WOMEX Artist Award

A R T **TEHRAN** — Four-time d e s k Iranian Grammy Award nominee Kayhan Kalhor has won the Artist Award at the WOMEX Awards in Finland, the organizers have announced.

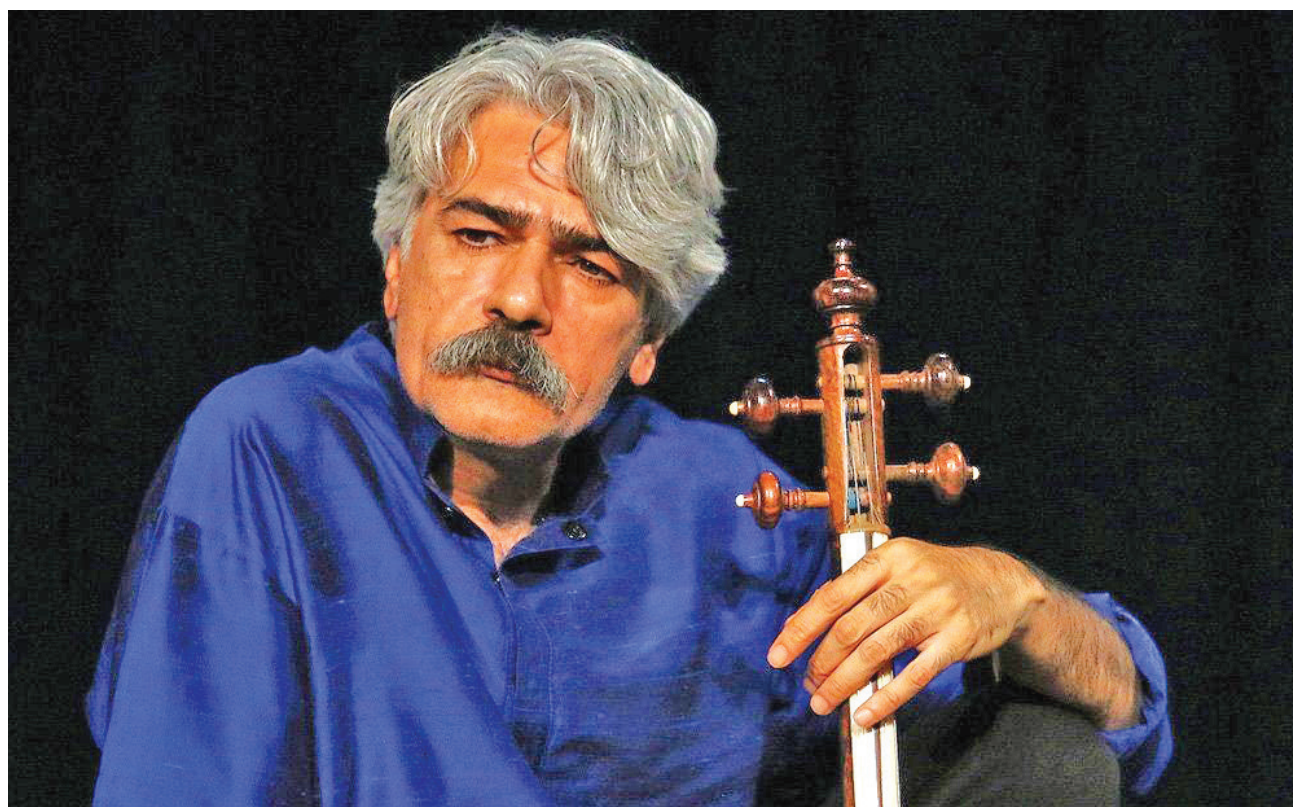
WOMEX – the World Music Expo – is the most extensive international music meeting in the world and the biggest conference of the global music scene, featuring a trade fair, talks, films and a showcase festival.

“For the mastery and virtuosity of the kamancheh, for the ceaseless innovation and collaboration to create exciting new musical languages, and for bringing the Persian classical music tradition to the ears of people all over the world, WOMEX team is delighted to present the WOMEX 19 Artist Award to Kayhan Kalhor,” the WOMEX jury said in its statement.

The statement also added, “For Kayhan Kalhor, the kamancheh is his voice. When he plays, he creates whole languages in which to communicate with people from all over the world, from centuries past and far into the future.

“Throughout his career, Kayhan Kalhor has worked with the best musicians from across Iran and studied the folk music of Kurdistan and Khorasan, allowing all of these voices to permeate his own sound.

“On the international scene, Kalhor is most well-known for his world-spanning collaborations. From Shujaat Khan, Yo-Yo Ma, Erdal Erzincan and Toumani Diabaté to the Kronos Quartet (recipient of WOMEX 18 Artist Awards), Brooklyn Rider and the Rembrandt Frerichs Trio, Kalhor’s musical partnerships are many and varied, and the results are invariably world-class.”



Kamancheh virtuoso Kayhan Kalhor in an undated photo.

Kalhor will receive the award on October 27 during the closing ceremony of the expo, which will open in Tampere October 23.

He will perform together with Turkish baglama virtuoso Erdal Erzincan in what will

be the final concert of WOMEX 19.

The WOMEX headquarters is located in Berlin, Germany and the expo is each year in a different country in Europe.

Earlier in 2015, Ramin Sadiqi, the founder

of Hermes Records, a Tehran-based studio active in producing and promoting modern Persian music, received the Professional Excellence Award at the WOMEX Awards in Budapest, Hungary.

Movies from Iran receive nominations at American festival



Ahmad Mehranfar (L) and Hadi Hejazifar act in a scene from “Katyusha” by Ali Atshani.

A R T **TEHRAN** — Iranian d e s k movies “Katyusha” and “There Is Sea” have been nominated in several categories at the Love International Film Festival (LIFF) in Santa Monica, the U.S., the organizers have announced.

Director Ali Atshani’s comedy “Katyusha” has been nominated in six categories including best feature film and best director.

Hadi Hejazifar has been nominated for the best actor for his portrayal of Khalil Katyusha, and Ahmad Mehranfar has been nominated for the best supporting actor for his role as Arshia in the film.

Other nominations include best

screenplay by Mehdi Ali Mirzaei and Ali Atshani, and best cinematography by Mahmud Atshani.

The film is about a middle-aged religious man, Khalil, who is supposed to take care of a spoiled son of a wealthy man as his bodyguard for a number of days. The gap between their social levels and worldviews creates some problems.

Directed by Armin Daneshvar, “There Is Sea” has been nominated for the best animated short.

The 2019 LIFF annual screening and award show will take place at the Monica Film Center in Santa Monica, California from September 18 to 20.

Iranian artists display works in Belgium



A poster for “The Color of Water”.

A R T **TEHRAN** — Works by d e s k three Iranian artists are on view in a group exhibition named “The Color of Water” at the MAS (Museum Aan de Stroom) Pavilion in the Belgian city of Antwerp.

The exhibit has been organized by Pedrami Gallery, a center for artworks from the Middle East in Antwerp, in collaboration with Antwerp Art, a non-profit organization in the Belgian city.

The exhibition brings together the work of seven artists, all geographically or culturally connected to the Middle East, Pedrami Gallery has announced on its website.

Mohammad Eskandari, Nasser Bakhshi and Roqieh Najdi are the Iranian artists whose works are on display alongside works by Eileen Cohen-Sussholz, Gil & Moti, Wendy Krochmal and Naomi Sussholz.

The title of the exhibit refers to a passage written by the twelfth century Sufi mystic, poet and philosopher, Ibn Arabi, in which he makes the following claim: That an understanding of the expression “the color of the water is the color of the receptacle” would lead to an acceptance of all forms of faith through a recognition of their underlying commonality.

The exhibit will be running until August 23.

Italian, Afghan experts to attend seminar on traditional theater in Kashan

A R T **TEHRAN** — Experts from Italy and d e s k Afghanistan are scheduled to attend a seminar, which will be organized on the sidelines of the 19th International Traditional and Ritual Theater Festival in Kashan.

Jolanda Capriglione will present his paper on the concept of theater and history, and his fellow Italian scholar Antonio Salerno will deliver a speech on ancient theaters’ changes and forms.

Afghan poet and writer Seyyed Abutaleb Mozaffari will present a paper on a folktale from the Hazaras, an ethnic

group native to the mountainous region of Hazarajat in central Afghanistan.

Over 25 papers from Iran will also be presented at the two-day seminar, which will open today.

Prominent Iranian theater scholars, including Mohammad-Reza Aslani, Mohammad-Hossein Nasserbakht, Davud Fathalibeigi, Hamidreza Ardalan and Rafiq Nosrati will also deliver lectures at the seminar.

The 19th Traditional and Ritual Theater Festival will open in the central Iranian city of Kashan on August 10 and performances will then continue in Tehran until August 17.

Crowds gather to mark 50th anniversary of the Beatles’ Abbey Road album photo

LONDON (Reuters) — Hundreds of people gathered at the world’s most famous zebra crossing on Thursday to mark the 50th anniversary of the day the Beatles created one of the best-known album covers in music history and an image imitated by countless fans ever since.

The picture of John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr striding over the pedestrian crossing on Abbey Road was taken outside the EMI Recording Studios where they made the 1969 album of the same name.

To mark the anniversary, a special ‘Abbey Road’ package featuring new mixes of the album’s 17 tracks in stereo and 23 session

recordings and demos, will be released on Sept. 27 by Apple Corps/Capitol/UMe, the record companies said on Thursday.

Scottish photographer Iain Macmillan took just six shots of the group on the crossing, with the fifth used as the cover of the band’s 11th studio album, released on Sept. 26 1969.

The picture shows Lennon in a white suit leading the group across the road. Starr wears a black suit while McCartney is barefoot, out of step and holding a cigarette. Harrison is in blue denim. A Volkswagen Beetle is parked in the background.

On Thursday, the Beetle was back in position while traffic crawled along the crowded street

as dozens of fans paraded on the black and white painted crossing for souvenir photos.

Beatles insider and former Apple Records executive Tony Bramwell said nobody at the time was really aware that ‘Abbey Road’ would be one of the group’s last releases.

‘Let It Be’ was the final Beatles album, but it was mostly recorded before ‘Abbey Road’. “In cultural terms it’s become iconic, the sleeve, the songs, the stories behind the songs,” Bramwell told Reuters.

He said the original idea for the picture had been McCartney’s. Asked why McCartney was barefoot, a subject of endless debate for fans, he replied: “It was hot.”

Abbey Road, which was voted the best Beatles album by readers of Rolling Stone in 2009, was the only one of the group’s original British albums to show neither the band’s name nor a title on the cover.

The album was the last to be recorded by all four members of the band together, and it had tracks written by each of them, including ‘Come Together’ by Lennon, ‘Here Comes the Sun’ by Harrison, ‘Maxwell’s Silver Hammer’ by McCartney, and Starr’s ‘Octopus’s Garden’.

Lawmaker Louise Ellman, who represents Liverpool Riverside, said she had come down to join the celebrations.

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Do not harm others so that you would have to apologize, for, apology is humiliating.

Imam Ali (AS)

WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES

Multimedia

■ An exhibition displaying sets of installation and photos by Ali Khatamsaz is underway at Soluk Gallery.

The exhibition titled “Three. Zero” will run until August 19 at the gallery located at No. 1, First Alley, Takhti St. off Fereshteh St.

■ A group of artists including Razi Razavi, Reza Kahnmai, Hani Najm, Siamak Nasr, Shirin Babazadeh and Zaha Bayat is showcasing their paintings, photos and sculptures in an exhibition at Saye Gallery.

The exhibit named “Demon” runs until August 21 at the gallery located at No. 21, 13th Alley, Sanai St. off Karim Khan Ave.

■ Sets of installation and sculptures by Yashar Azaremdadian and Taimaz Moslemian are on display in an exhibition at Aran Gallery.

The exhibit entitled “Palanquin” runs until August 26 at the gallery located at 5 Lolagar St., Neauphle-le-Chateau St.

Painting

■ An exhibition of paintings by Amir Rahsaz is underway at Shirin Gallery.

The exhibit named “Suspiria” will run until August 21 at the gallery located at No. 5, 13th St., Karim Khan Ave.

■ Paintings by Shahrzad Qazizadeh are currently on view in an exhibition at Tehran’s CAMA – Contemporary and Modern Art Gallery.

The exhibit titled “No Sign, No Address” will be running until August 14 at the gallery that can be found at No. 44, 10th Golestan, Pasdaran St.

■ A collection of paintings by Parvin Qorbanzadeh is on display in an exhibition at Negar Gallery.

Entitled “The Hidden Sense”, the exhibit will run until August 21 at the gallery located at 33 Delaram Alley, Roshanai St. in the Qeitarieh neighborhood.

■ Vista Gallery is hosting an exhibition of paintings by Ebrahim Hassanzadeh.

The exhibit entitled “The Sin City” runs until August 19 at the gallery located at No. 11, 12th Alley, Mir Emad St.

■ Anahita Ashrafzadeh, Maryam Hassani, Amir Abbasi, Nazanin Honarvar, Sharan Bahramifar, Fatemeh Jalili and five other artists are displaying their latest paintings in an exhibition at Artland Gallery.

The exhibition will be running until August 19 at the gallery, which can be found at 4 Safa Alley, Kachui St. in the Evin neighborhood.

■ An exhibition of paintings by Maryam Moqaddam is currently underway at Idea Gallery.

The exhibit named “The Body” runs until August 21 at the gallery located at 26, 18th St. off Sanai St., Karim Khan Ave.

■ Paintings by Golrokh Bakhshi are on display in an exhibition at White Line Gallery.

The exhibit titled “A Spread of Colors” will be running until August 19 at the gallery located at 22 Parvin Alley, off Jame Jam St. off Vahid-e Asr Ave.

■ Nasrin Kishani is showcasing her latest paintings in an exhibition at Shokuh Gallery.

The exhibition will be running until August 14 at the gallery located at 19 Amir Nuri Alley, North Salimi St. near Andarzgu Blvd.

